



“UN VIOLADOR EN TU CAMINO” AND ITS TRANSNATIONAL RESONANCE

A comparative study of the performances in Chile and Spain

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Abstract - NL

In deze thesis wordt de protest performance *Un violador en tu camino* door het feministisch collectief LasTesis bestudeerd. Door eerst de verschillende dimensie van deze beweging in Chili te definiëren, wordt er een vergelijkende studie gemaakt met hoe de performance geïnterpreteerd werd in Spanje. De verschillende dimensies en karaktertrekken werden bekeken in het licht van twee luiken. Luik 1 heeft te maken met de structurele aanklacht van gendergerelateerd geweld, waarbij de link wordt gemaakt tussen geweld op vrouwen en economische systemen van onderdrukking en extractivisme, zoals het neoliberalisme. In Luik 2 wordt bekeken hoe Latijns-Amerikaans feministische bewegingen als een bron van inspiratie kunnen dienen voor feminismes in Europa. De conclusie van dit onderzoek luidt dat net door de radicale structurele aanklacht die *Un violador* doet, waarbij er verschillende strijden geconnecteerd worden, maakt dat het een erg inspirerende beweging is, voor andere feminismes.

Abstract – ENG

In this thesis, the protest performance *Un violador en tu camino*, by the feminist collective LasTesis, is studied. By first defining the different dimensions of this movement in Chile, a comparative study is made with how the performance was interpreted in Spain. The different dimensions and characteristics are examined in the light of two frameworks. Framework 1 deals with the structural denunciation of gender-based violence, linking violence against women and economic systems of oppression and extractivism, such as neoliberalism. Framework 2 examines how Latin American feminist movements can serve as a source of inspiration for feminisms in Europe. The conclusion of this research is that it is precisely because of the radical structural denunciation of *Un violador*, in which different struggles are connected, that the feminist movement is very inspiring for other feminisms.

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Introduction

This thesis addresses the feminist intervention *Un violador en tu camino* (A rapist in your path), created and performed by the Chilean collective LasTesis in 2019. The performance received a widespread international resonance and was reinterpreted in various corners of the world. At present, the movement is inscribed in the trajectory of significant global women's marches, following NiUnaMenos and #MeToo. The *violador* movement is characterized by its structural denunciation of gender-based violence and its articulated criticism of neoliberalism.

The aim of this study is to develop a picture of how Latin American feminist movements receive a transnational response, through the analysis of the most recent trans-nationalised movement. Therefore, I will examine what the key dimensions are of the *violador* performance in Chile. To complete the transnational analysis, I will compare the original Chilean performance with the re-staged performances in Spain.

The study will be revolving around two frameworks. First, the feminist structural perspective on gender-based violence, in which the connection between exploitative economic systems and violence against feminised subjects is central to the further investigation. And second, the Latin American feminist movements as a source of inspiration for European countries.

The *violador* movement will in this respect serve as a lens to examine how Latin American feminism travels transnationally. The aim is to decentralize the idea of a universal feminism.

The investigation will be based on two case studies: the performance in Chile and the interpretations in Spain. Through an extensive literature review I will analyse the context, goals, participants, (academic) inspirations, the precedents etc. of the Chilean performance by LasTesis. Since the events occurred in the recent past, it is interesting to take a look at *NiUnaMenos*, in order to fully contextualise the newest movement. The literature review will be complemented by an analysis of interviews in newspapers or magazines and social media communications. The combination of the analysis of primary and secondary sources will provide a profound understanding of the feminist movements.

For the comparative case, the decision fell on Spain. Because of the shared language and history, these two countries have a constant communication flow and transfer of ideas and cultural understandings. Chile and Spain are also both relatively young democratic states, given their brutal dictatorships under Pinochet and Franco respectively. Despite the different natures of these military regimes, both countries were met with a harsh setback of women's rights (Carrera). In terms of contemporary global politics, Chile and Spain are on different sides of the spectrum. Chile as an ex-colony, situated in the Global South, and Spain as a former colonial power in the Global North. For this case study I will use the same methodology as before: an intersectional analysis of primary and secondary sources.

Throughout the writing of this work, I have been very aware of my own positionality as a white female European citizen, and the biases that come with it. For these reasons, I carefully

evaluated my sources, relying mostly on Latin American authors, to prevent myself from falling into a Eurocentric inquiry. Also, I will focus on recent academic articles only, except for classical works on the topic.

Conceptual Framework

Intersectionality

The central theoretical frame for this thesis is intersectionality. It is an indispensable tool and framework in analysing the transnational resonance of *Un violador en tu camino*, the different dimensions of this feminist movement, and how they are reinterpreted in new contexts. The critical, analytical concept evolves around the idea of overlapping social identities. The different dimensions are referred to as different axes, that interfere and affect one another. Some important axes are race, gender, class, ability, age, sex, religion, etc. Paying attention to the intersections of these individual positions or experiences is crucial to visualise the discrimination people confront and to gain understanding in the game of power and privileges.

The term was coined in 1989 by Kimberlé Crenshaw, an American lawyer, philosopher and civil rights advocate. She drew attention to the need of representing lived experiences of individuals, in which various dimensions intersect on a daily basis, in academic work and law-making. Crenshaw demonstrated that a single-axis framework is blind for the specific situations of people that create the social inequality.

The origins of intersectional thought go back to the mid-19th century in the United States, where Afro-American women led a social struggle for civil rights. The powerful speech of Sojourner Truth in 1851, ‘Ain’t I a woman?’, already exposed and theorised the multiple discrimination that black women encountered.

From the 1970’s, black, lesbian or working-class feminist movements expressed their critique on the exclusive notion of ‘woman’ in feminist theories. The dominant feminisms and gender studies worked from a white, western, middle-class, heteronormative perspective, ignoring the experiences of the greater part of women. In 1990, Patricia Hill Collins developed the concept of ‘matrix of domination’ to depict the interconnectedness of social classifications in order to understand experienced societal exclusion or privileges.

From an intersectional perspective, the norm is problematised, categories are deconstructed, and universalist ideas dismantled (Kathy Davis 2011, 48). Intersectionality focuses on the relationality between different identity aspects: they co-constitute each other. This means that different types of discriminations or privileges do not just add up. Rather, they interact and transform in contact with one another.

Intersectionality serves as an analytical tool and as a critical method of inquiry at the same time (Collins & Bilge, 2016). Investigating social inequality and power relations is vital to start activism on the ground. These political or social actions are then again examined. This makes

that intersectionality remains in process, continuously intertwining different dimensions, social identities or aspects of life.

Throughout the course of this thesis, an intersectional lens will be central. Awareness of my own positionality, and how this may affect my research will mark my reflections.

Neoliberalism in Latin America

To present the background of Latin America thoroughly, it is indispensable to make some notes on neoliberalism. In the following section, the concept will be briefly introduced, and I will discuss how the neoliberal context in the region, and its prolonged effects on current society, came about. Given the topic of this thesis, the interaction between feminisms and neoliberalism is of particular interest, so I will elaborate on this relation.

Initiation of neoliberalism in Latin America

Neoliberalism, in general, is considered “a set of policies that altered the face of the continent (privatization, reduction in social protections, financial deregulation, labor flexibilization, etc.)” (Verónica Gago 2017, 1). As appointed by Rodríguez, academic literature on neoliberalism in general agrees upon the dubious consequences of 30 years of neoliberalism in Latin America. It does not surprise, then, that in the region, “the consolidation of already significant inequalities, precarious jobs and informality, political closure and social exclusion, are today among the best-known legacy of neoliberal policies” (Rodríguez, 2).

In Latin America, neoliberal reforms made up a crucial part of history and its logic and principles still persist into present society. In the academic debate on the topic, Chile is considered the first neoliberal experiment in the world. In the 1970's and 1980's, in the context of the debt crisis under pressure of international financial institutions like Worldbank and the International Monetary Fund, neoliberal reforms were introduced as a developmental strategy, and was presented as an alternative to the import substitution industrialization (ISI) model (Rodríguez, 3). The application of this new model, under high international surveillance, was facilitated by Chile's context of military dictatorship, that eliminated opposition. The transition was harsh, and the Structural Adjustment Programs changed the internal relations of Latin American countries, as well as their position in the global market. Economies were to focus on export, with the intent to reverse the inward-oriented measures of the ISI model, the process of privatisation was initiated on a large scale, and trade was liberalised, in order to serve the free market.

Despite the objectives of the structural adjustments to install democracy in the debtor states, the model of neoliberal industrialisation led to authoritarian-bureaucratic states instead (Rodríguez, 3). Thus, as Gago discusses, neoliberalism is often linked to extremism and fascism in the region, as it went hand in hand with military dictatorships and brutal international policies.

In the light of this research, the recent alliance between the neoliberal political order and religious fundamentalism in Latin America is noteworthy. As part of the Law and Political Economy project, Gago explains this relation by emphasising the mutating character of neoliberalism. Feminist movements increasingly question the gendered unequal effects of capitalism. In response to this protest, neoliberalism reinforces itself through compacts with conservatist allies.

Market logic

The market logic of neoliberalism is not only present in the economic dimension, but is also interwoven with ideas, values, policies and institutions and characterises the way citizenship is defined. Following Schild (2015), neoliberalism has its foundations in a “political rationality based on market norms and values with the intention to adapt individuals and societies to the dominant model of capitalist accumulation”¹ (81).

Neoliberal social policies directed at encountering poverty and unemployment, for instance, tend to place responsibility on individual agents, instead of interfering. As Schild sustains, when neoliberal governments introduce social measures, their incentive is market-oriented, which may undermine the ethical project of universal human rights and equality. The creation of consumers and responsible civilians who draw their own path of life is central in the neoliberal logic (82). This neo-liberalised social state, as Schild calls it, works counterproductively. The assumption that targeted aid will go to the people who need it the most through competition, “contradicts and violates the democratic sense of equality”² (Schild 2018, 173).

Interaction between neoliberalism and feminisms

The neoliberal change in discourse concerning the definition of citizenship –or rights and obligations of individuals– has a gender dimension. As explained by Schild (2018), the responsibility to work, for instance, was defined for masculine paid work only. Women take up most part of the reproductive, non-paid work, and the lack of recognition for these activities gives them a subordinate societal position in the modern neoliberal model.

The neoliberal ideology also has specific norms on femininity. As Schild (2015) argues, although access to the labour market may bring economic emancipation for some women, the duty of reproductive work is still mostly female. In contrast with its emancipatory aspirations, the system relies on traditional prejudices: women are seen as the principal carer, and in social measures that aim to ameliorate the situations of families, communities or neighbourhoods they are granted more responsibility (Schild 2015). This double standard increases emotional work and reproductive stress for women.

¹ “racionalidad política basada en las normas y los valores del mercado y cuya intencionalidad es la adaptación de individuos y sociedades al modelo de acumulación capitalista imperante” (Schild 2015, 81).

² “contradice y violenta el sentido democrático de la igualdad” (Schild 2018, 173).

Verónica Schild concludes that the empowerment of women is commercialised. From a neoliberal perspective, emancipation is only possible through entering the labour market and inclusion in the economy. The neoliberal responsibility claim for women is clearly built on a contradiction: “the appeal to women as autonomous individuals in liberal citizenship is intertwined with traditional assumptions about their role as mothers” that they fulfil in their family, or even community (Schild 2016, 68).

Thus, the neoliberal definition of autonomy creates new economic opportunities for women but traps them at the same time into new relations of oppression and exploitation (Schild, 67). It comes to our understanding then, that to address the issue of care, it is crucial to make a thorough feminist analysis of neoliberalism, framing it as “broader dynamics structuring the social, economic and racial inequalities of the region” (Schild 2016, 74). The interaction between feminisms and neoliberal mechanisms in Latin American society –how are they intertwined, and what is the effect on one another– is of particular interest for the analysis of the ‘violador’-movement.

The liberal discourse individualises women’s rights, and in this way, neoliberalism redefines feminist ideas. While the majority of jobs in precarious conditions is filled in by women, as well as the greater part of care responsibilities, a neoliberal-minded feminism fails to acknowledge structural causes for these numbers. If feminist movements are not sensitive for the underlying exploitative structures behind the current democracy in Latin America, their campaigns will not lead to major social changes that improve the lives of the larger part of women. Advocating for individual rights, “without questioning or challenging the dominant model of citizenship and politics”³, will allow “inequality and instability of both social conditions and employment”⁴ to continue (Schild 2018, 168).

In institutionalised feminism, neoliberalism still decides on the limits of what is possible, because the base structure remains untouched. It is in this respect that Schild underlines the importance of a critical, autonomous feminism, to offer social counterweights. The author finds support in other scholars, like Gago (2020), who stresses the need for feminisms to focus on the structural causes of inequalities, in order to actually transform society.

Therefore, neoliberal democracy should be analysed from a feminist perspective, so that the underlying capitalist accumulation and extractive activities become visible. “The situation of large majorities of women in precarious working conditions becomes ever more unsustainable, which visualises the social and ecological limits of a devastating capitalist development model. This generates the urgent necessity to re-establish politics of feminist allies”⁵ (Schild, 60).

³ “sin cuestionar o desafiar el modelo dominante de ciudadanía y política” (Schild 2018, 168).

⁴ “desigualdad y precarización de la vida tanto laboral como social” (Schild 2018, 168).

⁵ “se hace cada vez más insostenible la situación de grandes mayorías en condiciones precarizadas, lo que visibiliza con claridad los límites sociales y ecológicos de un modelo de desarrollo capitalista arrasador, que genera la urgente necesidad de replantear una política de alianzas feministas” (Schild 2018, 60).

I conclude this brief introduction to neoliberalism on the note that we need to see capitalist accumulation as a part of the analysis of neoliberalism, as sustained by Rodríguez. Indigenous, feminist, or urban poor movements have been questioning this extractivist logic, that lays at the basis of capitalist mechanisms, and it proves valuable to adopt this structural perspective (Rodríguez, 10). The following section will examine this further.

Decolonial feminism

Hegemonic and decolonial feminism in Latin America

Latin America is characterised by a long history of colonization. It is not surprising then, that colonial structures are persistent up until today in these societies. Power relations stemming from the colonial period are strongly racialised and gendered. Imperial and neo-colonial knowledge production form the foundations on which governments, political and economic institutions, as well as the social state are built.

In the interest of the analysis of the *violador* movement to be conducted in this thesis, this section concisely discusses how decolonial feminisms came about in Latin America. Special attention will go to the concept of body-territory, developed in the context of Indigenous feminisms.

From the previous section on neoliberalism, it can be concluded that the current liberal democracy in Latin America is still compatible with an imperial power that used to be the colonial rule. Decolonial feminism expands this idea: discrimination on the basis of gender and race are inherently part of the modern structure of neoliberal capitalism. Gendered mechanisms of coloniality are reproduced throughout modernity, as Montanaro Mena discusses in her overview of decolonial feminism in Latin America (127).

As explained by Montanaro Mena, institutionalised feminisms in the 1980's maintained the neoliberal and neo-colonial project. By doing so, mechanisms of patriarchal power, expressed through violence and corruption, were fortified. As neoliberalism steadily settled in Latin American society, the region entered the global market under pressure of the SAP's and international financial institutions. The institutional feminisms followed this way to trans-nationalisation, and the focus of their campaigns shifted from local struggles towards international human rights (Montanaro Mena, 113).

The process of institutionalisation of feminism in Latin America continued, and local organizations developed into NGO's, depending on international financial resources (Montanaro Mena, 113). Through neo-colonial structures, hegemonic western feminist ideas were adopted into Latin American society. Feminisms that did not respond directly to local struggles, internalised a coloniality, that constructed afro-descendent, Indigenous, working class, rural or lesbian feminists as the 'other'. Feminist organizations in Latin America increasingly began to reproduce hegemonic western ideas to empower women and advocate for gender equality. However, these movements did not have local, real situations as a starting

point, leading to adverse effects for women that did not correspond to the universal, white, idea of a woman.

It is in this context that autonomous and critical feminist groups arose in Latin America. They looked through an intersectional lens, to make visible the crossover discriminations that correspond to lived experiences of women throughout the region. “Parting from the histories of subaltern women [...] that were subjected to different forms of oppression, domination, exclusion and multiple forms of violence that capitalism, coloniality, racism and patriarchy entail”⁶ (Montanaro Mena, 118). Numerous feminist actors that were silenced by an institutionalized, hegemonic feminism that had its foundations in a racist, misogynist, heteronormative and colonial model, united in resistance (116). The ‘other’ feminisms found a common language against the multidimensional violence, rooted in an extractive neoliberal model. Through a decolonial feminist lens, the objective is to re-establish “autonomy and dignity for women in their own cultural contexts”⁷ (122).

Decolonial feminisms aim to connect these different struggles and decolonize the feminist movement. Through their focus on intersections between race, ethnicity, sexuality, class, and gender, amongst others, the idea of a universal feminism that corresponds to a singular concept of ‘woman’ is questioned. Identity politics, subjectivity and lived experiences are key words for decolonial feminisms.

The critical and autonomous perspective of these feminisms, relying on theoretical contributions of women that used to be excluded from the dominant knowledge production, black, Indigenous and farmers women for instance, bring new insights on modernity. Where white feminisms sustained that modernity was built on androcentric, misogynist and sexist principles, decolonial movements emphasize that these same modern models also have fundamentals in racism and eurocentrism (Montanaro Mena, 126). In this way, a decolonial feminist perspective reinterprets the relation between “modernity, capitalism, patriarchy, racism and liberal democracy”⁸, and is able to reconceptualise oppressions (Montanaro Mena, 126).

Body-territory

The concept of body-territory stems from the Indigenous feminist tradition and evolves around the analogy between the female body and territories or colonies. Territory, in this meaning, exceeds its geographical denotation, and becomes symbolic on top. The concept rests on the idea that both the female body and exploited territories are suppressed by the same economic and political model: a capitalist system that is built on extractive activities.

⁶ “partir de la historia de mujeres subalternas [...] que enfrentan las diferentes formas de opresión, dominación, menosprecio, exclusión y de múltiples formas de violencia que conlleva el capitalismo, la colonialidad, el racismo, el patriarcado” (Montanaro Mena, 118).

⁷ “la autonomía y dignidad de las mujeres en sus propios contextos culturales” (Montanaro Mena, 122).

⁸ “modernidad, capitalismo, patriarcado, racismo y democracia liberal” (Mena, 126).

As Verónica Gago nicely puts it, the capitalist exploitation of ‘free resources’, like “domestic labour, from peasant labor and from the labor of cities’ slums [...] is simultaneously colonial and heteropatriarchal” (Gago 2020, 84). The neoliberal model is funded in the extractive, and exploiting economy and the patriarchization of territories, as Rogério Haesbaert (2020) agrees.

Over the past centuries, Indigenous communities in Latin America have been building up resistance against this systematic discrimination and extraction. Women in particular, play a vital role in this fight, starting from the idea that their female body is the first territory that they have to defend and protect against external forces. Under the pretext of creating civilisation and development, imperial rule maintains the subjugation of women, nature and former colonies and thus “inaugurates capitalist accumulation with the sexual and colonial division of labor as its foundation” (Gago, 84).

By linking these different territories of resistance, Indigenous women show how “the exploitation of common, community [...] territories involve violence on the body of each person, as well as the collective body, through dispossession” (Gago, 85), but also how violence on the bodies of women or sexual dissidents is intrinsically connected to “neo-extractivist political regimes” (95). By revisiting the history of resistance in the region, these decolonial feminisms theorize the perspective that the extractive logic, characteristic of the modernisation project, is to be seen as a new form of capitalist coloniality. Furthermore, Gago sustains that in this perspective, it also becomes clear that extractivism is both an economic and political regime, that is in this way passed on to every aspect of society.

A key word in decolonial Indigenous feminism is ‘dispossession’, being of the body, of territory, or of natural resources. While the capitalist logic defines possession in terms of private property, the concept of body-territory de-liberalizes this meaning. Rather, Indigenous feminisms perceive possession –of a body or territory– as a notion of ‘use’, as being part of a collective whole. As Gago (86) explains, in this notion lies the acknowledgment of the interdependence of our relations with others or with nature (86). They emphasise that the reduction to property terms individualises the problem and moreover makes invisible the primitive accumulation or expropriation that created the situation of dispossession. The neoliberal, extractivist mode “hides the initial expropriation that produces” the ‘lack’ of a territory or (rights over) a body (Gago 86). In this way, Indigenous and decolonial feminisms shed light on the ongoing capitalist accumulation as a structural foundation of inequality and expropriation, or gender-based violence on women.

Case study: *Un violador en tu camino* – CHILE

The Chilean Feminist Collective LasTesis

*A Rapist in Your Path*⁹ –and everything it gave rise to– started on November 20th of 2019 in Valparaíso, Chile. Initially, the first performance of *Un violador en tu camino* was planned for October, but due to the Social Outbreak in Chile, LasTesis was forced to postpone the performance. Starting on the 18th of October that year, throughout the country people had taken to the streets to protest against the structural inequality. In the following section, the Chilean context of social unrest will be discussed more in depth.

The performance is written and first realised by LasTesis, an interdisciplinary feminist artist collective, founded in 2018, composed of four artists with a different academical background: Sibila Sotomayor (anthropology, sociology and dramaturgy), Daffne Valdés Vargas (dramaturgy and literature), Paula Cometa Stange (design, sociology and history) and Lea Cáceres Díaz (costume designer). Performing on various festivals in Chile, the group creates artistic performances in which they translate feminist academic work to a broader audience. Through their music and theatre, they denounce sexual violence against women and LGBTQI+ communities, and defend the right to self-determination with respect to female bodies. They combine their feminist struggle with an anti-capitalist framework, as will be elaborated later on. Their main goal is to break the silence about gender-based violence that still dominates Chilean society by opening the debate, visualizing the number of rapes and demanding justice for victims of patriarchal violence. These values constitute the themes that become alive in every performance they make. Recently, on 26 February 2021, they released their newest work: *Resistencia*.

Un violador en tu camino was part of “Fuego: Acciones en Cemento”, an initiative to bring art outside of its traditional context, i.e. museums and auditoria, on to the streets and into public spaces. The aim of this project was to leave space for contingencies and the unexpected vulnerability of art within art. Since LasTesis has always stressed the importance of occupying the streets in order to reclaim female space and raising awareness while making the feminist movement more visible, their performance fitted perfectly within this frame.

Via their social media accounts the collective called for women to participate in their *violador* manifestation in the streets. With a group of approximately 50 women, they blocked the cars in a busy street. While singing the lyrics of *Un violador en tu camino*, some of them wrote the title in chalk on the occupied streets. Soon many spectators gathered around the performance and started filming it, many while applauding.

Five days later, on November 25th, the song was reinterpreted in the capital, Santiago de Chile, for the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women. Approximately 2000

⁹ Original in Spanish: “Un violador en tu camino”. Throughout this thesis, I will refer to the performance with its Spanish title.

women sang along to the lyrics and made the choreography their own. Again, on their Instagram account the collective called upon women and sympathisers to show up and perform the song with them. They asked them to be dressed in night club outfits and bring attributes like a black scarf. People who did not want to participate in the intervention itself were asked to form a protective circle around the performing women. This second performance was filmed and shared through different channels on social media and went viral almost immediately.

Soon after the major success in Santiago de Chile, the LasTesis collective invited everyone, regardless of their location, origins, language, social group, etc. to reperform *Un violador en tu camino* on the day of November 29th. This way, they wanted to collect footage of all varieties of the performance that came to be in different regions. In this post, LasTesis encouraged translations and adaptations to other realities, aiming to make visible the structural and universal problem that gender violence still is at present.

It was reinterpreted many times in different countries, first mostly on the South American continent, later it also spread to other corners of the world. London, Istanbul, Berlin, Brussels, Washington DC and Paris are just some of the cities where the song was translated and performed in protest against the status quo regarding wom*n's rights and gender-based violence. There are registrations of *violador* performances in more than 52 countries worldwide. In Istanbul seven activists were arrested for pointing at the Turkish state as being complicit in violence against women, as BBC reports. In protest to these arrests, several female Members of Parliament brought the song in the Grand National Assembly of Turkey, which led to the release of the arrested activists. Another example is New York, where women gathered in front of the courthouse on the day of Harvey Weinstein's trial.

Through the various reinterpretations of *Un violador en tu camino*, the song turned into a feminist anthem. It received wide response internationally, and the collective was included in the list of 100 most influential people of 2020 by Time Magazine. The *violador* song denounces the structural violence against women and the impunity the system allows for the perpetrators. Given the far-reaching reactions on the performances, this message seems universally applicable in different contexts, as the artists themselves proclaim in an interview with the Rosa Luxemburg Foundation.

Context

Social Outbreak, Chile 2019-2020

The first *violador* performance took place in the midst of the so-called Social Outbreak in Chile (*El Estallido Social*): a series of street protests throughout the country mostly between October 2019 and March 2020. It is considered to be the worst period of civil unrest since the end of Pinochet's dictatorship (1973-1990) in Chile. In the last three months of 2019 alone, a study by ACLED¹⁰ took notice of 1800 demonstration events. It was also the first time since the end of Pinochet's era that the military forces were deployed on the streets (Claudia Montero, 4). This

¹⁰ Armed Conflict Location and Event Data Project

was met with great disapproval by the Chilean population, which led to an intensification of the social unrest.

The Social Outbreak started on 18 October 2019 in Santiago, where students organised to occupy the subway stations due to a planned fare rise of the tickets, as reported in magazine *Red Pepper*. The government reacted by mobilising, in Santiago alone, over 10.000 officers of the national police force (*Carabineros*) and the military, who were to confront the crowd and protect the streets. Although president Piñera announced to cancel the fare rise, the protests expanded to other Chilean regions and the number of participants rapidly increased. Hoping to stop the people from protesting, the Chilean president introduced a curfew and declared a state of emergency, allowing him to deploy the military to oppress the crowd (Montero, 5). Nevertheless, this only augmented the manifesters' anger and government properties as well as subway stations were destroyed and sabotaged. VRTnws explains that the ticket rise was the top of the iceberg, but what laid underneath was the increasing inequality that affects the population of Chile. The high cost of living, low pensions, unaffordable health care and access to medication and expensive universities are some of the deficiencies in the provision of public and social services that decreased the faith of the Chilean population in the political elite. The gap between the rich elite and the poor majority has continued to grow over the past years, despite the government's promises on more economic prosperity for all the people of Chile. With the protests, the Chilean population wanted to make clear that their country suffers from high inequality, even though it is believed to be one of the most prosperous and stable countries in Latin America (VRTnws).

Shortly after he had declared war against his citizens for devastating the country's infrastructure in a press conference, President Piñera changed his strategy and tried to cut the social unrest by introducing social measures. However, the protests continued, as well as the destruction of public services. The unrest and the dissent with the government's policy was very widespread amongst the Chilean population, that has a rather small middle class, as VRTnws explains.

Over 3400 civilians were wounded throughout the Social Outbreak, and 32 persons got killed during the incidents (HRW). Following up the incidents, Human Rights Watch advocates for reforms within the Chilean police. Their report of the events during the Social Outbreak documents serious abuses in detention, excessive use of violence, torture and rape.

There were many cases of protesters or even passers-by that were not participating in the riots who incurred an eye injury (with permanent eye damage) because of the rubber pellets the police and order officers used to stop the riots, as HRW states in their report. These shotguns scatter pellets over a wide area, causing a great deal of collateral damage. There was also a significant number of victims of teargas cartridges that were shot straight into the crowd and official vehicles running over demonstrators.

Another reoccurring human rights violation, reported by HRW, is the disproportionate use of violence against the arrested. During the street protests, the police arrested over 15.000 people, whom they illegally held at police stations for hours or even days, without an official trial

following. In the period of October 18 to November 21 alone, the report noted 442 criminal complaints against the police for their cruel treatment, sexual violence, torture and attempted killings. As some testimonies in the HRW report read, they were forced to undress, squat, were sprayed with cold water and beaten excessively, without regard of the age and the state of defencelessness of the detainee. The practice of undressing and squat had been banned by police protocols in March 2019 but was still in use in practice allegedly to look for smuggled drugs or weapons.

An important aspect of this practice, regarding the subject of this thesis, is that the treatment of detainees is gendered. Women and girls were more frequently forced to strip, and the HRW research shows cases of sexual abuse and transgressive behaviour towards undressed women. There were also cases of homophobic discrimination and serious mistreatment.

While HRW registered 2278 civil victims of excessive police violence, referencing 203 members of security forces, which included 173 police officers, only nine cases received a follow-up. The violations of the police protocols were possible through the state of emergency president Piñera had declared, which broke with protocol during the Social Outbreak.

La Cosecha Roja – a medium and network that aims to rethink issues of violence and security in Latin America, reports on 106 cases of sexual violence and 517 cases of torture between the date that the repression against the protesting crowd began on October 18th until the second *violador* performance. In this way, the direct context served as an extra stimulation for LasTesis to come out with their song about gender-based structural and institutional violence. As they explain in the newspaper *La Tercera*, “the repression has been very harsh from the beginning, [...] police forces have done what they wanted, and have destructed how they wanted to”¹¹ (LasTesis).

In December 2019, Parliament started a constitutional reform process in response to the existing discontent. In this way, the social rise created an opening for feminist organizations to denounce the lack of recognition for women’s social and lived realities once again and demand a gender-specific perspective in the changes to be made.

Violence on women during Pinochet’s dictatorship (1973-1990)

Although it has been 30 years since Augusto Pinochet’s dictatorship came to an end, Chile’s economic and political model has remained largely intact (*Red Pepper*). The neoliberal establishment has been taking its toll on the working class in Chile. The middle-class group has diminished and what remains is a large gap between the rich elite and the large majority of the Chilean population.

¹¹ “la represión ha sido muy dura desde un principio, [...] la fuerza policial ha hecho lo que ha querido y ha destruido como ha querido” (Lastesis in *La Tercera*, 26/11/19).

As explained previously, during the Social Outbreak the military were out on the street for the first time since the dictatorship. The way in which civilian protests in the street were met by the *Carabineros* and military forces thus reminds of the cruel times of torture, censorship and harsh policies under Pinochet's regime.

Gender inequality and the backward step for reproductive rights largely find their origin during the Pinochet's regime but these patriarchal perspectives work through in Chilean society until today. Although progress has been made regarding women's rights and their supposed role in Chile, the legal situation has not changed thoroughly in the post-dictatorial period (HRW).

The location in Santiago de Chile where the *violador* performance of November 25th took place therefore was carefully chosen. The Supreme Court of Chile served as the stage of the event, to emphasize the lack of protection the state offers. The large majority of abusive crimes on women's lives or feminised bodies do not receive a judicial response nor do victims receive financial or medical aid (RED).

It took a rather long time before studies were conducted on the specific treatment of women during the dictatorship of Augusto Pinochet. Even when the democratization process in Chile began (from 1990 onwards), there was no general awareness that differentiated between the experiences of female and male dissidents. In line with Carrera, sexual violence has been a part of torture methods for women, but since it was part of the rationale, people failed to see this as a gendered practice (Carrera, 58). In this sense, a parallel can be drawn with the gendered approach of the *Carabineros* when confronting women or sexual dissidents, in that sexual abuse functions as a way to humiliate and control and to render protesting women vulnerable.

From the very beginning of Pinochet's coup, the regime targeted women who did not behave in line with the role pattern the state had laid out for them (Carrera). Considering that Pinochet's regime reacted against the social, political and cultural changes that were happening and transforming the Chilean society during the 1960's-70's, a conservative wave hit the country under his rule. Women were meant to take up their role as housewives and guardians of the family. According to Carrera, during the military regime women were expected to be the "mother-wife, loyal companion of the soldier, the saviour of the fatherland, which was a feminine figure who served as the mother of all Chileans"¹² (60). In this sense, their punishment for not complying with these cultural roles served as an example for other women, as well as to punish their husbands/fathers for dissident behaviour. Thus, the doctrine inscribed women into gender specific politics, of which sexual violence as a systematic practice was a central element.

According to Matamala, expert in gender and women's health and ex-prisoner of the regime, the double focus of torture on women (with a sexual component besides the 'usual' procedure) made the suffering of women more profound. Sexual violence lowers the self-esteem, which is

¹² "madre-esposa, fiel compañera del soldado, salvadora de la "patria", figura femenina que se presenta como "gran madre" de todos los chilenos" (Carrera, 60).

vital in the persistence to overcome moments of physical and mental torture. Women thus faced a twofold torture process.

Since sexual violence as a torture method was part of the dictatorial mindset, it was made invisible to society: victims, perpetrators, state officials and social workers did not describe sexual harassment in any form as a method to make women vulnerable, nor to gain control and domination. “Gender roles were absolutely incorporated in the political domination”¹³ (Matamala, 63). It existed on the side of the torture that 300.000 men and women suffered in camps from 1973 up to 1990.

Even in the period after the dictatorship, the silence on what had happened with arrested women remained, Carrera explains. Feelings of guilt towards those who did not survive, state strategies to overcome the fear, the lack of consciousness on gendered violence, and stigmatization of sexual abuse silenced the victims.

In this light, it does not surprise that the wound is still not healed today. In an article for BBC, LasTesis explains that dictatorship and the violence towards citizens constitute a national memory that continues to affect Chileans. With their performance in front of one of the biggest concentration camps of Pinochet’s dictatorship, the women who lived through the dictatorship, joined by younger generations, demanded justice and wanted to break the silence, to prevent similar systematic sexual violence from happening during further social unrests, as will be elaborated later on.

Femicides and gender-based violence

“Wanting to know resembles rebellion” (Julieta Kirkwood)¹⁴

Femicides

The earliest notions of the concept of “femicide” can be traced back to 1801 in England where it was used to denote “the murder of a woman” (Saccomano, 54). Diana Russell, a feminist activist and writer, rewrote the definition in 1992 in the United States, together with Jill Radford as “the misogynous murder of women committed by men” (Russell & Radford, 1992). Later Russell adapted the usage of “women” to “persons of female sex” to include girls and babies.

When the term travelled to Latin America, it was adapted again to the Latin American context. It was the Mexican feminist activist Marcela Lagarde who decided to translate “femicide” into “feminicidio” instead of “femicidio”, which would be formally the literal translation. This change was motivated by the need to add the aspect of impunity and institutional violence to the definition of the concept in Latin America. Under the influence of the Latin American usage of “feminicidio”, many contemporary Anglo-Saxon academics switched to “feminicide”.

¹³ “los roles de género estaban absolutamente incorporados en la dominación política” (Matamala, 63).

¹⁴ “El querer saber se parece a la rebeldía”. Julieta Kirkwood was a Chilean sociologist, political scientist, professor, and feminist activist from the 20th century.

Following Lagarde's motivation, this thesis will address the phenomenon as "femicide", adding emphasis to the structural aspect of this extreme form of gender violence.

The Chilean Network against Violence towards Women (RED)¹⁵ publishes an annual report in which the statistics of cases concerning violence against women in Chile are discussed. In this file, violence against women is considered structural and imbedded in a patriarchal system, that is connected to other structural forms of domination. They mention the "cultural colonial matrix" and the capitalistic neoliberal method of production as lying at the base of the existing cultural and social hierarchies (7). This connection between different systems of domination and suppression is also present in the concept of "extractivism", which is frequently referred to in current feminist movements in Latin America. This idea refers to the capitalist exploitation of the earth, of women and of racialized population groups, leading to a patriarchization of territories, extreme violence or sexual exploitation and structural racism.

The RED emphasizes that feminicides come forth out of power relations that are present in society and that legitimize violence against women to maintain masculine privileges (23). In the contextualization of the term, it is crucial to understand that the perpetrators are ordinary men, rather than pathological men, whose cultural idea is that they own the female body and life (4). Feminicides "correspond to the most extreme expression of a system of domination that exercises structural violence over bodies of women"¹⁶ (2019, 4).

To include all types of violence directed at women, and not just limit the meaning to those who end in the actual killing of a woman, the RED states that a more inclusive name would be femicide violence. Another important note on the data on feminicides in Chile is that two large categories still remain invisible and unnoticed. Suicide as a direct consequence of mental or physical gendered violence, as well as femicide punishment are mainly absent in the numbers. This latter category refers to the killing of those loved by a woman, through which the perpetrator means to mentally punish the woman.

Out of the data that the RED gathered, it can be concluded that femicide impacts women and girls of all ages, and that 77% of the crimes are committed by an (ex-)partner. This shows that most of the femicide crimes are to be placed within a domestic context, perpetrated by close contacts of the victim. The RED denounces the misrepresentation of these crimes, when they are presented as a crime out of love, passion or jealousy. By doing so, domestic feminicides are naturalized.

In the table below we find a list of the feminicides in Chile in a domestic context per year in the period of 2010 to 2020. The first column presents the official number of murders of women gathered by the RED, the second column are the data collected by the governmental institution

¹⁵ "Red Chilena contra la Violencia hacia las Mujeres". Unless otherwise specified, all citations stem from the 2020 report.

¹⁶ "Este tipo de agresión [femicidio] corresponde a la expresión más extrema de un sistema de dominación que ejerce violencia estructuralmente sobre los cuerpos de las mujeres." (RED 2019, 4)

SernamEG (National Women’s and Gender Equality Service). The column on the right shows the number of attempted feminicides. The row of 2020 refers to the first semester.

As can be noticed, there is no substantial change in the amount of feminicides over the past ten years. This is a significant proof that the promulgation of the Chilean law on domestic violence (law 20066) in 2005, and its extension through the law on femicide (law 20480) of 2010, did not suffice in practice to decrease the number of feminicides. This falls under the term ‘social femicide’, following the Heinrich Böll Stiftung: “[it] refers to the role of governments and societies in places where women are allowed to die because of misogynist attitudes, sexist laws or social institutions” (5).

TABLA 1.
Femicidios consumados y frustrados entre 2010 - 2020

Año	Red Chilena	Sernameg	Frustrados*
2010	65	49	
2011	48	40	87
2012	44	34	82
2013	55	40	76
2014	58	40	103
2015	60	45	112
2016	55	34	129
2017	69	43	115
2018	58	42	121
2019	63	46	109
2020**	21	19	60

*Datos disponibles corresponden a contexto intrafamiliar
**Datos del primer semestre

FUENTE: Elaboración propia en base al registro de femicidios de la Red Chilena contra la Violencia hacia las Mujeres y datos del Servicio Nacional de la Mujer y Equidad de Género

Sexual violence

In their performance, LasTesis explicitly accuses the sexual violence that women in Chile daily confront. According to the statistics of the RED, in 2019 there were 4113 police reports on violations, and another 13.837 crimes related to sexual abuse (on a population of 18,95 million people in 2019). Research shows that in these cases 88,4% of the victims are women and 39,9% are minors. This total number coincides with 49 sexual aggressions a day. Estimations of the RED and other independent institutions that study gender violence, OCAC¹⁷ for instance, expand this number to 150 daily sexual crimes. The report reveals alarming data on sexual crimes: there has been no decrease in the number of cases from 2013 to 2018. Furthermore, the number of 2018 broke the records compared to the last decade.

An important aspect to look into with respect to sexual violence is the idea of compulsory heterosexuality that serves as a motivation for sexual harassers. The Annual Report on Human Rights of Gender and Sexual Diversity of Movilh¹⁸, has notice of 698 sexual abuses of individuals identifying as LGBTQI+ in 2018, which is the highest number in the past 17 years.

¹⁷ Observatorio Contra el Acoso Callejero

¹⁸ Informe Anual de Derechos Humanos de la Diversidad Sexual y de Género del Movilh

As will be discussed in the following paragraphs, the institutionalisation of sexual violence leads to stigmatisation, fear of reliving the moment, revictimization and little information on official institutions that help victims, which altogether makes that many sexual aggressions remain under the radar. Because of the lack of provided information, violent acts are not recognised as violations by the victims or their surroundings.

Institutional violence

Institutional violence against women stems from a patriarchal framework and is produced and reproduced by the state and its apparatus. It can be found in measures, laws, public policies, etc. that fail to protect women from gender specific violence, or even provoke violations of women's rights. The lack of public policies to protect women on a daily basis, violence committed by police and state officers, misogyny acts within the judicial power and the lack of access to fundamental rights (RED, 49) are all signs that violence has been institutionalized in Chilean society. Also, many Latin American states, including Chile, fail to meet the demands and principles of international treaties that fight violence against women like CEDAW and the Convention of Belém do Pará (1994).

Following the Social Outbreak, state repression and police violence increased, which also meant more complaints of sexual abuse by official authorities. According to the INDH (National Institute for Human Rights¹⁹), 3 out of 10 women testified of some type of sexual violence, comparing to 1 out of 10 men that were arrested. The RED states that female, racialised, young or non-heterosexual individuals in particular were targeted during the protests. Testimonies of arrested individuals during the Social Outbreak, tell how the official procedures were accompanied by unwanted touching, revision of cavities, the obligation to undress and squat and threats of rape and harassment. In addition, lesbian women encountered hate and bullying along the physical violations. This demonstrates that the motivation behind these violent acts is based on maintaining male power and heteronormative patriarchal role patterns.

The RED also pays attention to the misogyny that exists within the judicial power in Chile. Machista prejudices disadvantaging women, the neglect in judicial processes of violated women and the lack of a gender education for police and state officers (RED, 52) explain why many cases concerning violence against women remain unsolved. Again, the number of cases without following up increased significantly during the Social Outbreak.

There are many structural obstacles that women face when starting a trial against their violator. First of all, sexuality or gender is not a topic that is taken into account in the investigation of the case. This means that the option of a crime motivated by gendered hate is not considered, and thus not a key element in the inquiry, leading to false assumptions and wrong sentencing for lack of evidence or motive. In addition, the processes tend to be long and exhaustive, lasting 947 days on average in 2019. Of all cases that were started, only 24,6% led to a judicial procedure, and in only 7,7% of the cases the perpetrator was actually sentenced. Thus, women end up in a situation where their charges are underestimated and they instead of their perpetrator

¹⁹ Instituto Nacional de Derechos Humanos, of Chile

are criminalized. As the authors of the report on violence against women state, the existing sexual hegemony –that centralizes a heterosexual and phallogocentric perspective– places the responsibility on women, without dealing with the structural misogynistic nature of society.

In sum, this shows that there is no frame for structural gendered violence in Chilean jurisdiction. Women in Chile feel highly demotivated to act upon their violation, and get little support in this fight. It is notable that in most of the cases that eventually were met with a correct judgement, it was the family of the victim and feminist organisations that demanded justice instead of state institutions.

Another noteworthy element of institutional violence is the poorly organized access to health services for women. Sexual health and reproductive rights in particular are problematic, with 74% of Chilean women having difficulty to obtain birth control, according to a survey by Corporación Miles. In a study on gynaecological and obstetrical violence²⁰, it turned out that the majority of the interviewed women (67%) encountered some type of violence during one of their visits at the gynaecology department. The RED states that, in this climate, women’s “emotional, sexual and physical health is permanently affected” (60).

The media also play a role in the reproduction of misogynistic ideas. When reporting on feminicides, it is not unusual that this violence against women is represented in a sensationalist and stereotypical way. The focus on what women did to provoke the murderer, instead of addressing the question ‘why does a man murder a woman?’ augments society’s tolerance towards violence against women. This type of narration, which spreads disinformation and normalizes gender-based violence, increasingly meets online protest. LasTesis serves as an excellent example in this respect, trying to put the emphasis on the other –female– side of the story.

Violence on racialised women

When discussing feminicide, it is crucial to address racism as well, which is very present in Chile. The RED emphasizes that many, if not all, Latin American nations were built on racist structures, that live through in the current society. Indigenous people were considered inferior during colonial times, and later racialized bodies were made invisible. The systematic and institutional inequality that indigenous people in Chile still face at present-day makes indigenous women more vulnerable to extreme violence. In this respect, it is important to adopt an intersectional perspective, as the RED also underlines, to be able to treat all women according to their specific condition and circumstances.

The file reports on a higher percentage of violence against rural or indigenous women. Because state institutions are absent in these communities, there is more poverty, a lower grade of schooling and more unpunished violence. The RED emphasizes the need for a policy that takes

²⁰ Survey handed out by the Collective against Gynaecological and Obstetrical Violence (‘Colectiva contra la Violencia Ginecológica y Obstétrica’, Valparaíso, Chile).

into account the specific situation and the role of cultural belonging of indigenous women to actively counter discrimination.

Through their intersectionally disadvantaged position in society, sexual dissidents, racialised and disabled women encounter more gender violence, as the study of the RED reveals. The recent decision of the Constitutional Court in refusing to recognize the marriage of a lesbian couple (in September 2020), illustrates the conservative politics in current Chile, discriminating against people who deviate from the heteronormative sexual identity.

The RED concludes their report on gender violence in Chile articulating “the lack of state instruments to register, visualize and, in consequence, implement effective public policies to prevent, repair and eradicate violence against women”²¹ (70). To compensate for this governmental failure, social and feminist organizations take up a fundamental role in developing instruments to “name and denaturalize the violence, while setting up concrete actions to eliminate this injustice”²² (70). The “violador” movement perfectly fits that role.

Abortion

Like in the greater part of Latin American countries, the relation between Chile and abortion can be called problematic. Although approximately 60.000 to 70.000 abortions²³ occur every year in the country, the large majority of them still take place in a clandestine context.

In 1931 the Health Code legally permitted therapeutic abortion in Chile. However, Pinochet’s regime abolished this legal frame in 1989. It was not until 2017, under former President Michelle Bachelet, that a law that decriminalised abortion was promulgated. Up until today, this law permits abortion in the following cases: when the life of the pregnant woman is at risk, when chances are low that the foetus will survive the pregnancy, and when the pregnancy is a consequence of rape. In this latter case, abortion is only allowed in the first 12 weeks of pregnancy, and when the mother is under 14 years old, this period is extended to 14 weeks.

In 2018, President Sebastian Piñera introduced new rules concerning the abortion law, reinforcing existing barriers for women to access abortion. The reform allowed private hospitals (and not only individual doctors) to refuse to provide abortions under a ‘conscientious objection’, and furthermore the former necessity to argue this choice was withdrawn. According to Human Rights Watch, this creates obstacles for women wanting to abort, especially in rural areas, when their local hospital does not terminate pregnancies.

²¹ “la falta de herramientas del Estado para registrar, visibilizar y, en consecuencia, implementar políticas públicas efectivas para la prevención, reparación y erradicación de la violencia contra mujeres.” (RED, 70)

²² “las organizaciones sociales y feministas han cumplido un rol fundamental, no sólo a través de la necesaria denuncia, sino también construyendo instrumentos propios que permitan nombrar esta violencia, desnaturalizarla y levantar acciones concretas para eliminarla.” (70)

²³ Data of Instituto Chileno de Medicina Reproductiva (Chilean Institute of Reproductive Medicine)

Analysis performance *Un violador en tu camino*

The contextual framework on LasTesis and *Un violador en tu camino* already mentioned the collective's denunciation of the rape culture, which is permeated with a patriarchal, machista and heteronormative vision that nourishes structural violence on women. In the following sections, the claims and characteristics of the *violador* movement will be covered more in depth. The song is funded on feminist academic work and makes many references to specific circumstances in Chile.

Lyrics, choreography and dress code

The lyrics, dance moves and clothing provide the spectators with numerous elements that show a direct link with the Chilean context and gender-based violence in Latin America. However, the performance had enough appeal to be re-staged in other contexts, in various corners around the world. The reinterpretations remained close to the original: in most cases, the lyrics were literally translated, and sometimes an alternative last verse was added. In an interview with the Chilean academic magazine *Nomadías*, LasTesis explained that it was important for them to incorporate many different ideas on sexual violence, while still relying on straightforward language and moves, so that it would be easy to sing and dance along for a large majority of women and sexual dissidents (335). In the analysis that follows, it becomes clear that sometimes the symbolism is very concrete, referring to specific situations in Chile, whilst other examples can be seen in a broader context.

UN VIOLADOR EN TU CAMINO²⁴

El patriarcado es un juez
que nos juzga por nacer,
y nuestro castigo
es la violencia que NO ves.

El patriarcado es un juez
que nos juzga por nacer,
y nuestro castigo
es la violencia que YA ves.

Es femicidio.
[Place hands behind the head, squat up and down]
Impunidad para mi asesino.
[Repeat movement above]
Es la desaparición.
[Repeat movement above]
Es la violación.
[Repeat movement above]

A RAPIST IN YOUR PATH²⁵

Patriarchy is our judge
That imprisons us at birth
And our punishment
Is the violence you DON'T see.

Patriarchy is our judge
That imprisons us at birth
And our punishment
Is the violence you CAN see.

It's femicide.
[Place hands behind the head, squat up and down]
Impunity for my killer.
[Repeat movement above]
It's our disappearances.
[Repeat movement above]
It's rape!
[Repeat movement above]

²⁴ Original lyrics, as it was written by LasTesis-collective in their manifest *Quemar el miedo*.

²⁵ English translation featured in the Women's March at the White House, where *Un violador en tu camino* was performed in 2020, organized by the Women's Rights Network: <https://womensmarch.com/2020-dance>

[Run in place, but without lifting feet from the ground; move forearms up and down in sync with the feet]
Y la culpa no era mía, ni dónde estaba ni cómo vestía.
X4

El violador eras tú.
[Extend LEFT arm straight out in front of you, pointing]
El violador eres tú.
[Repeat movement above]
Son los pacos,
[Use LEFT arm to point behind you]
Los jueces,
[Use LEFT arm to point in front of you]
El estado,
[Raise arms, pointing in circle around the head]
El presidente.
[Cross forearms above the head]

[Use LEFT arm and pump a closed fist]
El Estado opresor es un macho violador. X2
El violador ERAS tú.
[Extend left arm straight out in front of you, pointing]
El violador ERES tú.
[Repeat movement above]

[Cup LEFT hand around mouth to amplify shouting]
Duerme tranquila, niña inocente,
sin preocuparte del bandolero,
que por tu sueño dulce y sonriente
vela tu amante carabinero.

El violador eres tú. X4
[Extend LEFTt arm straight out in front of you, pointing]

[March in place, but without lifting feet from the ground; move forearms up and down in sync with the feet]
And it's not my fault, not where I was, not how I dressed.
X4

And the rapist WAS you
[Extend LEFT arm straight out in front of you, pointing]
And the rapist IS you
[Repeat movement above]
Its the cops,
[Use LEFT arm to point behind you]
It's the judges,
[Use LEFT arm to point in front of you]
It's the system,
[Raise arms, pointing in circle around the head]
It's The president.
[Cross forearms above the head forming an X]

[Use LEFT arm and pump a closed fist]
This oppressive state is a macho rapist. X2
El violador ERAS tú.
[Extend LEFT arm straight out in front of you, pointing]
El violador ERES tú.
[repeat movement above]

[Cup LEFT hand around mouth to amplify shouting]
Sleep calmly, innocent girl
Without worrying about the bandit,
Over your dreams smiling and sweet,
Watches your loving cop.

El violador eres tú. X4
[Extend LEFTt arm straight out in front of you, pointing]

Structural nature

As the title reveals, the song addresses sexual abuse and rape. When reading or watching the performance, it becomes clear that the criticism has a structural nature. LasTesis underlines the patriarchal climate that gives rise to violence on women, by explicitly pointing to the role of institutions that create this climate, like the state and the police. As the collective expresses in their most recent manifest (*Quemar el miedo*, 2021), “when we talk about violence, we always imagine it to be systematic and in multiple areas”²⁶ (124).

²⁶ “Cuando hablamos de violencia, siempre la pensamos de forma sistemática y en múltiples ámbitos.” (LasTesis 2021, 124).

The first sentence, “patriarchy is our judge” talks about patriarchal injustice: society is structured according to a masculine perspective, following Marco Ambrosi de la Cadena. Power relations that are inherent to current society were formed alongside a set of patriarchal norms and values. A society that relies on masculine knowledge production, insensitive to the subjectivities of feminized bodies, adversely affects the social situation of women. As LasTesis illustrates, women and sexual dissidents, as well as gender-based violence, are judged through a male gaze, without seriously considering the female experience. Ambrosi de la Cadena explains that “the lack of an adequate interpretation of marginalized experiences unleashes a coercive and violent society”²⁷ (584). It is in this sense that LasTesis denounces the impunity of perpetrators.

This is in line with how the RED contextualizes the annual numbers of cases of abuse, rape, violence or discrimination against women. As previously discussed, the RED demonstrates that institutional violence is produced and reproduced by the state and its apparatus. The performing women literally point –with their moves and lyrics– at the “cops”, the “judges”, the “state” and the “president” as the culprits. They demonstrate against the machista system and culture, rather than singling out specific cases and individuals.

The repeated sentence “the rapist is you” denotes resistance against cultural ideas and people’s behaviour in general. “You” in this sense, is to be interpreted as the whole of society and the norms and values it produces, that are present in every single person. The RED also emphasizes that perpetrators are ordinary men that internalize the cultural idea of ownership over the female body (4). Martin & Shaw argue that this sentence in the performance “presents a systemic abuse of women’s bodies by a patriarchal apparatus” (4).

In her analysis of the *violador* performance, Kenia Ortiz Cadena sustains that “the structures of patriarchal power have created a subalternity that involves women, diverse or dissident bodies, and in particular black and indigenous women and their racialized bodies”²⁸ (277-278). The oppressive state LasTesis sings about, stems from a system of patriarchal and colonial powers. Through their performance, they aim to expose this injustice –the marginalized position of women and gender-specific violence that comes with it (Ortiz Cadena, 281). According to Claudia Montero, the phrase “this oppressive state is a macho rapist” leaves an open invitation to profoundly revise masculinity and examine how it impacts women.

The structural nature also lies in the collective identity of the movement: women and sexual dissidents feel empowered because of the feeling of not being alone. LasTesis argues that society considers the problem to be individual, and this causes people to remain silent about experiences of abuse. But in the context of the performance people realise that it is a social problem, they say, requiring a structural approach (340). In another interview with La Tercera,

²⁷ “la falta de una interpretación adecuada de las experiencias marginalizadas desencadena en una sociedad coercitiva y violenta” (Ambrosi de la Cadena, 584).

²⁸ “las estructuras de poder patriarcal han creado una subalteridad [*sic*] que involucra a las mujeres, a los cuerpos diversos o disidentes, y con mayor acento a las mujeres negras e indígenas, racializando sus cuerpos” (Kenia Ortiz Cadena, 277-278).

LasTesis is optimistic about the force of a collective mass to outweigh individuality, and in this way destroy current power relations.

Reappropriation of body

Within this collective identity, every single body participating is also represented in the collective body: a joint re-claim and resignification of the female body is expressed through the performance. As LasTesis explains in the interview with *Nomadías*, their bodies function as “instruments of resistance and struggle” (333). Martin & Shaw talk about a double standard regarding bodies: a violent crime against the female body is considered a minor and private occasion, whereas violence on men is located in the public space and therefore more visible. Taking the female body to the public sphere, and thus “situating the crime of rape as a major, a general and a public phenomenon” (Martin & Shaw, 4) in this respect is an act of resistance, as LasTesis would agree.

LasTesis attempts to supersede the construction of the female body as an object. Instead of being solely “subjugated”, the body in the performance is also “resistant” (Martin & Shaw, 7), occupying public space and opposing to the ‘natural order’ that subordinates it. In this sense, the performance is liberating and a significant event in the reappropriation of the female body.

Invisibility & impunity

Interesting is the shift that takes place between the first and the second verse: the lyrics go from “the violence you DON’T see” to “the violence you CAN see”. Hardly noticeable, this change adds nuance and strengthens the message. In the first verse, the focus lies on the invisibility of (sexual) assaults on women in Chilean society. As discussed in the section on violence in the Latin American context, many crimes and violent acts remain under the radar. There is no legal, political, societal or cultural frame for structural gender-specific violence, concluded RED. The second verse then, concentrates on the inability of society and politics to deal with the underlying issues that sustain this violent climate. A patriarchal societal framework allows society to turn a blind eye and legitimize violent acts. This message is reinforced by the blindfolds the marching women wear.

At the same time, LasTesis denounces the “naturalization of gender-based violence”, observes Montero (7). The collective emphasizes that this violence IS present and visible, as feminist movements have always been making clear, and they appeal for an alert and engaged attitude to detect it. Recognition is the first step towards transforming society.

The fact that *Un violador en tu camino* grew into a mass mobilization gives the event a high visibility in the public space. This contrasts sharply with the silence some victims (or their families) encounter, following rape or abusive acts. LasTesis states in the interview with La Tercera that they hoped to break “social myths surrounding rape” –in this way acknowledging sexual violence as a complex societal problem, so that impunity for perpetrators can be tackled. One of the main goals of LasTesis in this respect is to break the ‘pact of silence’, which hinders and discourages women to talk about their experiences and increases stigmatisation. According

to Martin & Shaw, “the performance plays on a central juxtaposition of rape culture, that of invisibility on the one hand, and spectacle or performance on the other” (6).

Victim blaming

The collective also focuses on the issue of victim blaming, as they chant “it’s not my fault, not where I was, not how I dressed”. As could be read in the RED file, in many of the cases of gender-based violence in Chile, the crime is not acknowledged as a crime, or very much minimized, and the responsibility is laid on the victims. Again, it is not against individuals that the song protests, but against a misogynist set of values. The lack of attention, open debate and campaigns to raise public awareness increases essentialist ideas, stereotypes or biases that trigger violent behaviour. In an interview with El País, LasTesis commented that the idea behind these lyrics was for women to liberate themselves from guilt feelings, from being the victim and simultaneously from being the culprit. On social media, this specific sentence gave rise to a large number of testimonies, filling in the place, their age and what they were wearing at the moment of abuse. This again visualizes the scope of sexual assaults and raises questions on the disproportionality with which women or sexual dissidents suffer, LasTesis tells.

The dress code of night club clothes reinforced their denunciation of victim blaming. The visual message was strong: everyone should be able to wear and behave as they please, and this should never be considered an incitement to abuse.

The discourse of victim blaming is also present in the way the media covers feminicides or cases of gender-specific violence. The RED analysed that the focal point in reporting largely remains the victim, communicating every sensational aspect of the crime, often full of personal data and images of the victim. For LasTesis this exemplifies the “hegemonic, socio-cultural narrative”, which constructs a “constant re-victimization” (339), the collective explains in the magazine *Nomadías*.

It is this type of narrative, reaction or invisibility that normalizes gender-based violence, as an individual problem, or as a female responsibility. This atmosphere leads to fear to talk and to the feeling of being censored and increases misunderstanding and a lack of acknowledgment on various levels. Retaking the public space is in this sense a very liberating move, to reclaim the sphere from which women were excluded historically, and “position themselves politically” to create an “alternative narrative that counters the imposed hegemonic narrative”²⁹ (Ortiz Cadena, 278).

Carabineros

The *carabineros* play a special role in the *violador* performance. The title, for example, is a direct allusion to the famous slogan used by the *carabineros*: “a friend in your path” is twisted into “a rapist in your path”. With this, LasTesis puts the spotlight on the gender-based violence committed by the police or other state institutions. The “violador” song is satirically inspired

²⁹ “se posicionan políticamente [...] mostrando así una narración alternativa a la hegemónicamente impuesta” (Ortiz Cadena, 278).

by an anthem for the *carabineros* stemming from the dictatorial period, *Orden y Patria*. LasTesis entirely copied the last verse: a lullaby for little girls by the police, who guarantee to offer protection. Putting these words in this new ironic context, they denote the perversity between what the police is expected to do, create security for everyone, and the reality of excessive use of violence by police officers. At the same time LasTesis draws attention to –and inverts– the image of women and girls that is depicted in the anthem of *carabineros*: “passive, fragile and devoted to love” (Montero, 7).

The squats incorporated into the choreography are a reference to the practice of the police to make arrested people squat, often undressed. As discussed above, this humiliating practice is strongly gendered, since the majority of people who are confronted with this are women or sexual dissidents. This direct connection with the recent Social Outbreak in Chile, and the following harsh repression (with various problematic cases reported by HRW) makes explicit the “denunciation of political rape and humiliation” (LasTesis in *Nomadías*, 335).

The blindfolds as well remind of the numerous eye injuries of social protestors, caused by police officers and military forces to prevent further social riots. The performance alludes to the recent events, during which various eye injuries were identified by HRW, and at the same time brings under attention that this has happened before.

In the aftermath of the performances, the tension between LasTesis and the *carabineros* has only been rising. The state police accused the collective of inciting to violence against the police. In *Nomadías*, LasTesis said: “they try to blame us for all the evils [...]. as artists, they are trying to censor, intimidate and violate us, but it is also violent towards all women and dissidents with whom we are fighting”³⁰ (332). The tense relationship underlines the structural nature of the conflict and of the demand of feminist movements. The *violador* protests are viewed through a male gaze and the patriarchal institutions fail to respond adequately, by starting the conversation. For LasTesis, this reaction points once again to the social inferiority of women, a “symbolic violence that has been hidden throughout the centuries”³¹ (340). For LasTesis, the repression of *Un violador en tu camino*, is proof of the patriarchization of society and is a confirmation of the need to “deconstruct hegemonic masculinities that are highly toxic” (341).

Overall, *Un violador en tu camino* makes a strong performance with a wide societal impact and an impressive and spectacular image. It de-individualises gender-based violence, redefines women as political subjects, creates a collective sense and establishes the body as a territory of resistance (Ortiz Cadena, 287). Furthermore, Lola Proaño Gómez observes that the analysis illustrates that the denunciation in this feminist protest intersects with the claims of the Social Outbreak: resistance against institutional power relations (12).

³⁰ “Están tratando de culparnos de todos los males [...], como artistas, nos están tratando de censurar, de amedrentar, de vulnerar, pero también es violento con todas las mujeres y personas de la disidencia con las que estamos en esta lucha juntas y juntos” (LasTesis in *Nomadías*, 332).

³¹ “violencia simbólica y esa violencia es la que ha estado a través de los siglos oculta” (LasTesis in *Nomadías*, 340).

Trajectory of women's movements

Un violador en tu camino is part of the long trajectory of women's movements in Latin America, and therefore builds on the advances, claims and struggles of previous feminist manifestations. Lola Proaño Gómez describes this as scars that remain from the dialogue between social power relations and the resistance that aroused against them (16). In this way, every feminist movement creates an opening for new subjectivities, realities and changes, that can be picked up in further struggles. LasTesis' purpose can be considered as a "synthesis of 100 years of feminist movements in Chile" (6), according to Montero, because it translates feminist theory into a universal message, and from there on it critically analyzes present society (6).

The Chilean feminist strikes of the 'Mayo Feminista' in 2018 and the protests against the educational reform of 2011 constitute this trajectory (Martin & Shaw, 3), together with earlier women's groups. Proaño Gómez also sees a clear connection between the claims of *Un violador* and recent movements of *feminismos populares*. They adopt a critical stance towards the financial, institutional and labor model of capitalism (8). The *violador* movement thus incorporates the social claims that are also expressed in the mass mobilizations during the Social Outbreak.

Un violador also grew from and interacts with *NiUnaMenos*, an Argentinean manifestation that rapidly spread across the world. The two maintain an interaction and express support for each other –LasTesis attended a strike for the legalization of abortion, one of the key demands of NiUnaMenos, in Buenos Aires for instance. Therefore, it is useful to take a glance at this movement, in order to further contextualize the analysis of the *violador* manifestations. Since *Un violador en tu camino* is a recent phenomenon, academic work on this topic is rather limited.

The *NiUnaMenos* movement started in June 2015 in Argentina, following the murder on the 14-year-old Chiara Paez. The campaign was set up by a collective consisting of female artists, journalists and academics, and could soon count on wide support by people protesting against femicides, sexual harassment, the gender pay gap, sexual objectification, denial of transgender rights and the criminalization of abortion. The protests grew internationally and on the worldwide March strikes, organized in 55 countries, *NiUnaMenos* was frequently mentioned. The organizers were pleased to see how this massive mobilization inspired different struggles and protests all around the world: *NiUnaMenos* became part of the common language within women's movements.

Gago explains that feminism in Latin America used to reside mostly in the academic, institutional sphere. The message of *NiUnaMenos*, however, was loudly repeated by a large and diverse group of people. As Marisa Revilla Blanco states, this movement gave way to a diversification of feminist identities (52). The author sustains that the fourth 'wave' of feminism in Latin America is in this way characterized by the collaboration of different feminisms: popular, indigenous and decolonial feminism, as well as ecofeminism, queer feminism and transfeminism, amongst others. Although plurality and diversity form the core of Latin

American feminism, there should always remain an awareness of “different power dynamics on the inside” of feminist movements (65). Leaving room for multiple visions and identities is crucial in order to establish sustainable and inclusive feminisms.

In the article, Revilla Blanco provides two insights that are relevant in the *violador* case as well. First, the recent digitalization of activism, of which both #NiUnaMenos and *Un violador* are an illustration, helps to diversify the message and reach a wider audience. In this way, statements of a campaign receive wider support, leading to a broader political impact. Secondly, by using a cultural activity such as music or street performance, the collective identity is strengthened.

The Argentinian movement is based on intersectionality and transnational connections (Gago 2018, 663). As Gago explains in an interview with social media magazine *HerStories*, *NiUnaMenos* “connects domestic violence, with racist violence, with institutional violence, with violence in workplaces”.

Altogether, in consonance with Sara C. Motta, *NiUnaMenos* is a “multi-layered, inter-generational, multi-institutional and multi-lineage movement” (18). The expansion of feminism to new generations became very visible throughout the marches, having many young women participating. Sciortino puts it nicely when she says that *NiUnaMenos* represents diversity and continuity. The crowd consists of students, adolescents and seniors, people of different societal classes, political parties or ethnic descent, in families, alone or as a part of a feminist collective, and different sexual and gender identities are present.

Motta describes several key characteristics of *NiUnaMenos* that built bridges for the following feminist manifestations. First, their starting point is a multiple body, instead of individual bodies. As we can read in the collective’s manifest: “we say not one woman less ... with shared pain, and with a concern for the urgent necessity of starting coordinated actions that attack the problem, starting at its origin - machismo culture - and continuing to its ultimate consequence - the battered woman, the murdered woman”³² (14). This points out the structural nature of their denunciation, emphasizing the role of the state in the impunity of the perpetrators: “a culture that devalues, infantilises, sexualises and brutalises women” (18).

Here, the collective body serves as a weapon, following Proaño Gómez, that opposes the norms which produce gendered violence (6). Both in *Un violador* and in *NiUnaMenos*, the body and language are performative, challenging institutional and societal norms, states the author.

Second, they focus on prevention and education strategies to start at the roots of the problem rather than restoring the damage done. A third interesting point is that the movement managed to get different social classes aboard, with an “increasing inclusion of working-class movements” (19). Lastly, the recognition of ancestral knowledge, brought by decolonial, indigenous and black feminism in Latin America, is also reflected in *NiUnaMenos*.

³² Translation by Sara C. Motta: “Feminising our Revolutions: New movements in Latin America offer inspiration and re-enchantment.”

In her analysis on social movements, Silvina Sciortino defines ‘moments of opening’ in the history of women’s movements in Latin America. These moments function as triggers that stimulate others, transcend themselves as a movement and, in this way, transform societies. The movement had a broader impact that transcended the initial intentions. New alliances, a renewed debate on strategies to obtain rights, invention of a new language (the hashtag on social media), reclaiming public spaces and relying on earlier slogans or women’s movements to address the historical and structural nature of the problem show that *NiUnaMenos* is a moment of opening (46). On social media for instance, #NiUnaMenos and #VivasNosQueremos was widely shared and soon was slightly alternated to focus on women in specific situations: #NosQueremosPlurinacionales, #NiUnaIndígenaMenos, etc.

NiUnaMenos and *Un violador* both rely on the occupation of public spaces: the streets and social media. When the collective body disposes of patriarchal norms, an alternative and safe space is created (Proaño Gómez, 10). It is by being present, and publicly denouncing hegemonic ideas, that lived experiences of precariousness or subordination can be acknowledged (14). “The body enters in a dialogue with the public space, as a way to relocate the body as an instrument to battle with”³³ LasTesis explains in *Nomadías* (333).

In conclusion, *Un violador* is not a single event, but comes forth out of centuries of feminist struggles. In turn, the movement will inspire others to build further on their standpoints and impact and transform society into a more just place.

Academic background

As mentioned before, LasTesis’ starting point was to diffuse academic work on sexual violence and femicide to a broader public, “in different languages so that it reaches diverse audiences”³⁴ (LasTesis in *Nomadías*, 334). The writing of their performance, thus, was preceded by a thorough investigation, and critical adaptation to the Chilean context. “The artistic process departs from an extensive research of studying, creating, materializing”³⁵, they explain in an interview with Fundación Rosa Luxemburgo. This section focuses on two authors who have contributed elaborately to the debate on –and relationship between– patriarchal society, gender-based violence and capitalist accumulation.

³³ “el cuerpo dialogando con el espacio público como una forma de reposicionar tu cuerpo como una herramienta de batalla donde la calle es un gran escenario” (LasTesis in *Nomadías*, 333).

³⁴ “a través de distintos lenguajes que permitan también llegar a distintas audiencias. (LasTesis in *Nomadías*, 334).

³⁵ “el proceso artístico parte de una gran investigación, de estudiar, crear, materializar” (LasTesis in Fundación Rosa Luxemburgo).

Rita Segato

LasTesis repeatedly stated that their work was inspired by the academic work of Rita Segato³⁶. In her essay compilation *The Elementary Structures of Violence*³⁷ (2003), she develops a model that reflects on the aetiology of violence.

The anthropologist states that the phenomenon of violence stems from the unstable cycle between two axes. The horizontal axis represents all relations of allies and competition that form a contract between equals. The vertical axis refers to the premodern relations of social status, based on markers that differentiate people and create a hierarchy. These markers are “constructed and indelible” (253). According to Segato, as they stem from two different time periods, there is a tense relation between the two systems of contract and status, and this forms an inconsistency in modernity.

The two infect each other, but they do not reproduce themselves automatically. Considering gender for instance, women are the ‘other’ in terms of status, but share the same rights as men in terms of the ideological contract. So, law does not coincide with cognitive habits and practices. This double role disrupts both systems, so a violent input is the only way to maintain the existing order. Within gender relations, this is where male dominance comes from, according to Segato.

Segato emphasizes that the subject that imposes violence is a person who is centrally positioned in both systems, in protection of his position of power. Femicide is a perfect allegory for Segato’s model: fraternities re-establish their status by affirming the subaltern place of women in society. Women, as well as ethnic minorities for instance, occupy a hybrid position in this double system, and this creates a violent climate against them.

As long as there is a tension between the two systems, violent dominance over defined ‘others’ will exist. Therefore, it is crucial to understand that “societal violence in the light of a symbolic, patriarchal economy forces us to rethink solutions and redirect pacification policies towards the sphere of intimacy”³⁸ (Segato, 259).

By analysing gender-based violence within a theoretical framework, Segato demystifies violence. LasTesis seeks to deconstruct the idea of a “violator as a person that acts to satisfy a sexual desire”, as they explain in the interview with Fundación Rosa Luxemburgo, and intend to place the violence in its complex context of power relations. Martin & Shaw affirm that violent crimes on women are often “associated with desire, passion, and with what is private” (4). It is this “patriarchal myth of female disobedience and punishment” (4) that is denounced

³⁶ Argentine-Brazilian feminist anthropologist, specialized in gender violence and the relationship between gender, racism and colonialism, amongst other subjects.

³⁷ Original edition in Spanish: *Las estructuras elementales de la violencia* (2003).

³⁸ “Entender la violencia societaria a partir de una economía simbólica de corte patriarcal nos obliga definitivamente a repensar las soluciones y reencaminar las políticas de pacificación hacia la esfera de la intimidad” (Segato 2003, 259).

in *Un violador*, when they sing that every woman is judged and punished for being a woman and not complying to the hegemonic norms (Martin & Shaw, 4).

Another significant remark of Segato addresses the irrationality of violence committed in public spaces. As LasTesis denotes in their performance, violence in these cases is not personal, but rather anonymous and structural. It is “a structure without a subject” (Segato, 23), because violence on strangers resembles “aggression for aggression’s sake”, by analogy with “l’art pour l’art” (23).

As previously discussed, moral violence comes in many forms. Automatic sexism and racism are imbedded in moral life and are part of unconscious habits, often well-intended. These unbalanced gender relations that are widely perceived as ‘normal’ suggest a naturalization of violence and abuse. This shows once again the structural nature of violence. Segato emphasizes that law and legislation do not have the capacity to change the morals of society (123). As Segato argues, law is supposed to act on the base of equality, but it is the set of principles, values and the hierarchy behind the legislative body that leaves women or ethnic minorities unprotected (137). The system of status affects and transforms the system of contract.

In order to establish equality and well-being for women, an ethical movement is needed to transform the moral and legal sphere. Although the impunity of gender-based violence is often denounced in Latin American feminist groups, like LasTesis, rather than demand extra investment in criminalization, these movements aim to transform the moral behind the law. If re-education is not part of the reforms, law does not represent all women, sexual dissidents, racialized groups or other minorities equally, leaving certain intersections invisible (Segato, 136). Reading Segato elucidates the stance of LasTesis-collective on systematic, societal and cultural change, instead of solely introducing legislative measures. A transformation can never be structural if the underlying set of ideas is not touched upon.

Since law reflects the morality, it is through visualizing human rights, and thus pointing to the discrepancies between the system of contract and of status, that people can adapt morals and values of a society. As was discussed in the previous section, movements like *Un violador* and *NiUnaMenos*, by bringing their violated bodies into the public space, make visible this lack of social dignity, human rights and acknowledgement of lived experiences. It is here that we situate the major importance of social movements.

Silvia Federici

In *Caliban and the Witch* (2004), Silvia Federici examines the relation between the transition from feudalism to capitalism on the one hand, and the witch hunt and constant violent climate for women on the other. Investigating capitalism from a feminist perspective, she connects the “expropriation and pauperisation with the permanent attacks on women”³⁹ (22).

³⁹ “¿De qué manera se relacionan la expropiación y la pauperización con el permanente ataque contra las mujeres?” (Federici, 22).

Building on theories by Marx, Foucault and feminist authors, the Federici argues that the mechanism that keeps capitalism alive necessarily separates production from reproduction. Furthermore, capitalism needed to create the sexual division of labour, and maintain it through violence. Her principal argument thus states that the primitive accumulation that capitalism is based upon, forced women into a new social role of exploitation.

Federici focuses on body politics through a feminist lens: the effects capitalism has over female bodies. She demonstrates that the sexual role patterns within capitalist society were constructed, and that they were motivated by the need of work force. Women were banned to the sphere of reproduction, and deviations from this role pattern were embedded in the ideology of the disobedient woman or witch. Disciplining the female body was one of the main aspects of the primitive accumulation, and thus, as Federici states, it is not surprising that the body has always been a central claim of feminists throughout the years. This argument recurs in the *violador* movement, where the body is considered to be the first territory of resistance against structural violence and a submissive position.

Through this analysis, Federici historicizes contemporary tendencies, with respect to violence committed against women. She draws a parallel with the Structural Adjustment Programs, that were increasingly exploitative and often went hand in hand with misogynistic campaigns (18). In this way, Federici contextualizes “the resistance against the SAP’s as “part of a long-lasting battle against privatization and enclosure, not only of common grounds, but also of social relations”⁴⁰ (19).

The author also stresses that the conquest of the feminine body has always played a central role in the process of capitalist accumulation, and this explains the feminization of poverty (32). “Women have paid the highest price for this, with their bodies, their work, their lives”⁴¹, as concluded by Federici (32).

Federici sheds new light on current tendencies when she expounds that “the socio-economic system of capitalism is necessarily linked with racism and sexism, [...] and searches to justify and mystify the contradictions that are embedded in its social relations”⁴² (32). “Hiding the exploitation of women and colonized subjects”⁴³ is one of the recurring strategies of capitalism in this respect (31). By ignoring the experiences of women, sexual dissidents or indigenous peoples amongst others, resistance can be marginalized, and the capitalist ideology can be considered progressive. *Un violador* and other activist, feminist movements attempt to unmask the capitalist system. In their communications and campaigns, LasTesis emphasizes the need of an anti-capitalist vision in order to overcome the systematic denial of precarious lives of women or minorities.

⁴⁰ “la lucha contra el ajuste estructural formaba parte de una larga lucha contra la privatización y el «cercamiento», no sólo de las tierras comunales sino también de las relaciones sociales” (Federici, 19).

⁴¹ “las mujeres han pagado el precio más alto, con sus cuerpos, su trabajo, sus vidas” (Federici, 32).

⁴² “el capitalismo, en tanto sistema económico-social, está necesariamente vinculado con el racismo y el sexismo [...], debe justificar y mistificar las contradicciones incrustadas en sus relaciones sociales” (Federici, 32).

⁴³ “esconder la explotación de las mujeres y los sujetos coloniales” (Federici, 31).

Un violador en tu camino received a wide response from different angles in Latin America. The performance was repeated at 200 instances approximately⁴⁴ in the region alone, “with locations ranging from public squares, parks and Indigenous communities, to schools, workplaces, universities and parliaments” (Martin & Shaw, 5). For LasTesis, the unexpected massive re-staging of their performance in diverse contexts, proves the principal thesis they present: gender-based violence is structural and universal (in *Nomadías*, 335). Oppression is a common theme, they say, that appeals to many people, and in this way constitutes a transnational message. Furthermore, the different interpretations, with adaptations in language or nuance, supersede the original meaning and reinforce their original performance (335).

LasTesis started from an intersectional and inclusive perspective when developing their protest performance. As they wrote on Instagram: “the struggle is against patriarchal, class-biased, racist, heteronormative and transphobic violence, and against its destructing institutions”⁴⁵. The founding activists express themselves with an awareness and sensitivity towards lived experiences that are not their own. In order to spread their message, they encouraged everyone to use, adapt and appropriate the lyrics and dance. By doing so, they go against the patriarchal, vertical way of organization, and adopt a non-hierarchical, horizontal way of working, they explain in *Nomadías* magazine.

This section discusses how *Un violador* takes on an intersectional and inclusive perspective through its actions and communications, and which social identities are involved in the movement. Firstly, from a gender perspective, LasTesis is consistent in its inclusive attitude. In *Quemar el miedo*, the collective clarifies that when they use ‘women’, they refer to every subjectivity that identifies as such. Furthermore, they always address all “women and sexual dissidents”, in order to go against the heteronormative and binary discourse.

As demonstrated throughout this study, one of the ground principles of the movement is the connection between the social and feminist struggle. The structural analysis demands an intersectional approach in transforming the economic, societal and political system. The incorporation of the *violador* performance into the social protests illustrates this: “the future will be feminist or will not be”, is a slogan often read at women strikes. LasTesis in this respect explains that they “are convinced that the feminist demands are transversal in all other demands”⁴⁶ (342 in *Nomadías*). This works the other way around as well, a feminism that does not take into account class aspects will leave people behind. In this way, opponents of neoliberal and patriarchal structures, its capitalist accumulation, and institutionalized politics find strength in their united struggle.

⁴⁴ Data from <https://umap.openstreetmap.fr/es/map/un-violador-en-tu-camino-20192021-actualizado-al-0-394247#10/-33.4990/-70.5226>

⁴⁵ “La lucha es contra la violencia patriarcal, clasista, racista, heteronormativa y transfóbica, y contra sus instituciones nefastas” (LasTesis, Instagram 27/08/20).

⁴⁶ “Estamos convencidas de que las demandas feministas son transversales a todas las demás demandas” (LasTesis in *Nomadías*, 342).

Regarding class, *NiUnaMenos* and *Un violador* demonstrate that feminism has expanded its former elitist, setting to a broader social sphere. Whereas until several years ago feminist demands did not leave the academic world, at present they work transversally through different societal spheres, including the working class (LasTesis in *Nomadías*, 342). Although the four members of LasTesis are, besides being artists, academics or highly educated, their intention is to stimulate embodied knowledge produced by the participating subjects, countering the hierarchical knowledge production (Martin & Shaw, 4).

On the 3rd of December, approximately 10.000 middle-aged women brought a “violador”-interpretation in front of the National Stadium in Santiago. The place is famous for the cruelties that were committed in these buildings during the Pinochet’s dictatorship. In 1973, the stadium served as a centre of detention and torture, where political opponents of the regime were imprisoned and murdered. Through the choice of this location, the elder women aimed to visualize, within the women’s movement against gender violence, the women who were tortured in this concentration camp during the dictatorship.

The performance of “Las Senior” illustrates the intergenerational strength of *Un violador*. The night club clothes of LasTesis were replaced by black clothing, a red or green scarf, and black blindfolds to make reference to the raped and murdered women during Pinochet’s dictatorial regime. As Martin & Shaw affirms, this event stresses the “cross-generational alliance” in which “older generations of Chilean women learn from younger ones whilst ensuring that their historical experiences are remembered” (10). One of the senior organisers states in *La Tercera* that she is thankful for the engaged younger people, who taught her generation about the micro-machismos that underlay society.

The approach of LasTesis was decolonial, on international level as well as on national, communal level. In newspaper interview, the collective states that they explicitly wanted to base their artistic intervention on the academic work of a Latin American philosopher. This brought them to Rita Segato, one of the most distinguished Latin American anthropologists, specialized in decolonial feminism. In the light of hegemonic, western, feminisms, the *violador* movement counteracts neo-colonial tendencies that rely on hierarchies and biases between feminisms. The transnationalization of the movement thus, is in itself a decolonial project, as Martin & Shaw also sustain (8). With the foundations of their performance laying in research of Segato’s theories, the LasTesis collective incorporates criticism on the exclusion of racialised subjectivities into their work.

What is of particular interest here is that *Un violador* does not only act in a decolonial way as a collective, but also as a movement. The song was translated into various Indigenous languages. In Santiago de Chile, for instance, a group of Mapuche women interpreted the performance in Mapudungún⁴⁷. *Un violador* was also re-staged by the women from the Escuela Antisuyu Warmikunu, in Puyo (Ecuador), representing several different nationalities: Kichwa,

⁴⁷ See performance: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2_nvbfGAy38

Shuar, Waorani, Achuar and Shiwiar⁴⁸. These versions bring under attention that the structural denunciation of neo-liberal activities that are linked with patriarchal oppression and extractivism, is to be both feminist and decolonial.

Another noteworthy element when discussing the decoloniality in *Un violador*, is the adoption of concepts that originate in Indigenous feminisms. With a focus on the body as a primary territory of resistance, the idea of body territory is recurring in the movement. As discussed previously, the idea of ‘possession’ –or rather ‘dispossession’– of ‘free’ resources like nature, the female body and reproductive work, are inherent to modernity and neo-liberal, exploitative systems. So, these decolonial feminist claims are also expressed in the “violador”-movement.

In sum, the widespread appeal of the movement on the Latin American continent can be partly explained by the inclusive and adaptable character of the intervention. The choreography, for instance, is simple and easy to copy, which makes it accessible for wheelchair users to participate. The song was translated into French, Mapudungún, Basque, Greek, Arabic and Hindi, amongst others, as well as sign language. These adaptations were enthusiastically encouraged by the collective, as could be read on Instagram: “thank you for taking our work and making it yours”⁴⁹.

Another argument to understand the extensive impact of *Un violador* is content-based. In an opinion piece, LasTesis declared that the extent to which women around the world could identify with the performance did not surprise them, given that their “message transforms into a universal message of violence against women, dissidents, adolescents and children, which has to do with the functioning of modern states as well”⁵⁰ (LasTesis in *The Clinic*). This denunciation of patriarchal structures, that define the modern state, is universal, as Montero sustains: “patriarchy threatens all women in the world with rape, regardless their race, class or educational level”⁵¹ (7). LasTesis’ performance is a case against all types of abuse –“rape, femicide, catcalling”– and the protest accuses every structure that lets this happen (LasTesis in *Fundación Rosa Luxemburgo*).

Like Ortiz Cadena indicates, the performance made gender-based violence visible, and encourages women to “recognize and denounce violence on their own bodies in diverse contexts”⁵² (281). *Un violador* thus constitutes an “intersectional feminism and crosses social, class, ethnic and age boundaries, boundaries of education, privilege and profession” (Martin & Shaw, 5), that manages to unite everyone into a collective body with a common cause.

⁴⁸ See performance: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RQOBQ8nYrH0>

⁴⁹ “Gracias por tomar nuestro trabajo y hacerlo suyo” (LasTesis on Instagram, 27/11/19).

⁵⁰ “No nos sorprende, desde el punto de vista que el mensaje se transforma en un mensaje universal de violencia hacia las mujeres, las disidencias, las adolescentes, los niños, y que tiene que ver con el funcionamiento de los estados modernos también” (LasTesis in *The Clinic*).

⁵¹ “El patriarcado amenaza con la violación a todas las mujeres del mundo, no importa su raza, clase o nivel educativo” (Montero, 7).

⁵² “reconocer y denunciar la violencia experimentada en su propio cuerpo en contextos diversos” (Ortiz Cadena 281).

Synthesis: the dimensions of *Un violador en tu camino*

From the analysis of *Un violador en tu camino*, as it was performed in Chile, seven key characteristics can be deduced. These different dimensions constitute the core of the movement and will serve as a guideline in the comparison with *Un violador* in Spain.

The first dimension has to do with the aspects that can be derived from a literal interpretation of the performance. By transforming into a mass manifestation, the aim of *Un violador* is to render visible the gender-based violence. This is done in two ways: they bring under attention the scale of gender-specific violence and the number of victims, and they point out the underlying patriarchal nature of society. This analysis allows a structural approach. They also address victim blaming through the lyrics and clothing. Important in this respect is that they do not react against individuals, but rather denounce the set of patriarchal and misogynist values that make blaming the victims acceptable. The lyrics and moves also refer explicitly to the direct context in which the first intervention took place: the Social Outbreak in Chile. The *carabineros* in particular play a central role in the performance. In depicting the police and its excessive violence on women, LasTesis targets the institutional violence.

The structural nature of the denunciation expressed in *Un violador* is a second key component of the movement. As demonstrated throughout the analysis, LasTesis does not look at single cases, but rather analyses the systems that form the frame for gender-based violence. They express their criticisms on the patriarchal ideology that still dominates our societies, and pushes women and sexual dissidents in a subordinate position.

The “violador” performances also denounce the neoliberal economic and political system and its institutions. This anti-neoliberalism is a third aspect that is present in the manifestations throughout Latin America. Especially the gender dimension of the system is of interest here. The individualization of women’s emancipation and the increasingly precarious conditions for women on the labour market reinforce women’s vulnerable social position. The primitive accumulation and extractivist practices upon which the capitalist, neoliberal system is built, maintain unequal social relations and therefore need to be incorporated in the feminist analysis.

Un violador en tu camino adopts a decolonial perspective. Discrimination and oppression of feminized or racialized subjectivities are inherently connected to the modern structure of neoliberal capitalism. Therefore, it is crucial that *Un violador* is explicitly decolonial and anti-racist, in order to counter these oppressive structures. Also, the performance was interpreted by various Indigenous collectives, who in this way put emphasis on the extractivist nature of capitalism and patriarchy.

The fifth dimension revolves around the reappropriation of the body. Reclaiming the public space as female actors, means a resignification of the female body. In this way, the body constitutes a way of resistance against the patriarchal violence. Furthermore, the strength of the movement is expressed through the collective body.

Another element worth mentioning is the de-hierarchization of art and of the women's movement. LasTesis explicitly intended to counter the patriarchal, vertically organised systems. The "violador" movement is therefore based on horizontal solidarity and mutual understanding, instead of hierarchies and oppressions.

The last dimension is the intersectionality that shines through every facet of *Un violador*. In their structural analysis of gender-based violence and discrimination, LasTesis combines social, feminist, decolonial and class struggles. Lived experiences and realities, situated knowledge and the idea of multiple social identities are central concepts within the "violador" movement.

Case study: *Un violador en tu camino* – SPAIN

Context

Women's social position and feminism in Spain

In order to analyse how *Un violador en tu camino* was re-staged in Spain, it is necessary to take a look at the historical context. This section will briefly discuss how the social position of women in Spain evolved in the course of the last 40 years. I will also elaborate on gender-based violence and discuss how it is prevented and acted upon.

The dictatorial period under Franco (1936-1975) initiated an anti-feminist motion that left its marks in contemporary Spanish society. The fascist, authoritarian regime depicted women as angels of the house, confining them to the private sphere (Cubells et al., 71) where domestic violence remained invisible. Due to women's status as second-class citizens, the influence of feminist groups was scarce and minimal in this period. So, when in most other European countries the so-called second wave of feminism grew, Spain lagged behind in terms of the impact of feminist movements, awareness of gender equality, and gender-based violence.

At the end of the military regime in 1975, women's groups gained strength and became more present in the public space, claiming a voice in decision-making processes and societal transformation. In the transition to democracy under left-wing administration that followed, feminist issues came on the agenda, which gave rise to a revision of women's citizenship, and the installation of gender equality institutions and policies (Alonso & Lombardo, 78).

This institutionalization of feminism in the 70's-80's was met with concerns about the (neo)liberal co-optation or de-politicization of feminist matters throughout Europe. In Spain, however, partly due to their recent transition to democracy, state feminisms encountered less resistance in settling (Jarty & Batthyány, 363-364).

After the progressive evolutions of the 2000's in Spain, the financial crisis of 2008 initiated various de-democratization processes, Alonso & Lombardo argue, having adverse effects on women's mobilizations. The National Reforms and Stability Programmes had a neoliberal

nature, with adjustments like “cuts to public budgets and welfare policies, deregulation of the labor market, tax increases, liberalizations and privatizations of public services” (Alonso & Lombardo, 82). Since gender equality projects used to fall under non-priority areas and suffered badly from the austerity measures, feminist movements played a vital role in resisting this neo-liberal tendency (82). Following Alonso & Lombardo, the debt crisis also created openings for authoritarian shifts in behaviour of governments. This created a climate with “attacks to women’s sexual and reproductive rights”, a “lack of accountability” on the government’s side, and the “restriction of freedom of expression” (83). This political discourse was counteracted by feminist movements, who ensured a continuing space for contestation. A third process of de-democratization in Spain, commented by Alonso & Lombardo, is political corruption. Again, social and feminist struggles take up a leading role to question power games. Overall, although new progress does not run smoothly, it is shown that feminist mobilizations, have been crucial in protecting women’s rights and social position in the last decade in Spain (85).

As Jarty & Batthyány maintain, in the neoliberal context of both Europe and Latin America, state feminism gradually transforms into a market-based feminism (376). The increasingly precarious labour market, which disproportionately affects women, and ongoing gender inequality stimulates autonomous feminisms to show resistance against neoliberal economic models.

In recent years, a conservative, anti-feminist backlash is arising, as Marcel Obst explains. Anti-gender ideologists have found their way into political parties, like Vox, and are campaigning to cut down acquired women’s or LGBTQI+ rights. This new right focuses in their discourse on protecting men’s rights, reversing victim-perpetrator roles and transphobic statements. Although still being rather marginal, “anti-gender mobilizations in Spain have not only diversified over the last years but have also grown in strength by moving into institutions” (Obst in *Heinrich Böll Stiftung*).

Gender-based violence and legislation

Gender-based violence is one of the most frequent human right violations in Spain, as can be read in the 2018 report of Amnesty International. In 2018, there were 89 victims of feminicides in Spain, according to the statistics of *Femicidio.net*, an independent online platform that studies gender-based violence and organises educational workshops to raise awareness on the issue. 29,5% of them had already filed a complaint against the perpetrator earlier. In 52,8% of the cases, the murder took place in the private sphere, all committed by the (ex)partner. Another noteworthy aspect of the setting of these feminicides is that for 41,6% of the perpetrator the crime was motivated by the feeling of rejection by his partner. This last high number reveals a machista mentality, that places women in a subordinate position and presumes possession over the female body.

The data of 2019 by *Femicidio.net* show that in a significant number of cases the victims and families are not informed on the penalty of the perpetrator. In 18,1% the case closed without further notice.

In 2004, pioneering in Europe, Spain introduced the Law against Gender Violence⁵³. However, this legislative body did not thoroughly include the actions to be taken afterwards, states Amnesty International. It did not provide a framework to follow up the victim, both in terms of trauma, stress and emotional state, as in terms of measures to prevent the violence from happening again. Furthermore, in this law only domestic violence was considered gender-based violence. This meant that violence committed by third parties could not be legally recognised, in this way creating an enormous blind spot. The Convention of Istanbul (2011) was more inclusive: it confronted physical, psychological, sexual and economic violence (Amnesty International). Despite of its creation in 2011, Spain did not ratify the Convention until 2014. Also the State Compact against Gender Violence⁵⁴ (2017) left much to be desired, according to Amnesty International. At present, the Organic Law of Integral Guarantee of Sexual Liberty is being negotiated. This act would put consent and the female experience at the heart, and address revictimization, so it is well received by Amnesty International.

In comparison with other European countries, Spain has one of the highest numbers of denunciations concerning sexual violence. Still, there are many obstacles women encounter in the aftermath of abuse (Amnesty International). The lack of information and public policies makes it difficult for victims to find their way in the legal system to file a complaint. The judicial roadmap differs from region to region and often consists of long and slow processes. Also the victim blaming and revictimization that women encounter during the process creates a disincentive. As a consequence of stigmatization and prejudices the victim's testimony is questioned, and due to the lack of a training on gender-based violence, the used approach is not adequate. Amnesty International therefore advocates for extensive gender education programmes, to reduce biases and discrimination and to raise awareness on this problematic. The lack of data minimalizes the scale of the problem and renders victims invisible. This in turn reinforces the idea of being alone and the fear of disbelief or negation towards their experiences. In this respect, it is the androcentric bias underlying the legal system that reproduces discriminatory practices, as Cubells et al. explain (73). In a patriarchal legal system, violence against women is still often considered a personal or psychological problem, which reinforces stereotypes and bias (88).

Analysis performance *Un violador en tu camino*

In Spain alone, *Un violador en tu camino* has been multiply re-staged in over 40 cities, as data collected by Geochicas show⁵⁵. In this section, I will discuss the most outstanding performances in Spain and compare their focal point with the dimensions of the Chilean intervention as defined in the previous analytical section. This analysis is based on the review of newspaper articles and interviews, social media posts, videos and images of the different interpretations of the *Un violador* performance.

⁵³ Ley 1/2004: Medidas de Protección Integral contra la Violencia de Género

⁵⁴ El Pacto de Estado contra la Violencia de Género

⁵⁵ Data from: https://umap.openstreetmap.fr/es/map/un-violador-en-tu-camino-20192021-actualizado-al-0_394247#7/39.724/-5.757

A first element that caught attention is the role of Latin American expats or migrants in the organization of the *violador* interventions. In Madrid, for instance, Femigrantxs, a feminist collective that works from a migrant perspective, were one of the leading actors in setting up the interventions (Geochicas). On their Facebook page it is clear that they actively support multiple Latin American feminist causes. Another initiative for performance in Madrid was taken by the collective MadridxChile –pronounced as ‘Madrid for Chile’. The tweets from MadridxChile members explicitly speak of a “performance in support of Chilean women”, as presented in the news platform *Público*. Their engagement with *Un violador* therefore is high, but at the same time mainly focused on the solidarity aspect. Also in Valencia the performance was led by an anti-racist and feminist group that focuses on migrant and racialised women, called Mujeres, Voces y Resistencia⁵⁶.

Although the explicit and personal relationship with Chile can definitely serve as an incentive to repeat the action, *Un violador* also resonated in native Spanish organisations. In several of these occasions, the reason for joining protest was mainly out of solidarity. The Plataforma Feminista Guadalajara, for example, elaborately expressed their sisterhood with Chilean women on Facebook. Commenting on the background of the Social Outbreak and gendered police violence in Chile, they announced their re-staging of the performance on Human Rights Day. Their specific focus on the human rights violations happening during the Chilean social protests as the direct trigger for the creation of the song, partly undermines LasTesis’ denunciation of structural violence. It shows their unawareness of the earlier research by LasTesis and the broader social and historical meaning. Indeed, in their interpretation of the Chilean performance, on Facebook, they only address the explicit references in the song to the direct context. In this way, this particular performance in Guadalajara loses the strength of structural denunciation, which is one of the key components of the Chilean intervention. While LasTesis stressed the importance to work with multiple interpretations of gender violence, in this instance the broad meaning and incorporated theories are downsized, and the Chilean performance is depicted as a linear consequence of the social unrest.

That the interpretation of *Un violador* varies along the Spanish feminist groups proves the following example in Valencia. The Asamblea Feminista explains in an interview with *Levante* that re-staging the performance for them was a “way to show solidarity with the Chilean *compañeras* and visualize all violence and oppressions that women suffer at a global level”, but it was also important to appropriate the performance and insert “particular forms of expressing ourselves”. In this way, the event was also a place to show their discontent about the fines that were imposed on women that were protesting in the 8 March strikes (Asamblea Feminista).

The “violador” performance was imbedded into the 8-M strikes in Spain on many occasions. The mass mobilizations on International Women’s Day –approximately 120.000 people took to the streets of Madrid in 2020 (El País), give more visibility to the “Violador” performance in Europe. In turn, the latter allows to increase attention on gender-based violence during these

⁵⁶ <https://www.facebook.com/mujeresvocesyresistencias/>

events. Important to remark on the 8-M strikes is the tension that exists in Spain between traditional feminisms and new generations on the inclusion of transwomen, as stated in *El País* (Gómez & Quesada). This stands in contrast with the vision of LasTesis and the diverse “violador” movement in Chile. Their definition of ‘woman’ is everyone who defines as such (LasTesis, 13).

Concerning the formal elements of the intervention, the choreography remains largely the same. Despite of the contextual meaning referring to particular violent practices in Chile, it seems that it is still relatable out of its context. The clothing varies from night club outfits, as LasTesis proposed, over a ‘dressed in black’ dress code, to accessories like a purple or green scarf. (a symbol popularised by the Argentinean feminist movement). A recurring attribute is the blindfold. In some cases, like in Barcelona, these blindfolds are white and covered with red paint, representing blood. This may indicate a lesser degree of integration and appropriation into the national setting, or a stronger tie with the events in Chile, stemming from the personal connection of Latin American migrants or expats. Overall, the copied formal aspects, and their explicit references to particular situations do not take away the appeal and feeling of empowerment the original intervention brings.

A remarkable element is the literal copy of the last verse of LasTesis’ song. As elaborated previously, this verse alludes to the anthem of the *Carabineros*. Despite the lack of connection to the Spanish context with these particular words, the verse is hardly ever customised. The interventions that were held in Madrid, Valencia and Barcelona exemplify this comment.

However, there are also feminist organizations that made some interesting textual adaptations. In the Youtube video of the Valladolid intervention it is striking that “it’s inequality, it’s harassment and abuse”⁵⁷ complete the second verse, adding up to the denunciations of “impunity”, “disappearances” and “rape” in the original performance. Also in the part where the women point at the culprits of their structural suppression, the collective Mujeres de Valladolid inserted new actors: “it’s the prosecutors, the rulers, the religions, the states, the presidents”⁵⁸. Mercedes Pastor, one of the organizing members of Mujeres de Valladolid explains in *El Diario* that with the performance and the little changes, they aim to unite women and bring under attention the injustice that always underlies arrests of women, and harms “female bodies”. In their denunciation, they focus on the role of the governmental administration and politics, which may imply a demand for support by the state in the struggle for women’s rights. Just like LasTesis, they position themselves against patriarchal institutions. When they mention the role of religion in this respect, this refers to the recent rise of a conservative right, that finds alliances in religious circles in attempting to scale back acquired rights, like abortion.

⁵⁷ “Es desigualdad, es acoso y maltrato” (Mujeres de Valladolid).

⁵⁸ “Son los pacos, los jueces, los fiscales, los gobernantes, las religiones, los estados, los presidentes” (Mujeres de Valladolid).

Another noteworthy feature is the change from ‘cops’ –*los pacos*– into ‘fascists’ –*los fachas*– as it is performed in Madrid, Grup de Dones affirms. With this adaptation, they explicitly refer to the recent rise of the alt-right political party Vox, that received the nickname ‘fascists’ by its opponents. This term is a direct link with the dictatorial past of Spain, and in this way illustrates how the societal scars, as described by Proaño, of Franco’s fascism are incorporated in the *violador* performances. This example thus shows how the historical power game of social relations and the resistance against them shine through in contemporary manifestations.

Besides performances with minimal textual adaptations, there are also cases of completely alternative versions. The Network of Honduran Women Migrants⁵⁹ shared videos on Facebook of their intervention during the strike of domestic and care workers, in December 2019 in Madrid. Titled “the exploiter is you”, they transformed the song into an intersectional criticism on their precarious situation as female migrant domestic workers:

UN EXPLOTADOR EN TU CAMINO ⁶⁰	AN EXPLOITER IN YOUR PATH
[...]	[...]
Es ser precaria	It’s precariousness
Impunidad para mi empleadora	Impunity for my employer
Es la explotación	It’s exploitation
Es la discriminación	It’s discrimination
[...]	[...]
Son los jefes, las jefas	It’s the managers
El Estado	The state
El sistema	The system
El Estado opresor es un macho violador	The oppressive state is a macho rapist
El Estado explotador es un macho represor	The exploitative state is a macho oppressor
[...]	[...]
Duerme tranquila empleada interna, en esta lucha vamos de frente que por derechos y empleo digno, todas unidas somos más fuertes.	Sleep calmly, domestic employee, in this fight we go head-on, for rights and decent employment, united we are stronger.
El violador eras tú	The rapist was you
El explotador eres tú	The exploiter is you
El maltratador eras tú	The abuser was you

Through this performance, and the strike in which it was imbedded, the domestic and care workers demand recognition, fair payment and a protective legal frame for the work they do, as explained in *El Salto Diario*. In this intersectional struggle, they denounce their precarious working and living conditions, and the invisibility of their exploitation, the association SEDOAC⁶¹ proclaims. In this respect, the nature of their claim is structural, against the

⁵⁹ Red de Hondureñas Migradas

⁶⁰ Original lyrics, as it was written by the Red de Hondureñas Migradas on Facebook (16/12/19).

⁶¹ Servicio Doméstico Activo is an association of domestic employees, founders of CETHYC.

capitalist system of extractivism that creates their precarious situation. Taking the “violador” performance as a starting point, they make explicit their anti-neoliberal perspective, while also connecting patriarchal structures, calling the “exploitative state” a “macho oppressor” (Red de Hondureñas Migradas). Their racialised female bodies are exploited in the capitalist project and oppressed by imperialist powers (Sanz in *Izquierda Diario*). With this intervention, the domestic and care workers, united in the Centre for Empowerment of Domestic and Care Workers⁶² (CETHYC), accuse the managers, the companies, the institutions and the state for the lack of protective measures, but their resistance also serves to ensure the transfer of knowledge on their lived experiences, explains Eda Marina Santos Luna⁶³ in *El Salto Diario*.

The intersectional character of this interpretation, combining social, feminist and migrant struggles, is of particular interest. Their social identity as migrant women in Spain places them in the bottom part of the social hierarchy, and furthermore nurtures their invisibility as domestic workers. Drawing on Federici, the exploitation of the feminine or racialised body has played a key role throughout the capitalist history (32). This exploitation is rendered invisible by capitalist mechanisms, so visualizing the feminization of poverty is a crucial step in transforming their working conditions.

Resistencia Migrante Valencia, AIPHYC⁶⁴ and Mujeres, Voces y Resistencias jointly initiated an anti-racist interpretation⁶⁵ of *Un violador* in Valencia, that they shared on Facebook in December 2019. The adapted lyrics react against systems of “racism” and white hegemony that lead to a violent context for migrants in Spain, expressed through “deportation” for example. Through sentences like “the racist/terrorist is you”, they take over the general and structural meaning of ‘you’, denoting a systemic racism that affects migrant women on a daily basis. The phrase “it’s not my fault, not how I talked, not how I dressed” addresses their vulnerability as a woman and as a racialised subject. Through the intersection of these identity markers, racialised women experience a multiple oppression, following Crenshaw. “Migration control is a white oppressor” they chant, addressing the harsh policies on migration and demanding the “right to migrate and to not having to migrate”⁶⁶, they wrote on Facebook (Mujeres, Voces y Resistencias).

On Facebook, the Network of Honduran Women Migrants also reported on an explicitly decolonial interpretation. During the carnival of Pachamama in February 2020, some collaborating collectives⁶⁷ –all related to Latin America in their activities– participated in an alternative version of *Un violador*. The Madrid-based collective, Plaza de los Pueblos, provided

⁶² Centro de Empoderamiento de Empleadas de Hogar y Cuidados (CETHYC), based in Madrid.

⁶³ Spokesperson for the Red de Trabajadoras Domésticas de Honduras

⁶⁴ Asociación Intercultural de Profesionales del Hogar y de los Cuidados

⁶⁵ “Es el racismo / impunidad para el asesino / es la violación / es la deportación / La culpa no era mía ni como hablaba ni como vestía / El terrorista eres tú / el racista eres tú / [...] el control de migración es un blanco opresor / Duerma tranquila, migra inocente / sin preocuparte de la frontera / que por tus sueños, dulce y sonriente / seguimos siendo la resistencia” (Mujeres, Voces y Resistencias et al., 18/12/19).

⁶⁶ “Exigimos el derecho a migrar, y a no tener que migrar” (Mujeres, Voces y Resistencia).

⁶⁷ Plaza de los Pueblos, Trawunche Madrid (Coordinación de Apoyo al Pueblo Mapuche), Coletivo Peruanxs en Madrid, Tinkus Integración Bolivia, Amores de Colca de Perú, Espacio Común 15M, amongst others.

the lyrics. Focused on the figure of Pachamama (Mother Nature), an Andean Indigenous goddess, the performance denounces the practices of *terricidio*, or the invasive activities on nature and life. The lyrics depict a battle against extractivist development: “development is a judge, who won’t stop to extract”⁶⁸ (Plaza de los Pueblos). Their message is one of reclaiming territories, structural exploitation of Indigenous territories and anti-racism. They also denounce neo-colonial politics –“the colonist is a judge”– that is connected with a racist discourse and system –“the racism you can’t see”. With the repeated phrase “the terricide is you”, again the structural problematic of neo-colonial capitalist extractivism, performed by the neoliberal state, is stressed. Their reclaiming of the streets is in this sense directly connected to the Indigenous, decolonial struggle for territory in Latin America, in order to counter the idea of ‘possession’, as previously discussed.

Important to remark regarding the decolonial aspect, is the Latin American descent of the organising collectives and participants. The combination of social, decolonial, anti-racist and feminist struggles of these performances thus are to be considered in this light.

As elaborated in the Chilean case study, the “violador” movement focuses on the collective body as a force of resistance. The performance in Arana de Duero (Burgos) is a clear case to illustrate how this characteristic manifested itself in Spanish interpretations. The intervention took place in December 2019, shortly after three ex-football players were sentenced for the rape of a 16-year-old girl, in the so-called *Caso Arandina* of 2017. As explained in *El Confidencial*, the Court of Justice decided that the violent acts did not fall under ‘rape’ but were considered ‘sexual abuse’ which led to a reduction of penalty. There already had been many manifestations throughout the country criticising the attitude of the judges who were questioning the credibility of the victim (*Hoy*). As the Platform against Machista Violence (PVM) proclaims in the magazine *El Ebiezo*, the victim had to prove she resisted against the three perpetrators, while semi-conscious. PVM stated that this discourse feeds stigmas and puts the responsibility and culpability on women. This attitude contributes to “minimizing and perpetuating that ‘rape culture’, that considers a woman as a body that is dissociated from their being, from their feelings, a body at the service of men's desire and their "right to possess it" whenever they feel like it”⁶⁹, argues PVM. Thus, in re-staging *Un violador*, this victim blaming that is part of the rape culture, and a central element in LasTesis’ performance, is firmly denounced here as well. Coming together on the streets with this strong message, demonstrates the pain of the collective body, that converts into power when united. It brings back the victim’s agency and challenges the underlying machista ideology.

⁶⁸ “El colono es un juez / que nos roba al nacer / y nuestro castigo es / el racismo que no ves / El desarrollo es un juez / que no para de extraer / [...] El estado expoliador es un macho violador / [...] El invasor eres tú / el terricida eres tú” (Plaza de los Pueblos, 22/02/20).

⁶⁹ “Minimizar, perpetuando esa ‘cultura de la violación’ que considera a la mujer como un simple cuerpo, un cuerpo disociado de su ser, de su sentir, un cuerpo al servicio del deseo del hombre y de su “derecho a poseerlo” cuando le apetezca” (Plataforma contra las Violencias Machistas).

As Segato argues, it is the morals of the society that need transformation, if we want to de-naturalise gender-based violence. Through re-education and raising awareness, the societal power relations that decide upon the legal frame can be challenged and transformed. Law and morality thus are connected. In this sense, the resistance against the Caso Arandina exemplifies how particular cases play a role in exposing the hiatus in legislation, as well as rendering visible on what foundations the legal frame is built. At the same time, it can be argued that focusing on these individual stories does not tackle violence against women as part of a misogynist set of values.

Mass mobilisations are a great tool in rendering visible patriarchal oppressive structures and the scale of gender-based violence. One of the main goals of LasTesis was therefore to break the pact of silence that is constructed around the rape culture. This idea is also very much present in the Spanish protest performances, such as in Santa Coloma, near Barcelona. As can be seen in the recording on Youtube, in the beginning of the performance the organisers express their frustration with the unequal system of impunity and invisibility of gender violence, but at the same time find strength in the collective identity. In this way, the denunciation is no longer an individual and personal matter, but rather a social problem. Inspired by LasTesis, they transform their anger into action and are hopeful for the power of this transnational movement, they state.

Conclusion: performances Chile and Spain

From the presented analysis can be concluded that, overall, it seems that the interpretations remain quite close to the original performances. All studied performances, for instance, are characterised by a strong sense of resistance and a war-like mindset. The frustration and exhaustion of women and sexual dissidents for being humiliated, discriminated, oppressed and violated are equally deep-rooted as the structures that underlie these practices, like the women in Santa Coloma make clear. What at first appears to be a peaceful protest, turns out to be a powerful riot. Like LasTesis said in an interview with El Pais, “our content is violent. We didn't end up setting anything on fire, but our speech is incendiary”⁷⁰.

Un violador represents multiple feminist demands, and at the same time manages to unite them. It is through the multiplicity of feminist voices that new alliances between different situated subjectivities can grow. Furthermore, Alonso & Lombardo sustain that this collective agency is vital to keep democracy processes going (80). In this way, movements like *Un violador* can transform society through their protests. At the same time, however, while a unifying factor can build bridges, it can also diminish the diversity within the feminist movement. Therefore, it is important, as Schild argues, that there is always room for specific responses to each distinct reality (2018, 162). This twofold perspective is illustrated in the *violador* movement, stressing the strength of a common cause, addressed from each lived experience.

⁷⁰ “Nuestro contenido es violento. No terminamos incendiando nada, pero nuestro discurso es incendiario” (LasTesis in El Pais).

So, the Chilean and Spanish performances share some key characteristics. The collective body, reclaiming public space, victim blaming, or the intersectional nature are elements that are depicted in the same way in the two continents. However, a closer look reveals some nuances that may change the understanding of the re-staged performances, their meaning and values.

Although both the Chilean and Spanish *violador* manifestations start from a structural denunciation of gender-based violence, it can be argued that the structural aspect in the Chilean case lies more at the foundations than in the Spanish manifestations. As discussed in the analysis, there were several cases that mainly focused on victim blaming as the central or only claim of the song. In this sense, they slightly lose sight of the other aspects of gender-based violence and the further structural and societal causes that maintain the patriarchal system. Indeed, victim blaming is a central theme in the original performance of LasTesis, but it is imbedded in the complex reality of social relations, power games and political structures, and in order to make a complete feminist analysis, these systems should be taken into account, as also Rodríguez proclaimed.

In this sense, some Spanish manifestants seem to demand a cooperation of the state, by adjusting the legal frame for example, while the movement in Chile rather proposes a complete restructuring of the state and its knowledge production, values and underlying oppressive systems. By analogy with Martin & Shaw, who comment on the difference between NiUnaMenos and #MeToo, it can be argued that the performance in Spain partly individualises the *violador* movement. However, there is a lot of variation between the different performances in Spain. Sometimes the norms, ideas and values are denounced, while other cases do not get further than the visualisation of the number of victims of gender-based violence. With respect to the structural dimension, it can therefore be asserted that *Un violador* is more radical.

The extent to which the anti-neoliberal cause is articulated in the Spanish performances depends heavily on the organisation or participants. In general, the anti-neoliberal dimension is not explicitly pronounced, but may become apparent in the performances and the way these are imbedded. Since in the majority of the Spanish interventions studied for this thesis, the sole focus is the accusation of rape and sexual violence, the denunciation of patriarchy is articulated, as this claim lies at the heart of the feminist movement. The connection with capitalist structures – like primitive accumulation, exploitation and extractivism– however, is addressed only in a few cases. A counter example is the alternative version by the domestic workers, who denounce the capitalist, exploitative system that creates their precarious conditions.

The decolonial dimension is rather complex. Although there have been performances in Spain that addressed the neo-colonial or racist structures, the collectives that organised these reinterpretations consisted of migrants and expats from Latin America. Given their personal relationship with Chile, or their own Indigenous descent, their decolonial perspective or profound solidarity with the decolonial or Indigenous struggle does not surprise. Knowledge from decolonial feminisms, like the neoliberal structure that allows extractive activities on female bodies, on nature, or on resources, is hardly ever incorporated into the Spanish *violador* performances.

Final conclusion

As a final conclusion I argue that the *violador* movement, originated from Chile, serves as a source of inspiration for European feminisms. The radical nature of the denunciations of gender-based violence imbedded in neoliberal exploitative systems and neo-colonial extractive structures, stems from decades of struggles in the region and an impressive trajectory of women's movements.

Through a de-hierarchization of the feminist movement, the *violador* intervention counters the neo-colonial power relations. Following Martin & Shaw, the "global reach of *Un violador*, and its multilingual performances, have disrupted the neo-colonial power structures of social movements" (9).

The radical structural denunciation as expressed by *Un violador*, connects economic oppressing systems, with political discrimination or social subordination. In Spain, the movement is less radical and the movement runs the risk to individualise the denunciation.

It is necessary for European countries to recognise the resemblances in capitalist exploitative structures, without falling into hierarchic relations with the so-called Global South. Only in this way can the structural criticism articulated by *Un violador* be fully projected unto Spanish society, and can this denunciation be appropriated.

The *violador* movement stimulates appropriation to other contexts or lived realities, in order to unite against the structural causes of gender-based violence. In this way they formulate a powerful response against the idea of a hegemonic or universal feminism. The performance unites people in a common cause, while remaining sensitive to situated knowledge and embracing specific applications, adaptations and appropriations to suit particular situations. Taking as a starting point real lived experiences, the different performances are little pieces in a web of transnational feminist movements.

In sum, *Un violador* can serve as a moment of opening, as defined by Sciortino. Latin American feminism is awake, and can guide other countries towards a more inclusive, structural approach in transforming society.

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