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Chilean Canadian Literature in English: Memories of Home and Belonging, from the Postcolonial to Decolonial Practice

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Doctor of Philosophy degree in Hispanic Studies

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Abstract

This dissertation aims to present a compelling exploration of identity and cultural hybridity, and of the intricate tapestry of diasporic experiences. As such, it delves into the significance of Chilean Canadian literature written directly in English, with a specific focus on the works authored by female writers as part and parcel of an emerging diasporic literature. Employing a postcolonial and hemispheric lens, this research employs a multidimensional methodology embedded in cultural memory, border studies, and representational intersectionality. Within this framework, this study attempts to unravel how Chilean Canadian literature written in English might contribute to a repository of Chilean Canadian literary memories. In doing so, it traces the evolution of the concept of home—as experienced and described by various protagonists across different generations since the initial arrival of political exiles in 1973 to the present day—as well as these protagonists’ expressed sense of belonging. I contend that through these diasporic intergenerational narratives, an imaginative landscape takes shape, illuminating the intricate interplay of identity and cultural consolidation. This is an imaginary that now expands to encompass other racialized groups, notably Indigenous communities from Chile and Canada, as it continues to define and contest the contours of Canadian *Latinidad*. Again, by framing these literary narratives as part of the production of a multigenerational diaspora, we emphasize the connection of the Chilean Canadian community to its roots and elucidate the evolving concepts of home and belonging. Moreover, we consider how these concepts may continue to evolve across generations in the future.

Keywords

English-Language Chilean Canadian Literature, Latina/o Canadian Literature, Latinocanadá, Diasporic and Postcolonial Literature, Migration and Exile Narratives, Memory Studies, Border Studies, Representational Intersectionality, Exiled Culture and Identity Formation, Archive of Memories, Hybrid Culture and Identities, Decoloniality.

Summary for Lay Audience

My investigation embarks on an exploration of Chilean Canadian literary texts written directly in English: a literature so far written exclusively by women. These texts containing narratives of migration and exile, represent renewed dimensions of diasporic and postcolonial literature within Canada.

The motivation behind proposing this topic for my dissertation is grounded in what I saw as a scholarly gap within Latina/o Canadian literary studies. This gap distinguishes, again, the more recent literary productions authored by female Chilean Canadian writers who compose directly in the English language, from the established body of Spanish-language Latina/o Canadian literature. This represents a departure from prior practices wherein Latina/o Canadian authors predominantly wrote in Spanish, occasionally supplemented with English or French translations.

Drawing from Siemerling's recognition of Latina/o Canadian literature as a potential focus for diasporic and postcolonial studies within the Canadian literary landscape ("Canadian Literatures" 210), I proposed to examine the aforementioned emerging Chilean Canadian literary corpus through the lenses of memory studies, border studies, and representational intersectionality.

This study reveals several outcomes that align with these theoretical frameworks. The analysis suggests that Chilean Canadian literary works follow the evolution of the idea of "home," as to how different characters across generations experience and talk about it. In doing so, Chilean Canadian literary creates a repository of memories, notably centred around the pivotal events of September 11th, 1973, and the emerging new story of "The Return Plan." Employing a border studies perspective, this research asserts that English-language Chilean Canadian literature, as a "borderlands literature," sheds light on the evolving dynamics of Latina/o hybrid cultures and identities in Canada, as well as on its own literary tradition. These are developments that involve, for instance, the intersectionality between Latina/o and Mapuche characters with Indigenous First Nations perspectives in Canada, thereby contributing to the broader process of decolonizing Canadian arts and cultures.

Acknowledgments

I am humbled and immensely grateful for the support and guidance I have received throughout the course of this dissertation. I would like to extend my genuine gratitude to my supervisor, Felipe Q. Quintanilla, for his unwavering support, dedication, and encouragement throughout my academic journey. He has been the keystone of this endeavor, shaping it into what it is today. The wisdom and knowledge shared by my professors at Western have also been instrumental in expanding my horizons and refining my research. I extend my honest appreciation to the female Chilean Canadian authors whose literary works have not only been a source of inspiration but have also provided the material upon which this study is built. To my cherished family, friends, and colleagues, your patient understanding, continuous motivation, and unyielding belief in me have been my driving force. I am profoundly fortunate to have such a remarkable support system, and I am genuinely thankful for every contribution that has brought this dissertation to completion.

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Preface

As a Mexican Canadian male researcher who has also experienced migration, I find myself straddling the roles of both an outsider and an insider within the context of my research on English-language Chilean Canadian literary texts, specifically those authored by female authors. Drawing upon the insights of Dwyer and Buckle (2019), I am reminded that my positionality is not defined as an absolute outsider or insider but rather as occupying a “space between” (61). This in-between space, akin to a bridge or a hyphen, allows me to neither fully belong to one nor the other. From this perspective, I recognize that I am not simply an outsider; rather, I am an integral part of every aspect of the research process. This sentiment resonates with my identity as a Mexican Canadian migrant in Canada. While I have extensively studied literature related to my research, I also share a deep connection with the experiences of fellow Chilean Canadian migrants, as well as with the broader Latina/o Canadian migrant community. The narratives of Chilean Canadian female authors that I focus on in this dissertation hold a special significance in my personal reality as a queer Latino Canadian residing in Canada.

As I engage with accounts of Chilean migrants and exiles, I realize that own migrant experience aligns me with a type of communal migrant narrative. Despite the different nationalities and stories of migration, I find common ground due to our shared status as members of a minority group in Canada. I am aware, however, that my status as an outsider calls for careful consideration when examining Chilean Canadian literary texts that convey female and Indigenous migrant experiences. In light of this realization, then I approach this dissertation with a focus on how female writers and their characters themselves convey their individual and collective experiences while navigating the Canadian borderland.

In summary, I primarily consider myself an insider due to a shared hybridized Latina/o Canadian identity, which fosters connections with other Latina/o Canadian migrants. Simultaneously, I embrace the role of an outsider, analyzing Chilean Canadian and literary texts written by women. Dwyer and Buckle’s concept of “the space between” accurately characterizes my position, allowing me to study Latina/o Canadian literary texts, even those written by women from the Chilean diaspora. This space between inside and outside,

depicted as a hyphen, serves as a dwelling place for people, embodying paradox, ambiguity, and conjunction (61). This intermediary perspective informs my research, allowing me to explore social, political, and cultural viewpoints as presented by Chilean Canadian female authors.

Furthermore, as a queer Mexican (mestizo, male) scholar and a first-generation Latino Canadian, I inhabit the role of a hybrid Latina/o Canadian migrant in Ontario, Canada. Thus, while I address topics such as the hybrid consequences of living in a Canadian borderland, I also recognize that the identities and cultures articulated by Chilean Canadian authors resonate with how I perceive and present myself as a migrant and as a member of a diaspora. This self-identification colours and motivates my exploration of themes such as the consequences of living in a Canadian context.

With an ever-present awareness of how my own biases and experiences may shape my analysis, I apply a postcolonial/decolonial lens to my research. This enables me to occupy a middle ground, a space between the “inside” and the “outside,” observing fellow Latina/o diasporic communities navigating their place in Canada. It is in this capacity that I study Chilean Canadian texts, drawing from both my training as a graduate student in Hispanic Studies and specialization in Migration and Ethnic Relations, and my direct experiences as a Latino Canadian member of a minority in Canada.

From a postcolonial/decolonial standpoint, I engage with female voices to illuminate how renewed English Chilean Canadian discourses reveal not only an identity specific to Chilean Canadians, but also the ongoing evolution of Latina/o Canadian literature, culture, and identities. While female Chilean Canadian writers vividly capture the essence of the Chilean diaspora and their experiences of exile in Canada, these works also serve as a testament to the expansion of Latina/o Canadian literature into publications in one of Canada’s official languages. The texts under scrutiny are narratives that, from a postcolonial/decolonial perspective, convey not only the viewpoints of Chilean Canadian women, but also the historical progression of a Latina/o diaspora, and its literature within Canada. These texts present images that depict and represent protagonists striving to move beyond postcolonial living conditions, particularly within the context of a multicultural

postcolonial nation like Canada. These authors incorporate diverse voices, effectively positioning themselves as agents of postcolonial/decolonial thought and action.

In conclusion, my approach to female voices within this dissertation reflects my recognition of existing as an outsider in the space between the inside and the outside, as conceptualized by Dwyer and Buckle. This perspective equips me to conduct an impartial and yet empathetic analysis while interpreting the perspectives of Chilean Canadian voices. My aim is not to generalize or impose my personal viewpoints of female writers, although my experiences as a queer Latino man contribute to my understanding of the need to transcend the strict heteronormative gender dynamics and modern paradigms in the multicultural context of Canada. My endeavor is to unveil how specific images, molded by Chilean Canadian female voices, inherently embodies the essence of the postcolonial and decolonial narratives.

Introduction: Positioning English-Language Chilean Canadian Literary Texts as Sample of a Diasporic Latina/o Canadian Literature

Carmen Aguirre is a highly acclaimed writer known in Canada's arts and media scene as one of the prominent Latina/o Canadian authors. She came to Vancouver as a Chilean Canadian political refugee when she was seven years old in 1974, escaping the socio-political turmoil caused by Augusto Pinochet's military coup against Salvador Allende's democratic government. This personal journey forms the basis of Aguirre's various publications, notably her renowned work, *Something Fierce: Memoirs of a Revolutionary Daughter*, which won the CBC Radio Canada Reads contest in 2012. Following this national recognition, Aguirre gained prominence in Canada, particularly among Anglo Canadian audiences, receiving numerous national—and international—awards. Her memoir, *Something Fierce*, remains pivotal for its portrayal of Latinas and Latinos in Canada, offering a unique perspective.¹

Aguirre's memoir captures the interest of diverse Canadian audiences, not just due to its captivating narrative but also due to a controversial incident. During the CBC Canada Reads contest, Anne-France Goldwater, one of the judges, controversially labeled Aguirre as a “bloody terrorist” in the broadcasted proceedings (“Canada Reads”). This event not only sparked increased attention toward Aguirre and her first *Memoir* but also initiated a broader debate about perceptions of Latin American migrants in Canada. Goldwater's portrayal of Aguirre as a “terrorist” position her as the “Other,” a subversive figure within the historical context of the Chilean coup, the Condor Operation, and Cold War events. Moreover, by questioning

¹ Years after its initial publication, its significance endures as it continues to be read and discussed, *Something Fierce* was scheduled for another presentation and discussion on January 11th, 2024, at the Museum of Vancouver in collaboration with the University of British Columbia, this memoir remains an ongoing subject of analysis for its ability to “resist traditional forms of refugee memoir and examine the problematic image of the ‘grateful’ refugee’s arrival in Canada” (“Re-Imagining Refugee Memoir”).

how a “terrorist” was allowed into Canada, Goldwater inadvertently prompts a reflection on the Latina/o Canadian experience: who these individuals might be, their reasons for coming to Canada from Latin America, and the historical environment of the 1970s and 80s. This incident also opens a door to discussing Canada’s connections with the rest of the Americas, which I will further elaborate on in the historical overview section below.

The portrayal of Carmen Aguirre as a “terrorist” is contested by *Something Fierce*, offering readers an intimate perspective on her involvement in the resistance against the Pinochet’s dictatorship. The memoir, narrated in the voice of Aguirre herself, vividly details the socio-political circumstances that led her and her family to flee Chile, and later return to join the armed resistance movement. In addition, it sheds light on Canada’s acceptance of Latin American refugees, including Aguirre and her family, starting in the 1970s. In *Something Fierce*, as a narrator, Aguirre re-imagines and re-interprets Chilean, and by extension, Latin America history from the point of view of a survivor demanding awareness about issues that were “officially denied by the governments in question,” and condemning the intervention of U.S. intelligence in support of Operation Condor—i.e., an “illegal, [and] top secret affair” (*Something* 22). In this sense, *Something Fierce* presents an alternative historical interpretation. It enables Canadian audiences to revisit and reconstruct Latin American history. Simultaneously, it reframes sociopolitical issues as novel condemnatory narratives, shedding light on aspects that might have otherwise remained concealed from its readers.

During the 2012 CBC Radio Canada Reads contest, Anne-France Goldwater changed her perspective on Carmen Aguirre’s *Something Fierce*. Initially labeling Aguirre as a “bloody terrorist,” Goldwater later praised the book for its educational and historical significance. She admitted that traditional history lessons often fade, but firsthand experiences like those shared in a memoir like *Something Fierce* resonate and stay with readers (“Canada Reads 2012 Day 4”). Goldwater’s shift came after recognizing the value of firsthand stories, particularly from a female Latina/o Canadian writer, detailing extreme struggles against oppressive circumstances. As a

lawyer, Goldwater appreciated Aguirre's eyewitness accounts of fighting for democracy under the Condor Operation.

Notably, an author like Aguirre can attain national recognition not for a work "in-translation" from Spanish to English, but rather by being one of the few Spanish-speaking writers from Latin America who writes and publishes directly in English. This process of writing and publishing into the English language, is what allows *Something Fierce* to enter directly into the imaginary of Canadian audiences, while establishing a parallel dialogue with, and enriching of Canadian letters. Also, as is the case with *Something Fierce*, various Chilean Canadian literary texts have incorporated in English language the narrative voices of individual, historical, and transgenerational interpretations about present and past experiences within the socio-political framework of the *post-1973 Chilean era*—i.e., from the September 11th, 1973, temporality, as the Chilean coup orchestrated by Augusto Pinochet to the present.²

The corpus under study in this analysis is situated within the framework of the post-1973 Chilean era. These literary works, now written in English language, present an alternative rendition of histories, memories, and firsthand experiences of Latina/o Canadians. In addition, these literary narratives have now entered a dialogue with other diasporic and major—English and French—Canadian literatures at large. In other words, these female authors' deliberate choice to write directly in one of Canada's official languages amplifies the depth of interpretation. More significantly, it empowers these female authors and their protagonists to represent Latinas and Latinos directly to Anglo Canadian audiences. Moreover, by opting for English over Spanish in their publications, these authors assert a diasporic and postcolonial standpoint. I will

² From now on, in this analysis, I will address this temporality as the *post-1973 Chilean era* since the consequences of the coup and its aftermath, continue to be significant in the present-day, even for new Chilean generations in exile. I am opting not to use the term "post-Pinochet era," furthermore, to encompass a broader historical scope beyond the direct influence of a single leader, highlighting the sustained impact of the entire period following the 1973 coup to the present.

delve deeper into these aspects in the subsequent sections after briefly introducing my initial research question and issues.

Initial Research Question

My initial research question addresses how female Chilean Canadian authors represent a Latina/o Canadian imaginary while shaping a diasporic literature of migration and exile into an archive of memories. While there is a vast number of literary studies about the Spanish language Latina/o Canadian publications, the innovative feature of this dissertation is its emphasis on a corpus composed by female Latina/o Canadian authors, primarily focusing on the so-called 1.5 generation of writers such as Carmen Aguirre who writes and publishes directly in English. As a member from the 1.5 generation of Latina/o Canadian writers, Carmen Aguirre, for example, can be described as a migrant author who arrived in Canada as a child or young adult but lived firsthand socio-political struggles in her native country (G. Etcheverry 145).³ Therefore, to address this primary question, my research primarily concentrates on examining how authors from both the 1st and 1.5 generations contribute to reshaping Canadian *Latinidad* through a transgenerational perspective. This approach enables an exploration of how different generations of authors influence and redefine the concept of Canadian *Latinidad* over time—i.e., it is a “processual” identity construction that refers to an ever-changing Latina/o identity of exile (Verdecchia, “Staging Memory” 6). In this line of thought, this project aims to better understand how memories, as portrayed in the Latina/o Canadian cultural imaginary, or Canadian *Latinidad*, are drawn within the English language Latina/o Canadian literature. Within the dominion of diasporic and postcolonial literature, my emphasis revolves around themes such as Latina/o migration and exile to Canada. Additionally, I delve into the significance attributed to the concept of home and the multifaceted sense of belonging that protagonists derive from their adoptive home in Canada, their native land in Chile, or

³ For further analysis of this term, see *Ruptures, Continuity and Relearning: The Political Participation of Latin Americas in Canada* (edited by Schugurensky, Daniel and Jorge Ginieniewicz, U of T Press, 2007).

both. My analysis of English-language publications notably highlights the authors' significant linguistic choice, allowing them to integrate into the English Canadian and broader diasporic literary canon. It is noteworthy that now authors portray protagonists who identify with their adopted home in Canada, marking a shift in their literary narratives.

Chapter Overview

This study, centered on female-authored works, employs literary text analysis to delve into diasporic narratives. Broadly speaking, through chapters dedicated to cultural memory construction (chapter two), border studies (chapter three), and representational intersectionality (chapter four), I aim to unravel complex themes such as identity, displacement, resistance, and cultural amalgamation depicted in these works. More specifically, chapter two examines politically motivated literature within English language. Moving forward, chapter three shifts the focus towards exploring identity and culture within the context of border studies and hybridization. Here, I delve into how these female authors portray the complexity of identity formation and cultural hybridity among Latina/o Canadians, examining their experiences within Canadian borderlands. Lastly, chapter four delves into new literary themes introduced in these works that aim to foster inclusivity. This section highlights the co-existence of other racialized voices, such as Indigenous Chilean and Canadian communities, seeking to create a more diverse and inclusive Canadian literary landscape. Through these chapters, the analysis aims to unravel intricate layers of identity, displacement, and the evolving nature of culture and belonging within the Latina/o Canadian narrative. Furthermore, in general, this investigation aims to reveal how authors intertwine memories with broader transgenerational experiences within the Latina/o Canadian narrative.

Historical Overview: Latin American Arrival to Canada

As noted by Hugh Hazelton in his seminal work *Latinocanáda: A Critical Study of Ten Latin American Writers of Canada* (2007), the connections between Spanish-speaking worlds with Canada date back to the 15th century that included earlier visitors such as Basque, Spanish, and Portuguese fishermen and explorers. In the late 1700s, further

explorers documented histories that distinguish figures such as Alejandro Malaspina and Juan Francisco de la Bodega y Quadra. The latter evoking a story that reflects on one of the first contacts of Latin American explores with First Nation peoples in Canada, and which is also documented in English-language texts by Latina/o Canadian writers (see Alejandro Saravia's poem, *Lettres de Nootka* (2008) —written in English language—; and the collaborative work of Lina de Guevara in *Journey to Mapu* (2013), analyzed in chapter four in this study). Additionally, Hazelton argues, by the 1800s, Cuban poet José María Heredia writes a significant first transnational work illustrating Niagara Falls and his deep fascination with the continent. Latin Americans, nonetheless, like before, continue to perceive the New World as a unified entity, that is, “as a basic continent” and using “the adjective americano in Spanish to apply to the entire hemispheric land mass from Tierra del Fuego to Ellesmere Island” (*Latinocanadá* 4). This is an approach and sentiment that continues to be addressed in more recent publications by Latina/o Canadian writers who speak now directly in the English language to better represent Canadian *Latinidad* from a hemispheric perspective [see Guillermo Verdecchia's iconic play *Fronteras Americanas* (*American Borders*) (1997/2013); and Carmen Aguirre's *Qué pasa con la raza, eh?* (2019), and *Anywhere but here* (2021), the latter analyzed in chapter three in this study].

Nonetheless, the first migration from Spanish speaking countries to Canada are those from Spain due to its Civil War, followed by Peninsular economic migrants from Spain and Portugal who during the 1950s and 60s emigrated to Canada in search for a better life. Moreover, the first migrants who arrived in Canada from Latin America were from countries such as Ecuador, but more significant were those political exiles who after the 1970s started to migrate to Canada due to socio political turmoil throughout the Southern region like people from Chile, Argentina, Uruguay, and Brazil. Military dictatorships and regimes that took place in the South, in Brazil in 1964, then in Uruguay in 1972, Chile in 1973, and finally in Argentina in 1976, were the sources of major political exile transits from Latin America to Canada (Hazelton, *Latinocanadá* 5-6).

The most significant wave of migration to Canada, however, is marked by Chilean political exiles, where September 11th, 1973, symbolizes when Latin America comes to Canada (Hazelton, “11 September”). Approximately 7,000 political refugees fled Chile to Canada during the 1970s (Raska). Chileans went into exile not only to Canada; in fact, about a million people, most of them in their twenties and thirties, left the country following the 1973 Chilean coup (Hazelton, “11 September” 182). Additionally, Chileans initiating the first large-scale migration of Latin Americans to Canada, and therefore, September 11th, 1973, is not only a pivotal date for the culture and identity of Chileans at home and in exile, but it also starts to help Canadians to recognize that the struggles of Latin America were now part of Canada’s own national sphere of experiences, particularly in the context of the conflict between Allende and Pinochet (Hazelton, “11 September” 183).

From different waves of migration to Canada, once again, the Chilean exile migrants after the 1970s brought artists and writers who settled in urban centers like Montreal, Toronto, and Vancouver, with small communities moving to Ottawa, Winnipeg, Calgary, and Edmonton (Hazelton, *Latinocanadá* 7). Some of these artist and writers had already worked and published in their native country, in Chile, such as the case of the here-featured writer Carmen Rodríguez. Other Chilean artists, of course, started to write and paint once they arrived in Canada as political exiles due to the commitment and solidarity to their compatriots in Chile, their families, and the disappeared. From the groups of 1st generation of Chilean exiles to Canada, many went to study in major universities and some also became professors creating an early focal point for Chilean literary activity in Canada (Hazelton, *Latinocanadá* 8). Due to the socio-political motivated migration movement by Chileans after the 1970s, Hazelton argues, “the Latino-Canadian literature of the period is highly politicized, doggedly and even fiercely optimistic, and often poignant in its lament for their vision of a most just society and for the people who died and were tortured trying to achieve it” (*Latinocanadá* 8). This same understanding is captured by another author and critic from that era, Chilean Canadian Jorge Etcheverry, who also argues that “There is the political or committed dimensions that is more or less common to almost every

Chilean author in Canada” (“Chilean Literature” 54). In this context, for the purpose of this analysis, it is significant that both the political and committed dimensions addressed here by Jorge Etcheverry, continue to be significant for the featured writers in this dissertation, and will continue to be, for future published testimonies by 2nd and 3rd generation of writers (see *50 Años Después: Uprooted and Replanted in Exile, Reflections on Being Chilean Canadian*, published by Casa Salvador Allende in Toronto, 2023).

Intersections of Histories: Tracing Dates of Significance in the Americas and Canadian *Latinidad*

In American history, there have been two significant dates that mark a temporality for individuals and the collective; that is, 1492 as the initial encounter of Europeans with the so-called New World, and the 500th anniversary of Christopher Columbus’ arrival in America in 1992. Both days have been marked as significant in Latin America history but had also influenced other social groups of the Americas. The Canadian Museum of History (Online), for example, publishes a page on the significance of the “Arrival of Strangers: The Last 500 Years,” where they quote the work of Tomson Highway, *The Dispossessed*, exploring the meaning of the first encounter of First Nations with Europeans. Highway states

Our ancestors, of course, had already lived here for many thousands of years. But as early as that very first encounter, extraordinary events began to occur among us. That initial meeting touched off a shock wave that was felt by Indian people right across the continent. And is still felt to this day. (“Arrival of Strangers”)

This quote illustrates how the meaning of these two significant dates on American history continues to be meaningful for First Nations people in Canada. Similarly, this continues to be a source of enunciation for Latina/o writers of the Americas [see the work of Guillermo Gómez Peña, for example, “1492 Performances” and in the same context, the publication of Guillermo Verdecchia’s play *Fronteras Americanas*

(*American Borders*), first published in 1997 as a response to the 500 anniversary of Columbus first arrival].

Similarly, in the Latin American and Canadian context, two dates stand out signifying Canada's connections with the Americas. First, as Hazelton essay's title points out, there's the significance of "11 September 1973: [when] Latin America Comes to Canada" (2014). Furthermore, in 2012, marked the first instance when a female Chilean Canadian author, Carmen Aguirre, garnered national attention by winning the 2012 CBC Canada Reads contest. This achievement not only propelled Latinas and Latinos into the spotlight but also initiated the creation of a rejuvenated space for Canadian *Latinidad* and its representation among Anglo Canadian and international audiences. More significant for Chilean Canadian exiles from the first generation, but also for Chilean Canadians in subsequent generations, is that the 10-year anniversary of the publication of Aguirre's work, coincides now with the 50th anniversary of the last Chilean coup. The past September 11th, 2023, marked this significant milestone, prompting both Chileans and Canadians to hold various online conversations and events. Notably, the coinciding 50th anniversary of the coup aligns with seminars such as the Virtual Panel Discussion "Chilean Exiles in Canada" hosted by the Canadian Museum of Immigration Pier21 on September 29, 2023. This anniversary holds particular interest for its dual significance in Chilean and Canadian history, as it is a testament to the enduring impact of the 1973 events on collective memory and representation. Moreover, as will be further explored in chapter two, the resonance of September 11th, 1973, persists as a pivotal source of memory and expression for younger generations of writers, who continue to evoke and convey the enduring struggles faced by survivors of the post-1973 Chilean era.

Within this historical overview, my analysis demonstrates the profound impact of female Chilean Canadian writers within the Canadian literary landscape. As participants in one of the most significant Latin American waves of migration to Canada, and through their emerging body of English-language works, female Chilean Canadian writers have begun to shape the Canadian literary canon. This influence acknowledges not only Canada's role as a postcolonial nation but also highlights the

development of a diasporic and postcolonial literature by Latin American writers. This literature sheds light on the experiences and representations of the diasporic “minority” of the Latina/o community in Canada.⁴

Latina/o Canadian Writing, the Continued Formation of a Diasporic Literature

A renewed diasporic and postcolonial literature is surfacing within the dominion of Canadian literary tradition, authored by female Chilean Canadian writers in the English language. Originating from Latin America, these literary works are now mainly crafted by women of Chilean descent who currently reside in Canada. The authors featured in this analysis—Carmen Aguirre, Carmen Rodríguez, and Lina de Guevara—have been integrated into English Canadian society since the 1970s, while also being part of the broader American hemisphere. Chilean Canadian literary works exhibit characteristics akin to Canadian diasporic literatures, encompassing themes of colonization, neo-colonization, modernity/coloniality, but also at times, the quest for decolonization within literary traditions. In addition, these narratives endeavour renewed expression, spanning individual, trans-generational, and trans-Indigenous

⁴ The Canadian Government suggests that “visible minority” refers to “whether a person is a visible minority or not, as defined by the Employment Equity Act. The Employment Equity Act defines visible minorities as ‘persons, other than Aboriginal peoples, who are non-Caucasian in race or non-white in colour.’ The visible minority population consists mainly of the following groups: South Asian, Chinese, Black, Filipino, Arab, Latin American, Southeast Asian, West Asian, Korean and Japanese” (“Visible minority”). Also, the Canadian Government describes “visible” minority members as someone (other than an Aboriginal person) “who is non-white in color/race, regardless of place of birth. The visible minority group includes Black, Chinese, Filipino, Japanese, Korean, South Asian-East Indian (including Indian from India; Bangladeshi; Pakistani; East Indian from Guyana, Trinidad, East Africa; etc.), Southeast Asian (including Burmese; Cambodian; Laotian; Thai; Vietnamese; etc.) non-white West Asian, North African or Arab (including Egyptian; Libyan; Lebanese; etc.), non-white Latin American (including indigenous persons from Central and South America, etc.), a person of mixed origin (with one parent in one of the visible minority groups listed above), another visible minority group” (Employment Equity).

perspectives. Taking cues from Hazelton's *Latinocanadá* (2007), the three female Chilean Canadian authors studied in this analysis continue to be seen as "anxious to find a place for their writing within Canadian society and perhaps [come to] enrich Canadian letters with their work" (3), as I analyze in the following subsection.

Latina/o Canadian writing has expanded over the last half-century from being mainly written in translation from Spanish to English or French, or both, into being written in official Canadian languages. In this analysis, I focus exclusively on English-language publications, because French-language publications deserve a study of their own. These English-language works include various literary genres such as novels, short stories, memoirs, testimonies, poetry, theater, and essays. Much of this work continues to be mainly published by small presses⁵ and independent publishing houses: such as Talonbooks in Vancouver which publishes various books by the well-known writer Carmen Aguirre; Playwrights Canada Press in Toronto, which published the first two Latina/o Canadian theatre anthologies (Alvarez 2013a, 2013b); or Women's Press Literary in Toronto which published Carmen Rodríguez's first English novel, *Retribution* (2011), and *Guerra prolongada / Protracted War* (1992).

The influx of approximately 7,000 political refugees from Chile to Canada during the 1970s holds significance, especially when considering the growing population of the Chilean diaspora,⁶ and other Latin American communities in Canada. The 2021 Canadian Census recorded approximately 580,000 individuals identifying as being from Latin America ("The Canadian Census"). This demographic growth underscores the prominence of diasporic communities and their corresponding literary

⁵ The most important of these publishers were Ediciones Cordillera, founded in Ottawa by Leandro Urbina, Jorge Etcheverry, and other Chileans that brought out the first bilingual anthology of Chilean Canadian writing, *Chilean Literature in Canada / Literatura chilena en Canadá*, edited by Nain Nómez, in 1982 (Hazelton, "11 September" 183).

⁶ 7320 Chileans were admitted in Canada between 1980 and 1990, 4675 between 1991 and 2000, 1835 between 2001 and 2005, 1680 between 2006 and 2010, 1320 between 2011 and 2015, and 1830 between 2016 and 2021 ("Immigrant Population by Selected Places of Birth," Statistics Canada).

expressions within Canada. In this context, Wilfrid Siemerling suggests that “the literary history that fully integrates available accounts” within postcolonial Canada needs further attention, such as the works of “Latin-American groups and their literatures” because they “remain to be written” (“Canadian Literature and the Postcolonial” 210). It is from these postcolonial, and diasporic perspectives that English-language publications by female Chilean Canadian authors from the 1st and 1.5 generations of writers takes on a space within the spectrum of diasporic and major English Canadian letters. The community of Latinas and Latinos in Canada, furthermore, even though less significant in contrast to those in the United States, has shown a strong identity and cultural consolidation in Canada that helps enrich the significance of Canadian *Latinidad*, and within the spectrum of hemispheric studies (Adams, “The Northern Borderlands,” 313). English-language Chilean Canadian literary texts invite audiences from different backgrounds to transcend national Canadian and hemispheric American boundaries, and therefore, there is a continued degree of representation, and identity and cultural interchange between the various Latina/o identities and cultures of the Americas with other diasporic and major Anglo communities in Canada.

English-language Corpus and Working Definitions

*I'm a bilingual writer... [and]
What I wanted was to be able to reach as wide an audience as possible
because I believe that our [Chilean] stories need to be read and heard...*
—Carmen Rodríguez, *Re:Location* (2023)

As this epigraph states, Carmen Rodríguez notes the importance of reaching as wide an audience as possible because she strongly believes that Chilean Canadian stories need to be read and heard. With this observation, I aim to approach a scholarly gap that distinguishes this Latina/o Canadian literature now being directly written in English (as supposed to previous traditions of publishing in Spanish with English, and/or French translations). In addition, there is a need for further examination of this

cohort of writers, which is predominantly female.⁷ Exploring the varied visions represented by a group of Chilean Canadian writers, as a racialized community in Canada, is crucial for a comprehensive grasp of the Latina/o Canadian sphere. Specifically, it raises the question: how do female Chilean Canadian authors depict a Latino/a Canadian imaginary? To briefly answer this question, the themes of migration and exile in the literary works of Latina/o Canadians deeply resonate with inquiries into culture, identity, and memories. Explored in both Spanish and renewed English-language Chilean Canadian texts, these themes are fundamental in reshaping notions of home and belonging for female Chilean Canadian authors, contributing to the ongoing construction of their hybrid cultures and identities in exile.

Home and a Sense of Belonging

The term “home,” as explored in this study, is a multi-layered concept that extends beyond its physical classification (i.e., a native” home” in Chile in this context, but also an “adopted home” in exile in Canada). It encompasses symbolic and emotional dimensions, serving as a space of belonging, attachment, and personal affiliations. In addition to representing a place of security and familiarity, “home” transcends physical boundaries and encompasses more than just a physical dwelling or specific location. It encompasses broader social, cultural, and emotional aspects, reflecting an individual’s life experience in exile, sense of identity, cultural heritage, and personal connections. Moreover, “home” is understood as a transformative “space,” where transcultural, hybridized, and imagined elements come into play. Within this “space,” individuals negotiate their sense of belonging and navigate the complexities of their hybrid identities and cultural (trans-)formations.

⁷ There are very few male Latino Canadian authors who have written directly in the English language (i.e., Argentine Canadian Guillermo Verdecchia and Bolivian Canadian Alejandro Saravia), and no Chilean Canadian male writers to speak of.

Migration and Exile Narratives

The corpus of study focuses on narratives of migration and exile, delving into the multifaceted experiences of Latin American individuals displaced from their native countries and navigating Canada as a “new adopted home.” These narratives explore the complexities of leaving one’s homeland, the challenges of adopting a new home, the shifting to a new environment, but more significant, the evolving sense of identity and belonging amid these transitions. Central to these stories are themes of displacement, cultural adjustment, resilience, and the formation of hybrid identities within the context of migration and exile. Through narratives of migration and exile, therefore, female Chilean Canadian authors and their protagonists navigate the complexities of belonging or their need to fit (or not) in a newly adopted society. As expressed by their attachment to the idea of “home,” in these exiled narratives, Chilean Canadian protagonists also shed light on the diasporic group’s sense of belonging within the larger Latin American and Canadian contexts. From this initiative, the theme of “home” and belonging (or lack thereof) will be addressed as a common thread throughout the various chapters of this dissertation.

A Note on Methodology and Literature Review

I propose a postcolonial theoretical framework because it helps us study, on the one hand, how these literary narratives written by a group of female writers from a minority community in Canada, have started to represent a diasporic literature that denotes a Latina/o community. Categorizing Chilean Canadian literary texts as part of a diasporic literature in Canada, in other words, allows me to take a cue from Siemerling’s conclusion on “Canadian Literatures and the Postcolonial” and to observe how Latina/o Canadian literary production contributes to the understanding of Canada as a “postcolonial space” (210). While the concept of postcolonial literature generally refers to literary works produced by authors from countries that were once colonized by European powers, Chilean Canadian literary texts written by female authors offer an opportunity to explore the effects of colonization or neo-colonialization, including issues of identity and cultural hybridity, power dynamics, and resistance.

For a female Chilean writer to choose to write in English can be seen as a departure from the native Spanish language and literary Latina/o Canadian tradition to publish in translation. I see this move as a way to assert agency, challenge linguistic norms, and explore alternative local and hemispheric perspectives. Writing in English can also be a means of engaging with broader conversations, not only reaching a wider readership/audience but participating in the literary traditions of other diasporic and central English literatures in Canada. In this context, the writing of female Chilean authors in English can be considered a form of postcolonial literature. It reflects the complex dynamics of language, identity, and cultural influence in postcolonial and sometimes also decolonial settings. It challenges the tradition of writing in translation and by adopting a dominant language, it explores the intersections of colonial history, gender, class, and linguistic choices. Through their work, these female writers address issues of hybridity, cultural negotiation, and the complexities of living in a postcolonial society while giving a renewed meaning to their sense of belonging and hybrid exiled identities. It is important to note that each author's specific motivations and themes may vary, and not all female Chilean Canadian writers who write in English would necessarily align with the postcolonial literary tradition. However, the act of writing in English as a Latina/o Canadian writer can be seen as a potential entry point into discussions of postcolonial literature.

In this context, these women writers challenge traditional gender norms and the male-oriented archetype of the "Latin American writer" through their writing. Within a postcolonial framework, their literature can be perceived as inherently feminist, promoting gender equality, sexual liberation, and the creation of a decolonized space amplifying female voices. These narratives represent the diasporic Latina/o community's memories, offering insights into the journeys of exiled individuals and the transformations of cultures and identities among Chilean Canadian protagonists. Female Chilean Canadian authors continue to shape the notion of Latina/o Canadian imaginaries, or *Latinidad*. After an established representation in Guillermo Verdecchia's *Fronteras Americanas (American Borders)* (1993/2013), a well-known and iconic portrayal of the Latina/o Canadian experience, female Chilean Canadian

authors contribute to the literary space from where Latina/o Canadian voices speak directly in English from a hemispheric perspective and in dialogue with an imagined community of Latina/os of the Americas. This perspective also aligns with Benedict Anderson's influential work *Imagined Communities* (1983) in the sense that it gives light to an imagined community and its cultural identity within a "modern" nation-state. From here, by approaching these narratives as part of a "new" imagined community, or minority/diasporic community, Chilean Canadian literary texts offer a valuable opportunity "to examine and compare how minorities are constructed and transformed in different host [or adopted] societies" in exile (Armony, "Latin American Communities" 20). Additionally, as postcolonial literary texts, these narratives reveal the "ongoing relations of power, dominance, contest, dialogue and negotiation in a field originally constructed by the moment of colonial [or neo-colonial] contact" (Siemerling 171). Situating my corpus of study—*English-language* Chilean Canadian literary texts—as an example of a Latina/o Canadian diasporic literature in Canada allows for a comprehensive understanding of its significance within the broader spectrum of Latina/o and Canadian cultures, identities, and memories.

Plot Summaries for Literary Works and Authors' Biography, Works, Prizes and Trajectory

Chapter 2: The Two Carmens

In chapter two, throughout memories, I study how a family-pair of female authors, Carmen Rodríguez (mother), Carmen Aguirre (daughter), present a historical context that encompasses different generations of Latina/o Canadian migrants and exiles. By examining Carmen Rodríguez's short stories in *And a Body to Remember with* (1997), and her first novel written in English *Retribution* (2011), as well as Carmen Aguirre's *Something Fierce: Memoirs of a Revolutionary Daughter* (2011), and the latter's dramatic play *The Refugee Hotel* (2012), we gain insight into the origin of Chilean Canadian cultures and identities in Canada as an archive of memories. Their literary texts not only represent stories from the past and present but also convey future aspirations.

Representing the 1st Generation of Political Refugees in Canada: Carmen Rodríguez's Collection of Short Stories in English Language

Carmen Rodríguez represents the 1st generation of Chilean political refugees in Canada, and her short stories in *And a Body to Remember with* (1997), communicate the sociopolitical struggles that made thousands of Chileans to go into exile. These stories not only reveal the Chilean arrival, their activism, and rebellion towards Pinochet's dictatorship, but also disclose the sentiment of commitment by Chileans in exile, their feeling of resistance, and their life experiences as political refugees adopting Canada as their new home in exile. These fourteen short stories are described by different female voices, where in their need to communicate their existence either in exile, or their memories of their beloved Chile, they encounter the demand to be heard. Many times, under traumatic situations, these female voices express their sentiment of leaving Chile, arriving to Canada as the place that signifies a "black hole," but also the new welcoming territory that helps them believe in new beginnings. These are the stories of a whole 1st generation of female exiles from Chile whose aim is to continue to communicate their stories and memories because, as Laura, one of the last literary voices reminds us, she has "a mind and a body to remember with" (159). Like this motive, as the title of the whole collection suggests, the several stories of survival include how female protagonists communicate their need to remember, but also transmit their stories to create awareness about their life experiences in Chile and Canada. *And a Body to Remember with* starts with a literary narrative about how Estela de Ramírez, while arriving to Canada, falls into a black hole. With this story Rodríguez communicates how the arrival of political exiles to Canada in the 1970's came for many of them as a surprise. Chileans for the 1st generation of political refugees, later we learn, thought that their exile was only temporary. Nonetheless, later Estela de Ramírez also invite readers to note how many of these political refugees also were proud to become Canadian citizens. Beyond this initial story, *And a Body to Remember with*, portrays also how one's life in exile in Canada links to a nostalgic sentiment and dream of returning to Chile ("In the Company of Words" 59–61; "3-D" 93–97); showcases the stories of the day of the coup ("Hand-made Times" 73-76);

commemorates the “disappeared on the eleventh of September 1973” while recalling memories of how women lived under, and contributed to the resistance in Chile (“The Mirror” 37–43; and “Adios Pazzolla” 47–56; “Trespass” 79–100). In sum, this whole collection of short stories concludes recognizing that there are memories that have not been gone and will never be going to go away.

***Retribution*: Rodríguez’s Transgenerational Voices of Exile, Resistance, and Commitment**

Rodríguez’s first novel written in English language, *Retribution* (2011), communicates the life experience of a Chilean family in exile from three different transgenerational female voices: Tania, the main protagonist, a young girl who arrived in Canada when she was only two-years old; her mother Sol; and her grandmother, Soledad. The story develops out of a family tension that describes the consequences of September 11th, 1973. From the start, Tania receives a letter at her home in Vancouver from the Chilean Consulate, to arrange a sample of blood to be tested because they believe that her biological father may not be Manuel, the man she has always known as such, but her mother’s torturer from a concentration camp in Chile. The story develops out of this event, culminating in how Tania ultimately discovers the *retribution* that her life represents. Before knowing that the Canadian Embassy had approved their refugee status, Sol, Tania’s mother, still in a concentration camp, recognizes that her retribution was to keep on living and giving birth to her rapist’s child. That together, herself and her mother, Soledad, were going to raise her daughter to be a good person, not like her biological father. “We would not only pick the pieces and restore our own lives, but also nurture a loving and respectful human being ... That would be our revenge, our retribution,” Sol states (220). *Retribution* reconstructs the memories of the Martinez family mainly through the experiences of Sol and her mother Soledad. Tania, having firsthand recollections transmitted by her grandmother, also contributes significantly to these memories. Therefore, the narrative encapsulates the collective experiences of the entire family, illustrating their daily lives before the 1973 military coup. It vividly represents Sol’s harrowing suffering in the concentration camp, the family’s escape to Canada as political refugees, Sol’s involvement in “an important armed operation” back in Chile (258). Sol decides to return to Chile in 1986 to join the

arm resistance movement because, as she suggests, she had not only gotten the retribution she had strived for (260), but mainly because her return to Chile was “not about revenge, ... it [was] about justice” (262). The story is, therefore, circled by Sol’s ten months living underground, her subsequent return to Canada to reunite with her mother and daughter, and her final journey to Santiago. This last trip was made to search for the remains of Miguel, her disappeared lover, in a mass grave located in the Atacama Desert. Some of Miguel’s ashes were sprinkled by Sol on the waters of the Chanleufú River, Miguel’s favourite place growing up in Chile; the rest were taken to Canada, to Vancouver, the current “home to his daughter [Tania]” (326). *Retribution* resolves the family conflict, Sol recognizes that her daughter Tania was a product of a rape experiences during a tortured even in the concentration camp, however, she is able to commemorate her disappeared beloved *compañero*, bringing some of his remains to her daughter Tania, who spreads Miguel and her mother’s ashes into the waters of the Pacific Rim National Park in Vancouver Island. After an Indigenous ceremony, her friend’s sister, Fay, who was a shaman, helped put her mom and her dad’s spirits to rest, “the father I never met,” Tania suggests (333). Thirty-six years old Tania concludes, restating the meaning of the novel with her art exhibition and performance piece, also called *Retribution*, that her mother and her grandmother had opted for love and hope, instead of cruelty, “That’s how they achieved justice. I am their retribution.” After burning the letter that initially opened the novel, she continues, “‘Miguel is my father,’ I said to the dead letter in a firm, loud voice” (338) —the novel concludes.

Representing the 1.5 Generation: Carmen Aguirre, Symbolizing the Chilean Political Refugees’ Arrival in Canada

Carmen Aguirre represents the 1.5 generation of Chilean political refugees in Canada, and her play, *The Refugee Hotel* (2012) —first staged in 2009— describes the arrival of the main wave of Latin Americans to Canada after the 1970s (of what was going to end up being 7000 Chilean political exiles to Canada), but also the consequences of living under the Pinochet’s dictatorship. This play includes themes of torture, trauma, PTSD, resistance, and survival. *The Refugee Hotel* encapsulates the Chilean experience in Canada as it unfolds through the arrival of political exiles in a hotel in

Vancouver five months after the coup. Its protagonists sought stability, housing, employment, and gradually began to integrate, establishing Canada as their newfound home in exile. The main characters are the González family, Fat Jorge and Flaca, and their two kids, Manuelita and Joselito. Both parents arrived in Vancouver after having survived imprisonment and torture in Chile. As they recall their recent past life in Chile, they also inform their audiences about their experiences at the concentration camps, as they recount the physical and psychological wounds. As the story develops, the audience finds out that Flaca was part of the resistance movement, but Fat Jorge was not, and that after being captured, they are allowed freedom only with the condition to go immediately into exile. The whole family, in fact, reunites at an airplane leaving for Canada, and “flees” the consequences of living under Pinochet’s dictatorial regime. It is not until they arrive at the hotel in Vancouver that their own dramatic existence starts to reiterate their trauma and violence from their native home in Chile. Fat Jorge was tortured, and Flaca was raped, her nipples were cut off and her vagina “hurts like hell” (49). *The Refugee Hotel*, then, becomes a new provisional “safe home” in exile, from where the whole family, adults and young, start to reconstruct their life. Both, Flaca and Fat Jorge express how being detained in different concentration camps in Chile had made them change, how in the concentration camp, for example, Fat Jorge’s conscience was born (50). Yet, Flaca suggests that if he wants to be a revolutionary, that “starts right here, Right now,” at the Refugee Hotel (51). Flaca asks Fat Jorge to talk about his PTSD, about the torture that makes him have nightmares, but he cannot. *The Refugee Hotel* introduces other Chilean characters who, like Flaca and Fat Jorge, arrived at the hotel in Vancouver, presenting another layer that juxtaposes the González couple and how they were liberated as refugees in Canada, but how they were all tortured too: Cristina, Calladita (Isabel), Manuel, and Juan. In addition, a Canadian character is introduced, Bill O’Neill, the hippie, the only Canadian character who speaks (broken) Spanish, and who also just arrived from Chile. He was held at the concentration camp in the Santiago’s National Stadium for four weeks. Bill O’Neill represents the Canadian solidarity who supported Chilean political refugees when they arrived in Canada after the coup. “Oh, comrades. My hearth is big with you ... Me want welcome you chilis to Canada, my country. Me

toast you for survive, for come here, for enrich my country with your wisdom” (61). The climax happens before the end of act one, when after a heated discussion about the social response in Chile towards the coup and the Pinochet dictatorship, Manuel and Cristina try to kill themselves. The next act starts to show how everything seem to be taking on its own path, Calladita now talks, and is starting a job as a cleaning lady at the hotel. Bill O’Neill finds a job for the rest, Fat Jorge and Flaca, and the kids are also starting school the following week. The Interfaith Church donates furniture and other things, so the González family move to a house. Juan and Calladita, and Manuel and Cristina are now together, “things have gotten hot and heavy here at the refugee hotel in the last couple of nights,” Bill O’Neill notes (123). At the last scene, a picture of the family is taken, with the rest of the characters, they all remain frozen, while adult Manuelita breaks away, referring to the life of each one of the characters thirty years later. Adult Manuelita refers to what happen to her family; “Flaca, my mom, worked at the cannery for many years. She put herself through school again, revalidated her degree and she’s now one of the top professors in pedagogy at SFU. Fat Jorge, my dad, worked at the steel mill for a decade” (125). However, she also communicates part of Aguirre’s own story, as we learn in her first *Memoir*, below: “My mother eventually left him [Fat Jorge, her dad] for Bill O’Neill (125). Finally, adult Manuelita concludes: “The receptionist [from the hotel] filled a wall with photographs, because many, many, many more refugees came to stay at the refugee hotel. From Guatemala, El Salvador, Vietnam, Iran, Ethiopia, Somalia, Yugoslavia, Colombia, Iraq ... It takes courage to remember, it takes courage to forget. It takes a hero to do both” (126) —the play concludes.

Aguirre’s 1st Memoir: One of the Most Recognized Chilean Canadian Stories

Carmen Aguirre’s *Something Fierce: Memoirs of a Revolutionary Daughter* (2011) mainly describes an autobiographical narrative, i.e., the life experience of a young girl and her journey into womanhood. Thru the voice of Carmen Aguirre herself, *Something Fierce* starts by describing Aguirre’s life going back to Chile after been granted refugee status in Canada. With her mother and younger sister, Aguirre embarks on a trip that reflects on how many Chileans reversed their life in exile to join

the armed resistance movement, a coordinates reserve migration phenomena known as the Return Plan (Part one, pp. 1-96).⁸ In the story, we learn that Aguirre was six-years old when she and her family fled to Canada as political refugees after the military coup of September 11, 1973, which removed Salvador Allende—the Chilean democratically elected and first socialist president of Latin America—and brought dictator Augusto Pinochet to power. By 1979, furthermore, as occurred with many other families in exile, Aguirre’s parents had already gotten a divorce, and her mother —Carmen Rodríguez—, had moved out “to live with some women in a communal apartment” (3): a story Aguirre revisits in *Anywhere but Here* (2021), and which I analyze in chapter three in this study. While this memoir represents mainly Aguirre’s and her family’s life experiences traveling through South America (Chile, Argentina, Bolivia, Peru, and Brazil) in the decade between 1979 to 1989, it is also a narrative that includes the stories of her own compatriots, aunts, uncles, and cousins—as she calls them—representing a collective layer in the story. One of the most significant characters in the story, beyond her own mother, is Bob, her stepfather to whom she always felt “great love” and who joined them in Lima after they arrived in 1979 (17). After their arrival in Lima, Aguirre communicates how right from the start, she started to learn how to live underground, and under the resistance movement. At such a young age, she learns to stay home alone with her younger sister for days, while her mother and Bob went on different operations. It was during this time when Aguirre first thinks that she did not have the courage other teenagers had to fight, like other boys in Peru, or Bolivia, but soon learns how to do so, and how to stand up for her already revolutionary beliefs. It is during this time that she starts to undergo a sociological awakening, and to recognize what they are really doing in the South.

This year, 1979, had been deemed the Year of the Return ... Now I understood what we had been doing there [in Bolivia] ... The Return Plan was very

⁸ The Return Plan is, therefore, a new imagined site of enunciation that claims space for condemnatory stories of an organized and coordinated return to South America, that started as a called to all Chileans in exile to participate in the resistance movement.

dangerous,

I understood. All three countries bordering Chile—Peru, Bolivia and Argentina—were under right-wing dictatorship, and Operation Condor was in full swing. Captured resistance members were either disappeared by local secret police or illegally transported across borders and handed over to Pinochet. (49)

This quote encapsulates the plot underlining the Return Plan and the resistance against Pinochet's dictatorship, stories that condense the commitment of Aguirre to narrate this story. This is a story of resistance and commitment, struggle and survival that includes memories describing historical facts that represent not only Chile, but also other countries under dictatorial regimes in South America during this decade. Certain historical dialogues condemn what was happening, such as, when Soledad, one of the underground characters argues, that "Pinochet is part of a much larger military and economic plan being orchestrated all over Latin America, with firms roots in the North ... The twenty-five Chilean economists who were offered scholarship at the University of Chicago have implemented a brand-new economy in Chile, referred as neo-liberalism," Aguirre interrupts her: they are "The Chicago Boys" (110-1). The story concludes when the resistance has dissolved, when Aguirre is twenty-one and starts her new life back in Vancouver, pursuing another dream: "I became an actor and a playwright," Aguirre writes in February 2010, "often performing my own work, which was political in a high personal way. I led community workshops using the technique ... Theatre of the Oppressed ... [while] Latin America, like the rest of the world, was overrun by neoliberalism ..." (268-9). Finally, as part of the acknowledgments, Aguirre thanks one of the members of the resistance for making her/him promise to tell this story, "because it has not been told enough, [and] because it is a story that must not die with the people who lived it" (277).

Chapter 3: A Literature of the Borderlands

Chapter three delves into the identity and cultural evolution of Latina/o Canadian protagonists post-exile, tracing their transition into hybrid individuals. Specifically, I analyze how Carmen Aguirre and her work *Anywhere but Here* (2021), have

contributed to the development of a literature centered on the borderlands. Situated within the framework of border studies and hemispheric perspectives, this chapter examines the evolution of the concept of “home” and the associated sense of belonging to specific borderland spaces among different generations of Latin Americans in Canada. While in chapter two, “home” refers to the geographical space left behind in Latin America and the desired place of return; in chapter three, “home” takes on a sense of in-betweenness, reflecting on processes of acculturation, transculturation, and hybridization.

Aguirre’s Sense of Belonging *Anywhere but Here*

Carmen Aguirre’s play, *Anywhere but Here* (2021), represents a family of political exiles in Canada trying some to fit into Canadian living, but others, aiming to return to their beloved home in Chile. This narrative illustrates how different generation of protagonists demonstrate their individual construction of culture and identity after having experienced living in exile. *Anywhere but Here* develops out of a family dispute, when Chilean Canadian Manuel finds his separated wife, Laura, kissing the hippie in a party. After this initial scene, Manuel decides to go “home,” so he grabs Carolita and Lupe—his two daughters—to start a physical return to Latin America by car, leaving Laura behind. This story not only describes the nostalgic sentiment of returning home, that many Chilean members of the diaspora had since they arrived in Canada as political exiles. Set up in different temporalities, mainly 1979 (in Vancouver) and 1979/2010 (near the U.S./Mexico border), this play represents the different meanings of migrating, yet representing how after going into exile one never is the same. All three characters represent the 1st and 1.5 generations that, from different perspectives communicate their emotions about the North (an adopted home) and their native home in Chile. The play mainly reflects on a reversing path of return in contrast with other Latin American migrants trying to reach North America. In short, all migrants “are encircled by past, present, and future in a collective vision that takes them, and the audience, into the compelling experiences of people crossing and guarding the border” (Cover Page). Towards the end of the play, Laura, the mother of this exiled family catches up with the rest of the family at the border between the U.S.

and Mexico, and they all end up expressing the need for a physical, but also internal search for the meaning home and the sense of where they “truly” belong, either to Vancouver, Chile—or the borderland. *Anywhere but Here*, however, does not resolve the family conflict, one does not find out if the family ends up crossing the US-Mexico border into Latin America, or if they go back to exile in Vancouver. This open ending, suggest, therefore, how the experience in exile leaves this Chilean family “Floating who knows where,” as the final play directions suggest, as “The piece of highway that the family is traveling on breaks off” (139). As we will see in my analysis, these play directions make readers wonder about the continuous feeling of uncertainty, that is, how exiled members continue to have a sentiment of belonging to an unknown space, or in between the dichotomy of “home” and “exile.”

Chapter Four: Including Indigenous Chilean and Canadian Voices

Chapter four shifts its focus towards the decolonization of the Canadian stage through the representation of racialized voices of Indigenous characters both from Latin America and Canada. This chapter highlights a hemispheric perspective that encompasses both Indigenous Mapuche and First Nations views, contributing to a “trans-Indigenous” vision (Noell), and representing the Two Eyed Seeing guiding principle of First Nation values in Canada. As an Indigenous Mapuche migrant character, the protagonist in *Journey to Mapu*, by Lina de Guevara, embarks on an imaginary journey to reconnect with his native home in Chile, embracing his Mapuche identity and engaging in self-discovery.

Lina de Guevara’s Collaborative Work: Indigenous Mapuche Co-existing with First Nation Voices

Lina de Guevara represents the 1st generation of Chilean political refugees in Canada, and her play, *Journey to Mapu* (2013), communicates a series of recollections by its main protagonist the dual character, young Tato, and his adult self, Lautaro, a Chilean Mapuche refugee in Canada. Tato/Lautaro constant memories and dialogues with each other and with other Indigenous First Nation characters helps *Journey to Mapu* to represent Indigenous visions of a hemispheric unison. The play exposes Tato as a

representative of the 1.5 generation of exiles in Canada, reflecting on stories of Chilean migration and Mapuche history. However, his experiences serve as a foundation for his adult daily activism, advocating for Mapuche communities both in Chile and in Canada. As a dual character, likewise, throughout recollected memories, Tato/Lautaro mirrors migrant issues as to how young migrant resist but also adopt to live in exile. *Journey to Mapu* represents how due to his experiences in Canada, and his encounters with other Indigenous characters, Tato continues to construct his culture and identity, and eventually, embrace his true Indigenous heritage.

Young Tato is a seventeen-year-old Chilean migrant in Canada. His physical appearance resembles also a First Nations teenager, “black hair, black eyes, and a charming smile” and therefore often he is mistaken as a First Nation kid. His English is poor, with a heavy Latin American accent” (355). Adult Lautaro is a thirty-seven-year-old man, but “His English is fluent, with a very slight Latin America accent” (355). The play is set between Vancouver, B.C. in 1990, and the present, therefore, the play happens in different temporalities, and places. For example, during the first scene, a Mapuche healer appears as if it were young Tato’s imagined world (in Chile), a “distant memory, like a dream.” This reflects on what Tato can remember, not yet as a recognized Mapuche himself, but as what “most of Chilean population knows: through the little that’s taught in school about the Mapuche world view, through family stories, or through infrequent encounters with Mapuches” (367). In this context, as suggested by the play directions, some Spanish and Mapuzungun dialogues (the language of the Mapuche) do not need translation, they “add to the mythical quality of the scenes” (367). On stage, there is a duality represented by two worlds: on the one corner, there is Lautaro’s office, symbolizing a contemporary world in Vancouver. On a different level on the stage, there is Lorena’s Indigenous space; she is an Indigenous character from Canada who during the whole play, “works, [and] finish[es] the embroidery in the button blanket... [with] totem poles suggested in the background” (357). Such a duality between a contemporary “Western,” Lautaro’s office, juxtaposed with Lorena’s “area” on stage, is constantly evoked throughout the play. In fact, there are many opportunities for the audience to notice the juxtaposition of time, spaces, and

Indigenous cultures, and in contrast to Western views. To illustrate, in the first scene, two main Indigenous characters acknowledge each other as a sign of connection, but also contrast. In this sense, right from the start, the play develops as juxtaposing the different visions characters represent between Lorena and Mapu, a Mapuche healer. In further scenes, there are other pair of characters that represent such duality, young Tato, and Jake (another Indigenous character from Canada), and, Tato/Lautaro's grandmother and Lorena's grandmother.

After a mystical introductory scene by the Mapuche healer ceremony, and a poem by Lautaro both in Spanish and Mapuzungun; the story continues to develop with a dialogue between young Tato, and adult Lautaro. While they both reflect on their individual feelings about how both see their exodus from Chile, arrival to Canada, and the feeling of living in exile; mainly, how adult Lautaro argues he was happy when his parents told him that they were leaving Chile, but young Tato affirms, "Me destruyeron la vida ... Nothing for me here..." (371). Adult Lautaro also presents the historical context and the reasons why, as a youth, he and his family fled Chile during Pinochet's regime. Moreover, he explains that it was because his father was a leader at the teacher's union in Chile, and therefore was imprisoned for three years, that they went into exile to Canada. At the same time, adult Lautaro reflects on his memories of his grandmother, and about a Mapuche historical episode of survival and resistance against the *winca*, the white men who wanted the Mapuche out of some fertile fields. "They said the good lands were wasted on the ignorant Indians ... Nobody care about dead Indians in those days" (370). This story is presented on stage juxtaposed by Lorena's following historical monologue, "In 1541, the Spanish conquistador Pedro de Valdivia arrived in Chile ..." (370) representing how as a First Nation character, Lorena has already learned about Chilean history. Followed by Lautaro's phone call revealing a speech against the construction of a dam in Mapuche territories in Chile. "Their lands are being seized, people are getting killed ... Yes, I have documentation, I have pictures" (371). A similar contrasting technique is used in the play in different scenes, which helps audiences to learn about each character, but

also to juxtapose Indigenous cultures, and contrast each other perspectives aligned with Western standards.

The plot takes a turn right after adult Lautaro tell us that it was not until he got to Canada that he realized his grandmother's stories came from the Mapuche. Then, young Tato has an encounter with an Indigenous character, Jack, with whom he discusses his arrival to Canada as a political exile, but also accepts his Indigenous heritage. The audience learns, at this point, that the Latin American stories of exile in Canada are not new but go way back to 1915. Jack tells young Tato the story of the first contact of Latin Americans with First Nation people of the Vancouver Island. The play continues presenting the different struggles by Indigenous peoples both in Chile, and in Canada. To illustrate, in another scene, young Tato is beaten by a few drunken white construction men because he looked "Indian." This event makes young Tato even more frustrated about living in Canada that suggest his parents to go back to Chile, but they conclude that their life is better off in Canada, so they stay.

The play concludes proving how, in exile, cultures and identities are always changing. "Something started to change ..." suggests adult Lautaro (398), after young Tato makes friends with Lorena, and after listening the story of Jack, Tato suggests that he may change his name to Lautaro. At this point, Lorena has already finishing embroidering the button blanket that signifies "the tree of life" design (397). This is followed by a speech that adult Lautaro is giving as a lecture: "The history, the tale of a people is a continuum, their hopes, their joys, their struggles, and their dreams are revealed in their world vision ... The Mapuche demand to be included, demand to be heard," he concludes (399). A louder sound of Mapuche trumpets interrupt the scene, while lights change—the stage direction offers. One sees the different Indigenous characters unified in one single song, standing around Machi, the Mapuche healer, who suggests through a poem, to let go of the darkness, while Lorena and young Tato, sitting on the floor, start eating from the same plate, as part of a "Mapuche friendship ritual" (400). As this synopsis suggests, an important part of this play is the inclusion of intersected Indigenous perspectives of the Americas, making this play more

inclusive in nature. These diverse stories intersect with one another, while overcomes stereotyping and racism in Canada.

Conclusion

This dissertation is structured around three case studies that utilize various theoretical frameworks to explore how English-language Chilean Canadian narratives represent or imagine a Latina/o Canadian community. The construction of Canadian *Latinidad*, originally established through Latina/o Canadian memories and narratives in Spanish, persists and extends its influence in English-language publications. Chilean Canadian literary texts, in their renewed form, furthermore, continue to shed light on the reasons behind Chileans' initial migration to Canada, and the ongoing cultural and identity formation of Latina/o individuals (and their communities) as hybrid individuals. It is essential to recognize, however, the significance of female authors in incorporating diverse racialized voices into the Latina/o Canadian imaginary, specifically emphasizing the inclusion of Indigenous perspectives, ultimately, showcasing the continuous construction of Canadian *Latinidad*.

After their arrival as political exiles in the 1970s, the authors featured in this dissertation, Carmen Rodríguez, Carmen Aguirre, and Lina de Guevara, with their English-language publications, have contributed enormously to the Latina/o Canadian imaginary as constructed within the spectrum of diasporic cultures and identities in Canada. Within a multicultural framework, such an imaginative construct contributes to the “visibilization” of Latina/o Canadian groups, which, Gabrielle Etcheverry states, such literary texts of Latina/o Canadians exist at the intersection of the dominant “Anglo-Canadian national” and the transitional Latina/o cultural formations (2). This intersection highlights the relatively unnoticed presence of Latina/o groups within local and hemispheric literary, and cultural frameworks. In this context, English-language Chilean Canadian literary texts play a crucial role in making Latinas/os more “visible” within the Canadian context.

Beyond exposing how literary texts depict the construction of a Latina/o diaspora in Canada, the central approach of this study is to categorize this emerging

wave of Latina/o Canadian literary texts as postcolonial, primarily due to their authorship by female Chilean Canadian writers. These narratives construct a Latina/o Canadian imaginary that originates from an archive of memories, from which Chilean Canadian writers represent the journey of Chileans from their exodus after the 1973 Chilean coup to the present. These writers are part of such a diasporic community of exiled Latin Americans, who since their arrival in the 1970s, made the effort to write (some to continue writing) in order to communicate, but also inform and create awareness about Chileans (as political exiles) in Canada. All three authors featured in this study create a production of an archive of memories that within their literary narratives, communicate not only individual/autobiographical accounts but also represent a collective memory that depicts, consequently, the culture and identities of Latinas and Latinos in Canada. Chilean Canadian literary texts, consequently, can be defined as decolonial, as these authors deliberately position their work within a space where both, historical legacies and contemporary intricacies are converged, thereby encapsulating the essence of these postcolonial artists and their Chilean Canadian culture. Authors write to reach further Anglo audiences (those who cannot read in Spanish), which helps them to open a space for further Latina/o recognition within the Canadian letters.

Finally, this dissertation builds upon the foundational insights derived from previous studies on Latina/o Canadian literature, predominantly written in Spanish. Consequently, one of my primary objectives is to draw inspiration from the scholarly approaches employed in analyzing the literary works of Latina/o authors in Canada. My dissertation contributes to the ongoing exploration of postcolonial Chilean Canadian literary production, specifically by tracing its evolution over time. By utilizing the diasporic Chilean Canadian literature as a case study, I am able to observe the notable transformations this literature has undergone in recent decades. Right from the start, I identify the authors' need for publishing in the English language as the most predominant development in such a Latina/o literary production. Moreover, while my analysis aligns with the works of previous dissertations such as Gabrielle Etcheverry's *Cultures of Coloniality*, it also differs from it because I dispute the fact that there are

no Latina/o English language publications in Canada. That is, while it is true that Chilean Canadian literary texts continue to have a “marginal” position within Canadian “multicultural literature,” it does not necessarily rely “on hybrid language strategies such as translation to reach non-Spanish audiences” as it was the case when Etcheverry wrote her dissertation (20). There is now a significant Latina/o literary production in the English language that non-Spanish speakers can approach “as key discursive tools for classifying people as either belonging to or being excluded from particular notional cultures via, for example, specific linguistic and ethnic affiliations” in Canada (G. Etcheverry 20). Therefore, a new perspective emerges when examining the literary works of first-generation migrants and exiles to Canada, as exemplified by Carmen Rodríguez. Traditionally, the theme of “home” evoked a sense of nostalgia and a desire to return to one’s native country in Latin America. However, more recently, even authors from the first generation who straddle the intergenerational border between 1st and 1.5 generations, like Rodríguez herself, express a desire to remain in Canada. After residing in Canada for 48 years, Rodríguez states that Vancouver has become her home (*Re:Location*). Moreover, as I will expand in chapter three, within a more modern, postcolonial identity (of the borderlands), and because of their particular life experiences in exile, the 1.5 generation of exiles in Canada have “adopted” Canada as their “home” (see Carolita in Aguirre’s *Anywhere but Here*). Furthermore, these literary texts also represent postcolonial narratives (in theatrical dramas) where like the playwrights themselves, their protagonists also start to show signs of decolonial thinking (and doing) while featuring topics related to a spiritual “home” that addresses the intersectionality between Mapuche and First Nations’ characters.

My dissertation aims to study the journey expressed by politically exiled authors to better understand the continued development of the Chilean, and by extension, Latina/o Canadian literary production. The three Chilean authors featured in this study not only communicate their individual (and familiar) experiences, but their stories also portray an imaginary informed by the understanding of a diverse group of Latin American protagonists. While these authors write from a particular West Coast

side of Canada, their individual and collective experiences also give a broader meaning to the representation of Latina/o Canadians elsewhere. As part of such a Latina/o diaspora, nonetheless, Chilean Canadian authors inform us of a diasporic minority that comes to assist in contributing to multiculturalism in Canada. Finally, because these authors belong to different generations (1st and 1.5 generations), they also help represent a transgenerational vision of such a Latina/o diaspora, including different voices, with different perspectives that help construct a more universal Canadian *Latinidad*. As part of the Chilean diaspora, the authors featured in this dissertation represent the memories of a Latina/o Canadian community in exile that, from a modern, postcolonial perspective, writers are claiming space within the spectrum of diasporic Canadian letters. Therefore, to conclude my analysis in this dissertation, I point to the need for a more inclusive Canadian canon. As part of the multiple minority societies in Canada, Chilean Canadian writers, due to their English-language diasporic literature, must now be included as Canadian literature within the frameworks of Canadian handbooks of literature such as the *Oxford Handbook of Canadian Literature*, and *The Cambridge Companion to Canadian Literature*, as Siemerling proposes.

Chapter 1

Situating Chilean Canadian Texts as a Diasporic and Postcolonial Literature

This initial chapter set out to discuss the pre-existing literature review and display the thesis' theoretical and methodological framework. It explores the significance of English-language Chilean Canadian literature as the representation of a Latina/o diasporic community, examining how it contributes to the understanding of history, culture, identity, the meaning of “home” and the perception authors and protagonists give to a sense of belonging. This analysis employs cultural memory as a theoretical framework for the construction of an *archive*—in the sense that literature might be said to capture and store noteworthy events as memories. The primary focus of this analysis centers, in other words, on the construction and exploration of literary archived memories: the journey from Chilean exodus to Canada in the 1970s and 80s, the formation of a diasporic Latina/o Canadian community, and the diasporic literature that has emerged as a result. This chapter, then, highlights the role of female Chilean Canadian authors and their literary works in portraying the experiences of their community. It demonstrates how these texts serve as a repository of memories, preserving and representing diverse transgenerational voices within the community while challenging dominant narratives and contributing to the evolving landscape of Latina/o Canadian and English Canadian literature.

Postcolonial and cultural memory theoretical approaches, furthermore, help me recognize the need for further attention to the study of English-language Chilean Canadian literature as a source of memories, and, simultaneously, how this literature, due to its English language publications, has started to become recognized along other diasporic literatures in Canada. In the last few decades, in other words, a number of female authors from Chile have developed a diasporic English language Latina/o Canadian literature; this is the category to which Chilean Canadian literature belongs. Analysis of the Chilean Canadian voices within this diasporic literature illustrates how authors' post-1973 perspectives link memories that continue to influence their sense of

self in the present. More significantly, this analysis demonstrates the authors' ongoing need to write and publish—now in the English language—about significant moments to convey the exile journey to younger generations, highlighting its enduring relevance to their present and future needs. In this context, Ros suggests that “Supported by human rights activists, [Chileans] started to build a counter-official narrative in which military repression was presented as a ‘cruel and unending rupture of life, an open wound that cannot heal’” (108). For authors from Chile, writing about life experiences of oppression, suffering, resistance, and survival under the Chilean military regime—1970s to 1990s—not only became noteworthy memories, but they are also reminiscences that inform historical Chilean memories as versions of how protagonists reimagine the “terror” lived during Pinochet’s dictatorship, but also after, during the post-1973 era. These are significant memories that, as noted by Carmen Rodríguez, cannot be easily forgotten because there is “a mind and a body to remember with” (*And a Body* 159).

Certainly, this historical period characterized by years of military and government authoritarianism encompass themes associated with condemnatory narratives portrayed through the individual and collective stories of the protagonists⁹—such as the participation in The Return Plan and armed resistance movement that authors convey in their stories. In her first memoir, Carmen Aguirre dedicates a whole chapter to communicate the significance of The Return Plan as a collective meaningful memory of the post-1973 Chilean era (*Something Fierce* 1-107). These are memories that depict the loss of family members and friends, their life experiences of detention,

⁹ My understanding of individual and collective stories takes cue from the reconstruction of collective memories in Susan Crane and Alon Confino. Crane characterizes collective memory as a conceptualization that embodies a continuous sense of the past and serves as the framework for historical remembrance (Crane 1373). In addition, from a historical context, Confino views memory as a cultural practice interwoven with other practices, collectively forming the mental horizon of society. Moreover, the significance of a memory is determined by an individual’s association with different groups, such as religious, family, professional, local, or national affiliations, impacting both the individual and the group’s perception of memory (Confino 81).

imprisonment, rape, and torture, but also survival and the exclusion/inclusion in a new Canadian way of life. These are experiences and memories that remain latent in the authors' lives and continue, consequently, renegotiating the Chilean—and by extension—the Latina/o Canadian imaginary. These reconstructed memories, as presented in these renewed English-language Chilean Canadian texts, give new meaning to the historical post-1973 era, while also commemorating the thousands of Chileans, and other Latin Americans, who were killed or disappeared.

Female Chilean Canadian writers, in this vein, as members of a transnational Latina/o community, have launched a multinational and transgenerational dialog on what it means to be Latina/o in “modern/colonial” North American societies. Here I am taking cues from Walter Dignolo, and his understanding of a modern/colonial world, a system referring to a global and socio-political framework, that emerged during the European colonial expansion, but that continues to shape the world today. Dignolo would contend that this modern/colonial view contributes to the ongoing reinforcement of a colonial/postcolonial, but mainly decolonial perspective—i.e., he would call it a delinking process that recognizes and values diverse knowledge, visions, and cultures, challenging Eurocentric/Imperial foundations and structures of power and inequality (*On Decoloniality*). As a structure for this chapter, within this context, the realm of literary exploration let us embark on a multidimensional journey, illuminating the intricate interplay of the Chilean Canadian diaspora, postcolonialism, and hybrid identities through the lens of Chilean Canadian literature.

The central aim of this chapter, and the overall dissertation, is to examine the application of different theoretical approaches focused on Chilean Canadian literature as “a cultural institution and archive of memories” (Assmann 98). Initially, these works are positioned as embodiments of diasporic and postcolonial literary expressions, reflective of the lived experiences of a community navigating the complexities of displacement, identity, and cultural transformation. In the following subsections, I present my understanding of the construction of a literary archive of memories (1.1), followed by an exploration of each theoretical framework (by chapter, and in each case study). Firstly, within the context of cultural memory (subsection

1.2), Chilean Canadian literature is examined as a repository of historical memories, wherein the literary texts themselves become vessels of remembrance, preserving the legacy of pivotal moments in the journey of the diaspora. Subsequently, due to the historical recollection of events, this subsection would also serve as a literature review. Secondly, embracing a hemispheric perspective (subsection 1.3), this literature is contemplated as a literary embodiment of the borderlands, wherein the intersection of cultures, identities, and narratives gives rise to a rich tapestry of interconnected and transnational stories. Lastly, framed within the context of intersectionality (subsection 1.4), these texts are explored for their capacity to extend beyond their immediate borders, providing an inclusive space for the narratives of other racialized Latina/o Canadian minorities. Through this exploratory journey, the chapter seeks to unravel the intricate interweaving theoretical frameworks of cultural memory, border studies, hemispheric perspectives, and representational intersectionality that will let us study English-language Chilean Canadian literature.

Ultimately, my analysis aims to demonstrate the evolving nature of this diasporic literature and its position within the spectrum of the Anglo-Canadian canon. By examining texts and their literary significance, I seek to illustrate how Chilean Canadian authors contribute to mapping a renewed journey—in English language—from where we can understand the processes of political exiles: their arrival to Canada, their development as a diasporic community, but eventually, the shifting landscape of Latino/a Canadian, and English Canadian literature. Chilean Canadian literary narratives provide valuable insights into the sociocultural perspectives of a diasporic community, highlighting the contrast between their experiences within Anglo societies, and the reconstruction of an imaginary “adopted home” in exile in Canada. These narratives contribute to the ongoing process of identity formation in the context of Latin American exile, enabling a deeper understanding of the complexities inherent in this diasporic experience. This dissertation provides, in other words, an understanding of the journey these writers, and their protagonists have gone through to continue developing their identities and cultural formations from exile, and

additionally, how they have created a hybrid Latina/o diaspora in Canada starting in the 1970s and 1980s to this present.

1.1 Literary Review: Constructing a Literary Archive of Memories

Prior to examining the ways in which various theoretical approaches enhance my literary analysis in each subsequent chapter, it is important to first explore my understanding of the concept of constructing a literary archive of memories, since it is the theoretical framework, I use throughout the various consecutive chapters.

Memories, as I see them in this analysis, are forms of literary expressions, but also “reconstructed images” that provide protagonists’ accounts of themselves as active participants or witnesses of their own history through time—i.e., these protagonists are survivors of the post-1973 Chilean era bearing witness of individual and collective experiences (Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory*). Drawing on Halbwachs, for Susan Crane, collective memory is “a conceptualization that expresses a sense of the continual presence of the past ... [and] is also the framework in which historical remembering occurs” (1373). Moreover, as reconstructed images, the Chilean Canadian imaginary is represented in these diasporic literary texts as “socially constructed” memories (1373). Individual expressions (or past historical images) inform also the collective, that is, a transgenerational vision.

My approximation to the study of memory, as a physical human action, interprets individual and collective remembering and forgetting as a social practice of identity construction. This interpretation is derived from Erll’s argument that memory, within “memory studies, is currently ‘more practiced than theorized’” (“An Introduction” 2). The individual physical capacity of remembering and forgetting is always embedded in social networks and relations within sociocultural groups and institutions. The notion that an individual’s memory is closely linked to collective memories, indicates that storytellers remember within the context of their communities and social milieus (Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory*). One never remembers in isolation. An individual act of remembering and forgetting is always collective in character, and the reconstruction of an individual’s past in a given present moment

happens only in light of collective connotation: one remembers only if, as a member of a social group, one gives importance to such particular past events. While individual memories are usually based on personal life experiences, the ability to remember within social networks allows protagonists to recall and give meaning to collective memories. In this vein, an approximation to literary narratives under cultural memory studies benefits me not only to answer questions about individual and transgenerational Chilean Canadian identities, such as how the protagonists represent “the interplay of present and past in sociocultural contexts” (Erll, “An Introduction” 2), but also to point out the representation of the self on the basis of shared memories.

Social and political responses to dictatorial crimes shape the modes of remembering. There is, therefore, a useful approach to the study of individual life experiences as memories that construct the identity of oneself, while at the same time representing a transgenerational sentiment to reconstruct a historical past. Erll has noted that “memory within and between generations is a significant form of collective remembering” (“An Introduction” 11). Both individual and collective (i.e., transgenerational) memories, then, as historical knowledge, communicate facts, speeches, stories, beliefs, practices, and symbolic representations of history, as the reconstruction of the Chilean Canadian imaginary. Such specific memories must not only motivate different contradictory emotions but also make individuals re-act to them. Why do Chileans choose to communicate certain historical and sociopolitical past events instead of other memories?

In addition, the memory of an individual survivor is explicitly understood as communal/political, and therefore, connected with the aim for social justice. One illustrative example suffices here; the narrative recounting the events of September 11th, 1973, as articulated by Carmen Aguirre, delineates an individual survivor’s experience. Even after numerous years, the recollection persists as an emblematic memory in her personal narrative. Simultaneously, it holds a collective dimension, shedding light on how distinct generations reacted to that specific date. Furthermore, it possesses political significance, as evidenced by the concluding quote, which reaffirms the Chilean commitment to never forget. Instead, the commitment is to remember with

the purpose of transmitting these narratives to younger generations. While listening to the final speech by the socialist president Salvador Allende on September 11th, 1973, the parents of Carmen Aguirre tell her—and her younger sister—, “Listen, Compañero Allende has something important to say, and no matter what happens to us, *you must always remember this moment*” (*Something Fierce* 54; emphasis added). As an individual survivor, and the protagonist of her own memoirs, Aguirre reconstructs historical and socially remembered “images” that have been, and continue to be embodied in her individual memory, but that are also reflected in a transgenerational and transnational Chilean history. Aguirre makes a connection, that is, a link between written stories, as Taylor would argue, within the social “repertoire of embodied practice/knowledge” and memories (*The Archive* 19). Taylor states, “Archival memory exists as documents, maps, literary texts, letters, archaeological remains, bones, videos, films, CDs, all those items supposedly resistant to change” (19). As a writer of archival memories, then, Aguirre concludes her memoirs in this context: “Thank you to one of the founding members of the resistance, who, on his deathbed, made me promise to tell this story,” or as we would argue here, she continues writing about this story “because it has not been told enough, [and] because it is a story that must not die with the people who lived it” (*Something Fierce* 277).

Based on the historical and sociopolitical stories portrayed by Chilean Canadian authors, one can see Chilean Canadian literary “images” as part of an archive of memories, or a Chilean imaginary that illuminates this diasporic community in exile. The motive why Latin Americans fled their countries, their arrival and Chilean community formation in Canada, the meaning they give to a “home” in exile and the sense of belonging in contrast to their homeland in Latin America are archived memories. These are “images” that illustrate the sociopolitical significance of September 11th, 1973, and its aftermath—the post-1973 Chilean era—, as a pivotal temporality of this renewed English-language literature. I argue, following Steve J. Stern and his coined idea of an “emblematic memory,” that *The Return Plan* is a renewed framework of remembrance and forgetting that signifies, at the same time, a new site of enunciation. For Stern, an “emblematic memory” refers “not to a single

remembrance of a specific content, not to a concrete or substantive ‘thing,’ but to a framework that organizes meaning, selectivity, and countermemory” (105). From this context, therefore, English language Chilean Canadian literary texts not only continue to address the post-1973 Chilean era as a source of memories; authors from the 1.5 generation of exiles, like Carmen Aguirre in this study, have started to showcase The Return Plan serves as a new emblematic source of memories that unfold, interact, and counterpoint with a “loose memory” and the idea of “memory knots” on the Chilean diasporic community that demand attention, (re)calling, publicity, and contentiousness (Stern 104).

Nonetheless, we continue to argue that the process of remembering one’s past is socially constructed (Halbwachs), and therefore, transgenerational perspectives shape the various ways in which different Chilean Canadian authors give relevance and continue to communicate the meaning of such historical and temporary moments of the community. Due to the strong cooperation (or intertextuality) represented among Chilean Canadian texts about similar individual life experiences in the post-1973 Chilean era, following Lachmann, I argue, these intertextual texts create not only a cultural and historical exchange but also the memory of this literature. Moreover, taking cues from Fortunati and Lamberti on cultural memory, the “bearing witness” of the protagonists helps us investigate “written sources, visual documents, and oral testimonies concerning events, situations, and people who played an important role in the cultural making of each nation (including letters, diaries, autobiographies, novels, photographs, films, documentaries, and museums and archives)” (133-4). The juxtaposition of “images” portraying one’s past and the role of protagonists “bearing witness” within these literary texts proves invaluable in the examination of an archive or repository of Chilean Canadian memories. English-language Chilean Canadian literature, therefore, works as a microcosm that represents the culture, history, and identity of Chileans as “images” of a Latina/o diaspora in Canada.

Chilean Canadian literature, primarily a politically motivated discourse condemning the post-1973 Chilean era as a “politically motivated literature” (J. Etcheverry, “Notes” 115), also functions as an archival repository for historical

memories. Explored in chapter two, this dual role is evident in English-language Chilean Canadian literature, which serves as both a condemnatory medium and a valuable source for understanding the initial exodus of Chileans to Canada and their subsequent arrival as political exiles. Within the realm of cultural memory studies, this exploration contributes to our comprehension of how recalling life experiences aids ongoing cultural and exiled identity construction. Drawing from Pierre Nora and Steve J. Stern, the argument expands the concept of *lieux de mémoire* to encompass not only historical and physical “sites” of remembrance such as the Stadium in Santiago, but also new enunciative “sites,” exemplified by a renewed enigmatic memory framework like The Return Plan. These sources present innovative “emblematic memories” as condemnatory narratives emerging from the voices and experiences of witnesses and survivors of the Chilean resistance movement.

1.1.1 Recalling, Recounting, and Retransmitting Historical Memories

This section helps us point out the significance of recalling, recounting, and retransmitting historical memories in this renewed English-language Chilean Canadian literature as condemnatory and denouncing narratives. After September 11th, 1973, Chilean authors began creating a literature that presents ground-breaking and condemnatory discourses as a response to their country’s neo-colonial, neo-imperialist, and Cold War circumstances. September 11th, 1973, therefore, marks a historical, but also socio-political breaking point in Chilean (and Latin American) history. September 11th, 1973 signals the beginnings of one of the most brutal dictatorships in South America, and English-language Chilean Canadian literary texts serve to renew the significance of Condor Operation, characterized as “a secret intelligence and operations system created in the 1970s through which the South American military regimes coordinated intelligence information and seized, tortured, and executed political opponents in combined cross-border operations” (McSherry 38). These sources encompass Chilean Canadian narratives primarily denouncing the repercussions of the 1973 Chilean coup, the subsequent Pinochet dictatorship, and attributing responsibility for the imprisonment, torture, and disappearance of numerous civilians. The Return Plan, moreover, is a renewed source of enunciation for Chileans,

both at home and in exile. This is the name given to the call for Chileans in exile to return to Chile, and therefore, holds profound significance as it represents a pivotal moment in the attempt to reconnect with their homeland amidst the turbulent political landscape while fighting as part of the underground resistance movement. The Return Plan “was a plan from the communist party and the MIR [Movimiento de Izquierda Revolucionaria] to bring back Chileans from all over the world to be part of the resistance” (Bascuñán, “Chilean Exiles in Canada”). For this analysis, therefore, both the September 11th, 1973, and The Return Plan became for Chilean Canadian writers, sources of historical emblematic memories.

The first wave of Chilean political refugees in Canada included writers who continued publishing in Spanish, some in translation to either or both of Canada’s official languages, such as Jorge Etcheverry, Naín Nómez, and Carmen Rodríguez. These authors initially used Spanish/English and Spanish/French translations to spread Latina/o Canadian literature and to gain recognition among Canadian audiences. This is the case, for instance, with the authors in the first two Chilean Canadian anthologies.¹⁰ Later, however, because a translation from Spanish into the official Canadian languages, as Hazelton claims, “is certainly no guarantee of public success” (“11 September”, 188), some Latina/o Canadian authors have chosen to write and publish directly in English to continue reaching greater audiences. Nonetheless, I would add that Chilean Canadian authors also write directly in the English language because they live and work in an Anglo world (such as in British Columbia), and therefore, writing in English comes to represent an organic transformation. After living in Canada, both authors featured in chapter two, Carmen Rodríguez, and Carmen Aguirre, became more comfortable with writing in English; for them, even though they

¹⁰ *Literatura chilena en Canadá/Chilean Literature in Canada*, edited by Naín Nómez and translated by Christina Shantz published by Cordillera, in Ottawa, in 1982; followed by *Literatura Hispano-Canadiense: Cuentos, Poesía, Teatro = Hispano-Canadian Literature = Littérature Hispano-Canadienne*, edited by Diego Marín and published by Alianza Cultural Hispano-Canadiense, in Toronto, in 1984.

are bilingual, they live fully in the English language. As stated in my introduction, the publication of English-language works has started to facilitate the entry of Chilean Canadian literature into the Anglo-Canadian national imaginary, enabling meaningful interactions with Canadian literary traditions.

Few authors from the 1st generation of migrants in Canada—Carmen Rodríguez and Lina de Guevara being two of the exceptions—have ventured to write directly in English. Many of them continue to write in Spanish and publish in translation to English and French, which is characteristic of a young Latina/o Canadian literature. Nevertheless, the writers of the 1.5 generation of exiles in Canada, such as Carmen Aguirre (and of the 2nd generation, such as Rosa Labordé, and Marilo Nuñez), are not the only ones to have written and published directly in English. From a 1st generation experience, Carmen Rodríguez claims,

I began the fascinating process of translating [my own work from Spanish into the English language] because I want[ed] Canadians to read my work. Then I realized that I would have to “translate” the new versions back into Spanish. But again, as I did that, new words made their way into the manuscript. (*And a Body* 13-14)

Between back and forth between these two distinct manuscripts, Rodríguez continues, “I felt that both tips of my tongue and my two sets of ears were satisfied with the final product” (14). Rodríguez’s goal, nonetheless, made her start writing in a language that is privileged in Canada due to its official status and number of speakers, which allowed her to reach a larger Anglo-Canadian readership. English-language publications permitted Rodríguez to participate in the development of a new Canadian diasporic literature in which Latin American migration and exilic stories claim a space among other accounts of migration by people from all over the world conforming, in turn, Canadian multiculturalism.

Chilean Canadian authors who publish in translation, but also those who now directly write in the English language have been and continue to be very significant in terms of the literary production of migration and exile in Canada. Therefore, I second

other critics and academics who have suggested that before the arrival of the main wave of Chileans in Canada, Latina/o Canadian literature did not exist (Hazelton 2014; J. Etcheverry 1989, 1995). A new social group of minority writers emerged as a result of the initial significant wave of Chilean migration to Canada in the 1970s. Following this context, Chilean Canadian literature is a condemnatory literature because it continues to denounce the “terror” that characterizes the post-1973 Chilean era. September 11th, 1973 remains the source of Chilean Canadian literary drama *Léo* (2006). Likewise, for Marilo Nuñez, narratives revolving around The Return Plan serve as the inspiration for her work, *El Retorno/I Return* (2021). Particularly notable is the resonance of The Return Plan’s story, wherein her parents’ decision to return to South America and be part of the underground resistance movement, serves as a profound source of inspiration for Nuñez. In the case of younger generations of authors like Labordé, who was born and raised in Canada, and Nuñez, who never resided in Chile, historical frameworks of emblematic memory remain pivotal sources for their creative work. Although this dissertation does not extensively analyze their plays, Labordé’s *Léo* (2006) contextualizes the 1973 Chilean coup as a pivotal historical “rupture,” while Nuñez, in *El Retorno/I Return* (2021), interviews her parents to preserve the narrative of “rupture” historical memories. These memories, rejuvenated by a new generation of writers, continue to inspire the most recent developments in English-language Chilean Canadian literature. Authors persistently explore socio-political themes, notably September 11th, 1973, and The Return Plan, which evoke emblematic memory frameworks with diverse implications depending on the generation and the authors’ direct or indirect connection to the coup. These plays underscore the essence of transgenerational Chilean Canadian literature, where authors exhibit unwavering dedication to the resistance movement and current sentiments of solidarity, forming the foundation of this diasporic literature of migration and exile.

For Carmen Aguirre, writing and publishing this kind of politically motivated stories is a sense of commitment to communicate such stories to new generations so that stories “do not die with the people who live them” (*Something Fierce* 277). The sense of camaraderie and dedication to a political agenda has motivated Chilean

Canadian authors to persist in their publishing endeavors, now in the English language, while remaining in solidarity with their disbelieved communities, and other members of minority Latina/o groups. Within this context, Carmen Aguirre, in her recent speech titled “Solidaridad” (2023), advocates for a more inclusive and welcoming environment in the Canadian theatre society and business. The significance lies in observing how the concept of writing *in solidarity* conveys the authors’ unwavering commitment to depicting the evolution of Chilean and Latin American history, culture, and identities through their experiences of exile in Canada. Their drive to remain committed serves as a testament to their enduring dedication.

Female Chilean Canadian writers have developed a literature full of historical and condemnatory memories aiming to re-establish democracy in Chile. These literary narratives are full of historical memories that have, since their inception in the 1970s, unfolded postcolonial discourses offering the initial representations of a diasporic Latina/o community in Canada. This literature serves as a medium, therefore, to understand the emergence of a Chilean diaspora in Canada, while also engaging in the reconstruction of Chilean history. Categorizing Chilean Canadian literary texts as part of a postcolonial literature representing a diasporic community in Canada allows me to take a cue from Siemerling’s conclusion in “Canadian Literatures and the Postcolonial,” to observe how Latina/o Canadian literary production contributes to the understanding of Canada as a “postcolonial space” (210). In this sense, Gabrielle Etcheverry argues that Latina/o Canadian literature, while intersecting with transnational Latina/o cultural formations, faces the challenge of an overarching cultural identity that overlooks its particularities and diversity, resulting in its relative invisibility within hemispheric literary and cultural contexts and serving as a notable instance of coloniality (2). In this context, I mainly address how Chilean Canadian texts, as a postcolonial literature production, contribute to representing a minority group of Latin Americans in Canada while giving more “visibility” to Latina/o Canadian cultures, histories, and identities. From a multicultural Canadian setting, and as part of a group of non-white individuals, female Chilean Canadian authors represent a postcolonial diasporic community of Latina/o Canadians.

Moreover, following Armony's approach to the setting of Latinas/os in Canada (particularly North of the US border in Quebec), "The case of Latin American Canadians offers an exceptional opportunity to examine and compare how minorities are constructed and transformed in different host societies" ("Settling" 20). Within this approach, one can understand the importance of studying the literary production of Chilean Canadians as a diasporic community in Canada. English-language Chilean Canadian literature is a reconditioned Latina/o production in English Canada, which from a postcolonial standpoint, speaks of the need for representation and inclusiveness among major and larger Canadian audiences and readers. Chilean authors intentionally opt for the major official and "dominant" English language in Canada as their preferred mode of expression, despite their domain of Spanish as their native language. This choice is not solely due to their residence in British Columbia, an English-speaking community, but also a deliberate decision to harness the power and reach of the English language. By embracing English as a literary medium, these authors engage with a broader readership and actively participate in the cultural and literary landscape of English Canada. Chilean Canadian authors, consequently, publish a literature that claims a space within the spectrum of Anglo-Canadian cultures and consequently, its imaginaries. In what follows, I continue approaching my understanding of Chilean Canadian literary texts as to better understand the construction of a Latina/o Canadian imaginary, through the lenses of national and transnational (i.e., hemispheric) perspectives.

1.1.2 Constructing a Latina/o Canadian Imaginary

In line with Guillermo Verdecchia's perspective on Canadian *Latinidad*, Chilean Canadian writers help to construct a Latina/o Canadian imaginary. The diaspora of Latina/o Canadians, including the identities of migration and exile within the Chilean Canadian context, can be understood as "always unfolding [and] in a constant process of construction and revision;" Chilean Canadian literary texts respond, "to present realities and aspirations for the future" (Verdecchia, *Staging Memory* 6). English-language Chilean Canadian texts, in this way, expand our understanding of how through memories, authors and protagonists express the meaning attached to their

“home” in Chile and their new “adopted home” in Canada, and consequently, how they seem to reflect on their sense of belonging. By addressing the protagonists’ feelings about returning to a native country in Chile, and how their sense of belonging dictates different features of the Chilean Canadian imaginary, I point out how memories do more than describe historical temporalities, because they also construct emblematic memory, and therefore, identity. By negotiating their memories, cultures, and therefore, identities, consequently, protagonists continue to construct key themes in English-language Latina/o Canadian literary texts. As the most significant example of the emerging Latina/o Canadian literature written now directly in English language, transgenerational Chilean Canadian texts continue to develop a Latina/o Canadian imaginary. Diverse generations of Chileans continue to construct their identity (in exile) as defined by their group identity abroad (in Chile) and by the transnational and multi-cultural connections (in Canada).

From a cultural memory studies standpoint, Chilean Canadian, and by extension, Latina/o Canadian literature, can be understood as consisting of “stories that individuals ... tell about their past to answer the question ‘who am I?’” (Erll, “Literature” 334). Chilean Canadian authors, along with the protagonists in their stories, engage in the process of recalling and reconstructing memories by drawing on cultural tropes rooted in a shared historical past experienced by a specific social group. Individual narratives within Chilean Canadian literature embody a transgenerational knowledge that recollects and reconstructs stories from the past, responding to the needs of the present. Moreover, taking cue from Fortunati and Lamberti’s understanding cultural memory narratives, English-language Chilean Canadian narratives are “not only individual expressions, [but] also represent cultural structures” as exposed in foregrounded literary sources such as diaries, autobiographies, memoirs, and testimonies (130). In Chilean Canadian narratives, transgenerational voices actively interpret, and recreate a past, and implicitly negotiate identity from a present moment and based on contemporary needs. In chapter two, I featured the transgenerational stories as intertextual dialogues that define two female Chilean Canadian writers, mother, and daughter, in the following texts, *Something Fierce*:

Memoirs of a Revolutionary Daughter (Aguirre), *The Refugee Hotel* (Aguirre), *And a Body to Remember with* (Rodríguez), and *Retribution* (Rodríguez). These stories are narratives described by survivors bearing witness and communicating their individual testimonies which give meaning to transgenerational narratives.

Such transgenerational narratives, then, create a space for their protagonists (and diverse characters) to continually reconstruct and communicate past experiences and recollections. All individual literary narratives, including those of female Chilean Canadian authors, are not only the representation of personal memories with a historical background but are also part of a conscious process that recreates transgenerational worldviews. This approximation of transgenerational stories, as a repository of collective memories, is fed by individual accounts of Chilean Canadian exiles in Canada. In this respect, I emphasize how individual memories create a transgenerational space of enunciation that helps to continue to construct a Latina/o Canadian imaginary, or Canadian *Latinidad*. A collection of individual and transgenerational narratives—within socio-political and neocolonial frameworks, as exposed by such literary texts—help create a shared knowledge about Chileans' historical past.

Chilean Canadian literature benefits from developing sites of enunciation from where authors, protagonists (and, consequently, their readers) are allowed to recall, recollect, and reimagine a particular past with September 11th, 1973, and The Return Plan, as emblematic memory frameworks, and sometimes also commemoration. September 11th, 1973, Hazelton reminds us, is a site of enunciation that resonates with how “Latin America [came] to Canada.” (“11 September”). The Return Plan, nonetheless, also depicts a recent memory framework in Chilean, and Latin American history that resonates with Stern’s notion of emblematic memories in the sense that “aspect[s] of remembrance, especially [those] crucial for study of collective memory, clarif[y] the distinction between the content (as in specific narrated events) of memory, and the organizing framework that imparts meaning” (105). In this context, the analysis extends beyond the comprehension of Nora’s physical sites of memory. These

are also recognized as transnational sites of enunciation by transgenerational voices of writers, imbuing their recollections with added.

In this context, while there are physical sites of memory in Chilean transnational history, such as street name honoring Salvador Allende in Toronto, there are other represented sites of memory within Chilean Canadian literary texts. For instance, the Stadium in Santiago, which served as a detention and torture center during the Pinochet regime, is emblematic of the atrocities committed against national and international civilians. While not directly analyzed in this chapter, these additional sites of memory contribute to a broader understanding of the historical events and their impact on Chilean history. As site of memory, moreover, the Stadium in Santiago enriches the archive of memories represented in Chilean Canadian literature. In a similar context, like September 11th, 1973, once the meaning of The Return Plan continues to circulate among younger generations, it could also be recognized as another imagined site of emblematic memories. Without a doubt, as it is happening in Chile, younger generations need more of these literary texts as frameworks that may help them to construct and reconstruct their historical memory. Like renewed sites of memory,¹¹ emblematic historical frameworks assist audiences and readers in remembering and continually construct individual, collective, and even national identities. Therefore, there are more and more archives, museums, monuments, memorials, and literature because “spontaneous collective memory has ceased to function” (Crane 1379). Increasing the number of historical literary texts, therefore, may improve the act of remembering and reduce the probability that calamitous events will recur. Under interdisciplinary cultural memory studies approaches, emblematic memory frameworks (Stern), have also come to represent literary material—including visual, performative, and virtual media—, as memories, which I will further discuss in the following section.

¹¹ See for example, the Museo de la Memoria y los Derechos Humanos in Santiago, inaugurated on January 11th, 2010; and a digital site luzymemoria.org.

1.1.3 Intertextuality as the Memory of Chilean Canadian Literature

As proposed by Lachmann, due to their intertextuality, literary works such as Chilean Canadian literary narratives can be considered an archive of memories because their “intertextuality produces and sustains literature’s memory” (309). Lachmann suggests that intertextuality is the memory of any given literature: “Every concrete text, as a sketched-out memory space, connotes the macrospace of memory that either represents a culture or appears as that culture” (301). Chilean Canadian literary narratives recover and reimagine historical contexts from the post-1973 era; therefore, this literature can be studied as an archive of memories from which we can give new meaning to the official Chilean story. Chilean Canadian literature, moreover, illustrates that there have been uncommunicated facts. In addition to the everyday-life fragments narrated by various protagonists of Chilean Canadian authors, Chilean Canadian literature presents new images that allow us to picture new versions of facts describing 1973’s sociopolitical backgrounds. To illustrate, following Stern, my contribution in this context is to assert that as a renewed emblematic memory framework, the imaginary surrounding The Return Plan (during the post-1973 aftermath) creates a site of enunciation from where authors, and consequently protagonists and readers, can better understand the experiences of Chileans in Canada returning to Latin America to be part of organized resistance movement. Within this new spectacle, The Return Plan creates not only a renewed literary Chilean Canadian literary theme, but it also creates a new site of remembrance—as I will further explore in chapter two. While authors have remembered and forgotten individual life experiences, collectively they continue to reimagine individual and social memories that document the rewriting of the sociopolitical and historical post-1973 era as the reconstruction of historical memories.

Within cultural memory perspectives, “the study of literary representations of individual processes of memory has always been one of the central epistemological interests in literary studies” and therefore, such literary representations “should be treated as cultural documents in their own right as they shed light on what is actually remembered as a culture’s past” (Neumann 339). In this process of writing, some

Chilean Canadian narratives represent intertextual historical and socio-political views to create awareness about facts, many of which are otherwise kept silenced in official histories. It is in this respect that Chilean Canadian literary production could be considered as “a medium of cultural self-reflection [that] paves the way for cultural change” (Neumann 341). For younger generations of Latin American readers in Canada, particularly for those who have not lived first-hand experiences during the dictatorial regimes in the Southern Cone, for example, Chilean Canadian narratives become the medium of archival memories (as argued before) from which they can be better informed about a shared Latina/o Canadian history. As noted by the character of Claudia in *In a Land I can't Recall* (Aguirre), certain people from the first generation of exiles, due to their struggles during the post-1973 Chilean coup, sometimes “don't remember those things,” or they do not want to remember them (20). Based on the historical and socio-political stories portrayed by Chilean Canadian authors, we can also see Chilean Canadian literary texts as part of an intertextual archive of historical memories that illuminate this diasporic community's stories.

Moreover, under the lens of cultural memory, this literature represents a space for “time-bound media of storage [that] allows for the cultural memories to travel across centuries and even become themselves objects of remembrance” (Erll, “Literature” 389). Furthermore, from a psychological perspective, Neumann would argue, “with their conventionalized plot-lines and highly suggestive myths,” Chilean Canadian text could “provide powerful, often normative models for our own self-narration and interpretation of the past” (341). It is these interpretations of the Chilean past that helps of Chilean Canadian authors re-construct Chilean history but also shed light on the development of their identities in exile. English-language Chilean Canadian literature also claims a space of production in parallel to other literatures in Canada. There are socio-political enunciations that allow us to better understand these texts as a repository of archival memories representing an imaginary by and for the exiled Chilean Canadian community. Taking a cue from Castro-Klaren's understanding of the Latin American “cultural imaginary,” I view the Chilean Canadian imaginary in this dissertation as “the collective symbolic expressions of

communities that create signification of identity” (2). Throughout this dissertation, the exploration and analysis of English-language Chilean Canadian literature unveils a vivid portrayal of Chileans living in exile, representing one of the prominent and esteemed Latina/o Canadian diasporas in Canada.

To conclude this section, under the lens of Sturken’s approximation to “cultural memory,” furthermore, the diverse sociohistorical memories communicated in Chilean Canadian literary narratives represent the “memory landscape that [Latin Americans] inhabit” in Canada (qtd. in Verdecchia, *Staging Memory* 3). Female Chilean Canadian authors, in this sense, recover and recollect socio-political and historical memories to continue negotiating and informing us about the Chilean Canadian cultural imaginary. Chilean Canadian literature allows authors—their protagonists, and consequently their readers—to perceive Chilean Canadian literature as the world we all “inhabit” as Latina/o migrants in Canada, as to how Chileans arrived in Canada, and continue to develop culturally, linguistically, and in terms of hybrid identities. This is a literary theme I will further develop in the following subsection while exploring the theoretical frameworks that inform my analysis in that chapter. As I will demonstrate, under a border studies methodology, we can address the continued construction of memories and identities, while giving more significance to how Latin American migrants may represent their sense of belonging to their native “home,” to their “adoptive home” in exile, but also neither to Canada nor Latin America, but to the *Borderlands* (Anzaldúa).

1.2 Chilean Canadian Literature: A Hemispheric Literature of the Borderlands

A hemispheric theoretical framework in borderland literature facilitates a comprehension of the diasporic, postcolonial, and occasionally decolonial dynamics and opportunities inherent in the Latina/o Canadian borderlands. My emphasis on border studies analysis, therefore, explains the ongoing development of a diasporic Latina/o Canadian culture and identity, culminating in the emergence of Chilean literature in Canada as transcultural literature of the borderlands. English-language Chilean Canadian literary texts contribute to the exploration of hybrid Latina/o culture,

history, and identities of diasporic communities of the Americas. As the major characteristic of diasporic literatures, identity, and cultural *hybridity*, defines the renewed Chilean literature in Canada as borderland literature. My conclusion contends that Chilean Canadian literary texts are significantly shaped by transcultural and hemispheric perspectives on migration and exile. As a result, these texts serve as a medium for transgenerational and intercultural Latina/o dialogues of the Americas that enrich our understanding of the exilic borderland Latina/o experience in Canada.

I first join the arguments of American scholar Rachel Adams and her analysis of “The Northern Borderlands and Latino Canadian Diaspora” (2008). Adams suggests that, despite the “relatively small size” of the Latin American descent in Canada, “it is worth paying attention to the cultural representations they have generated because they can lead to new perspectives on the relationship between hemisphere and nation” (313). Adams argues that “drawing Canada into emerging interdisciplinary conversation [of Chicano Studies, and the U.S./Mexico border as transnational contact zone] is not simply an additive move, but one that has the potential to alter the way we currently think about the borderlands and the Americas” (314). It is thus significant to continue a dialogue about the Canadian juxtaposition with the United States on the one hand, but also, with the rest of the Americas.

In this respect, Bhabha notes that we are currently finding “ourselves in a moment of transit where space and time cross to produce complex figures of difference and identity, past and present, inside and outside, inclusion and exclusion” (2). While Chilean Canadian narratives continue to represent some of their protagonists identifying mainly as Latin Americans with a close relationship to their native cultures and identities, other Chilean Canadian texts, such as the dramatic play studied in this chapter, represent younger generations starting to identify either as Canadian or as “hyphenated” Latina/o-Canadians, which illustrates the significance of hybridity between identities and cultures. This also demonstrates my continued study of Chilean Canadian literary expressions as an archive of memories, as how the original historical source of this Chilean Canadian literature draws now on a journey of migrants who, after living in exile in Canada, express a process of culture and identity reconstruction,

and transculturation into the Canadian world. Latina/o Canadian cultures and identities are constructed in part, due to a cultural interchange of linguistic, social, but also transnational relations, which takes me to turn into an analysis of the construction of a *Latinidad* from a hemispheric standpoint. Chilean Canadian narratives are valuable because, echoing Stuart Hall, they represent the “recognition of a necessary heterogeneity and diversity; by a conception of ‘identity’ which lives with and through, not despite, difference; [but also] by *hybridity*” (402). Similar to other diasporic groups in Canada and beyond, Chilean Canadian diasporic cultures and identities are in a constant process of continuous renewal and re-creation. Consequently, as a transformed feature, English-language Chilean Canadian literature intertwines with transnational Latina/o cultural formations across the Americas while simultaneously confronting the emergence of hybrid Latina/o cultures within Canada. The overarching outcome of living in exile is hybridization, and in the following discussion, I will delve into the exploration of the inhabiting of an imagined borderland as a “contact space” from where a new sense of belonging resonates within the in-between consciousness.

1.2.1 Hemispheric Intersections between Latina/o Canadian and Chicana/o Literatures

In this study, I take cues from Adams (2007; 2013) and Cutler (2017) to better understand Chicana/o literature studies, and how Chicana/o migrants inhabit the borderlands in the United States. In this sense, I explore the ways in which hemispheric perspectives enrich the notion (inclusion/exclusion) of diasporic communities in Canada. In this respect, while hemispheric studies may highlight and reinforce U.S. and Canadian hegemony, it also presents avenues to challenge such dominance by providing alternative perspectives and possibilities beyond those offered by dominant discourses. Migrant and exile Chilean Canadian discourses, therefore, contribute to the development of border/hybrid cultures and identities within Canadian hemispheric perspectives. I posit that due to these protagonists’ experiences of living in between cultures, Chileans develop hybrid identities outlining the representation of a Latina/o diasporic community. Drawing inspiration from Cutler’s approach to

Chicana/o literary production as borderland literature, one can similarly analyze Chilean Canadian literary texts as representative of marginalized narratives of the borderlands. As Clutter states,

the borderland paradigm arises out of Chicana/o studies, and as an interpretative framework has taken borderland literature to be synonymous with Chicana and Chicano literature ... Chicana/o borderland literature reflects critically on the legacies of US imperialism and westward expansion in the Southwest ... [it is] a “contact zone” [that illustrates] The subjective experience of in-betweenness [and] perhaps the dominant thematic motif of borderland literature. (159-160)

In this vein, utilizing border studies methodologies, I employ an analytical framework to explore how Chilean Canadian authors residing in Canada depict the diasporic community’s sense of belonging (or lack thereof) within a borderland context. However, prior to exploring the application of border studies as an analytical methodology, it is essential to examine the notion of “diaspora” within the frameworks of postcolonial and hemispheric constructs (Adams), but also how Chilean Canadian authors have contributed to the formation of a Latina/o Canadian diasporic literature of migration and exile.

Chilean Canadian literature is in continued development, and its renewed contribution to the English language signifies a dynamic shift in the Latina/o and Canadian letters that must acknowledge the presence of female writers from a minority group. These female Chilean Canadian writers are making significant contributions to the majority of Canadian writing and expanding the multi-ethnic representation within Anglo-Canadian imaginaries. Davey suggests in this respect, “the one true Canadian [literary] canon [is] neither made nor found nor will the claims to have founded cease” (33). The visualization of Chilean Canadian literary production as a diasporic Canadian literature can only help us to recognize that writers from minority communities are making inroads into Canadian writing, and therefore, Anglo-Canadian imaginaries. Moreover, defining Chilean Canadian as a diasporic literature

involves a meticulous analysis of how such literary accounts articulate the experiences and cultural aspects of a minority. A diasporic literature produces transcultural, transnational, and transgenerational narratives about the interlink of a given past (from one's "native" territory) with a current nation-space and temporality (and exile society in Canada). As the backbone of migration and exilic Chilean Canadian narratives, there is a collective of life experiences communicating the leaving of a "native" territory and the arriving into an exile space (and "adopted home") in Canada.

While Latinas/os have occupied the U.S. Southwestern borderlands region since before it belonged to the United States; in Canada, the major wave of Latin American migrants started in the 1970s and 1980s with political refugees fleeing South American dictatorial regimes and Central American civil wars. Latin Americans in Canada are, in this sense, a relatively newly settled minority group.¹² Nonetheless, linguistic, cultural, and political frameworks create diverging patterns of "inclusion" and "exclusion" in minority/majority relations. While there are major differences in terms of the country of origin, and therefore, different socio-political profiles between the population of Latinas/os in the United States versus Canada, there are similar trends in the Latina/o hemispheric perspective, which from a Canadian viewpoint, appear to follow the United States: mainly, that Latina/o migrants in Canada, as suggested by Armony, have a "strong and persistent identification with national origins" and also, that there is a "weaker attachment to the host country's national identity" ("Latin American Communities in Canada" 23-4). I identify the Chilean Canadian community, therefore, as a Latin American diaspora in Canada even though a few Latin Americans in Canada do not identify themselves as members of a diaspora, rather, they continue to identify themselves as from their place of origin (G. Etcheverry 20).

¹² Latin Americans occupy 5.7% of Canada's total population (Canadian Census); in the United States, the Census Bureau estimated in 2018 that Hispanics constitute about 18% of the total population.

While “Canada has long been overlooked in the scholarship about the Americas as hemisphere... locating Canada within the history and culture of the Americas, provides a compelling rationale for the inclusion of Canada in current articulations of hemispheric American studies” (Adams, “Canada and the Americas” 6). Despite the relatively small population of Latinas/os in Canada, moreover, there exists a noteworthy network of Latina/o Canadian writers who, as political exiles, played a crucial role in the emergence of a new diasporic literature with strong political motivations during the 1970s and 1980s. Through the lens of diaspora and postcolonial literature, the reading of Chilean Canadian texts reveals the presence of hybrid cultures and identities within the socio-economic and political connections of the Americas, unveiling processes of inclusion and exclusion within the Latina/o Canadian context.

Drawing from the perspectives of younger generations of writers, it is evident that there is a desire but also a questioning of the requirement to integrate into Canadian cultures and societies. Additionally, as suggested by Adams, “Only more recently has there been an attempt to move away from the experience of exile and toward cultural forms that express a hyphenated Latino Canadian identity” (“Northern Borderlands” 316).¹³ This has been illustrated by the principal character in *Fronteras Americanas*, who suggests that being Latina/o in Canada is to learn how to live as a hyphenated citizen, “learning to live on the border” (Verdecchia 106). This may also be a characteristic of younger generations that have spent most of their lives in exile, who may now recognize Canada as their “home” because, as identified in some literary texts, their narrators cannot identify with their native territories (see Carmen Aguirre’s character, Carolita in *Anywhere but Here*, in chapter three). This may be

¹³ A recent Survey on Canadian Latin Americans from the Association for Canadian Studies, in partnership with the Université du Québec à Montréal, illustrates that there is a slightly larger percentage of Latinas/os identifying as “Canadian and from country of origin equally” (28.5%), than the 26.9% who identify “from country of origin first but also Canadian” (Armony, “Latin American Communities” 22).

simply due to their temporal and geographical distance from their country of origin. In some instances, however, protagonists are seen as “different” in Latin America, and therefore, they are seen as foreign when returning to their “native” home. This is due, perhaps, either to their level of acculturation to Canadian life, or many times, due to their lower proficiency in their native Spanish language. Moreover, as I will further explain in the following subsection, taking clues from Cho, diasporic literatures “illuminate the uneasy and contradictory processes of citizenship’s formation” and therefore, “de-form citizenship by foregrounding, and complicating, citizenship’s emergence” (527). In this sense, Chilean Canadian narratives articulate the arrival and historical development of its diaspora, but also help us to draw how diasporic protagonists show a sense of belonging to either Canada or Latin America, to both or neither.

1.2.2 Hemispheric Perspectives: A Transformed Sense of Belonging

As a diasporic literature, English-language Chilean Canadian literary texts disclose a renewed version of how Latin American migrants negotiate a sense of becoming, being, and belonging to a Canadian society. Chilean Canadian authors, depict processes of inclusion and exclusion from a given past and present. Moreover, their migrant protagonists communicate how they go through a progression from being foreign to inhabiting a space within a Canadian society. The progression of adapting oneself or not to new ways of living sometimes leads to a nostalgic sentiment to return to a native land in Latin America, while other times protagonists describe their intention to fit into Canadian cultures and their struggles to become Canadian citizens, such as in Carmen Rodríguez’s *And a Body to Remember with* (1997), and *Retribution* (2011), Carmen Aguirre’s *Qué pasa con la raza, eh?* (2000), and in the works of other Latin American authors such as Guillermo Verdecchia in his well-known *Fronteras Americanas* (1993/2013), and *Citizen Suárez* (1998).

Taking cues from G. Etcheverry’s hemispheric perspective, “the study of Latina/o Canadian literature and its (often invisible) [or minority] position within national and transnational cultural frameworks can provide some fruitful insights into

the continued asymmetrical power relations within and between ‘postcolonial’ multicultural societies in the Americas” (15-16). Following these observations, it can be said that as a diasporic literature, Chilean Canadian literary texts are useful in this analysis because they speak of a *dispersed* Latin American community, and how through their exile journey, protagonists start to create dialogues indicating their will to become Canadian citizens. In their writing, Chilean Canadian authors also express “key discursive tools for classifying people as either belonging to or being excluded from particular national cultures via, for example, specific linguistic and ethnic affiliations” (G. Etcheverry 20). Once again, returning to Armony’s analysis on “Latin American Diasporas in Canada,” we can say that migrants “constantly express a strong sense of belonging to a large community across nationalities,” and their literature “question[s] and give[s] new meanings to that self-identification” (2-3). Building upon this approach to understanding notions of belonging, Chilean Canadian authors align themselves with a transnational identity, positioning themselves within the realm of the borderlands. This self-identification encompasses a hybrid space, where Chilean Canadian narratives portray their protagonists as existing within these complex domains.

Chilean Canadian narratives portray the complex and sometimes conflicting experiences of belonging to two distinct cultures, resulting in diverse hybrid identities that can be interpreted as postcolonial outcomes. It is living in between cultures and languages that makes subjects develop themselves into hybrid individuals. Chilean Canadian authors, in this sense, communicate how Latina/o Canadian identities, but also their stories, cultures, and many times also languages become multicultural because of having contact with different communities in Canada. In this respect, while first generations of exiles and migrants from Latin America strongly identified themselves with their native territories and “express lower feelings of attachment to Canada” (Armony 23), new generations have either adopted Canada as their own or rather identify with a third—borderland—space (Bhabha), that is, a hybridized living between cultures and languages.

Consequently, I explore how Chilean Canadian literary texts consistently deal with the dynamics of inclusion and exclusion, reflecting on and examining concepts of belonging and home. Some authors themselves, for example, openly embrace their hyphen identities, residing and operating in the liminal space between cultures and languages, as illustrated by Carmen Rodríguez (*And a Body* 14; *Re:Location* 2023). While Latina/o Canadian authors in Canada may be perceived as newcomers, they inhabit an in-betweenness, with some incorporating a hyphen identity:

I live and work on a teeter-totter, moving back and forth between two cultures and languages ... it is important to use the hyphen of my bilingualism, my biculturalism, the hyphen of my double identity as a bridge, so at least I can invite other Canadians to read my work ... this process mirrors my hyphenated existence (*And a Body* 14)

The lack of acceptance in their native countries, and their status as foreign in Canada, furthermore, Adams argues, is what makes younger generations of migrants seek “modes of belonging that are not tied to the nation-state” (“Northern Borderlands” 316). As an example of a postcolonial (border thinking) discourse, following this last statement, Rodríguez explains that she lives and works here, in Canada, “but cannot forget where [she] came from ... [her] heart trespasses borders and stretches over a whole continent to find its home at the two extremes of the Americas: in Chile and in Canada ... I am a Chilean-Canadian writer” —she concludes (*And a Body* 14). From this analysis, I identify that there are not only two—native and exile—spaces from where protagonists construct their identities. In my study, I aim to move beyond the native/exile dichotomy. I identify a third space as the “elsewhere” from where the words exile and migrant may also resonate. What is theoretically innovative in this approach, following Bhabha’s analysis,

is the need to think beyond narratives of originary and initial subjectivities and to focus on those moments or processes that are produced in the articulation of cultural differences. These ‘in-between’ spaces provide the terrain for elaborating strategies of selfhood — singular or communal — that initiate new

signs of identity, and innovative sites of collaboration, and contestation, in the act of defining the idea of society itself. (2)

In this way, Chilean Canadian authors from the 1st, 1.5, and 2nd generation immigrants challenge concepts of identity due to their current situation living in Canada. Chilean Canadian authors make space for individual (Chilean) and collective (Latin American) migrant life experiences, which will be subject to analysis concerning their level of acculturation, transculturation, and/or hybridization in local and hemispheric views. These Chilean Canadian diasporic discourses, moreover, not only portray cultural exchanges but also depict multicultural, transnational, and transgenerational signifiers, offering us cross-cultural representations that illuminate the diasporic Latina/o neo-colonial experience in Canada. Chilean Canadian writers craft diasporic voices representing multiple generations of migratory protagonists who continuously negotiate their sense of identity and belonging from a contact zone, that is, from imagined borderlands in Canada that illustrate their co-existence and interactions with other minority and majority groups. This hemispheric viewpoint allows for a comprehensive understanding of the diasporic, postcolonial, and even decolonial relations and possibilities within the Canadian borderlands.

Employing a border and hemispheric perspective, this analysis gains deeper insights into Canada as an exilic borderland space. While Canada has territories and provinces, in my analysis I describe such “exilic borderland spaces” as the places Chilean Canadian authors (and their protagonists) inhabit. These are spaces like Vancouver, Toronto, Montreal, and Quebec City that border the United States. Canadian borderland spaces, therefore, are places from where protagonists are represented constructing their exile culture and identity. By taking cues from Clutter’s quotation above, Canadian borderland spaces are “contact zones” where memories link one’s past with a present given space and temporality. Moreover, the significance or insignificance attributed by individuals to specific past events influences narrators’ attribution of meaning to their present temporality. I concentrate my analysis on the 1.5 generation of migrants in Canada because their exile experiences distinguish them from the 1st generation. While 1st generation migrants are represented as almost

always willing to return to their native home in South America, younger generations of characters are represented as willing to adopt Canada as home. This is my initial observation as to how living in exile not only contributes to the construct of hybrid cultures and identities but makes the younger generation of migrants adopt Canada as home. In other words, as represented in *Anywhere but Here*, for example, 1st generation characters, such as Manuel, may have more solid “native” memories about their past, while younger generations such as Carolita, have more solid memories about their “adopted home” in exile in Canada.

It is through transformation and difference, that Chilean Canadian writers represent their Latin American diasporic group from a hemispheric perspective. Moreover, Chilean Canadian narratives provide a depiction of a contemporary Canadian setting, wherein certain authors have begun to embrace decolonial perspectives, as elaborated in the subsequent subsection. In what follows I turn to explain my understanding of postcolonial and decolonial parameters to express how I see postcolonial texts starting to show decolonial tendencies. In this sense, I summarize how I understand the continued development of literary texts from a sense of commitment or politically motivated initiative, into authors writing in solidarity with their communities at home and in exile.

1.3 Chilean Canadian Literature: In Solidarity with Other Racialized Minorities

Chapter four explores the decolonization of the Canadian stage through the representation of racialized Indigenous voices from Latin America and Canada, employing an intersectional analysis that challenges the concept of “home” from a decolonial perspective while highlighting the transformative nature of Chilean Canadian exile and migration texts. In this final chapter, I follow critics who have contributed to “Mapping the Margins” between intersectionality, identity politics, and women of color in the United States (Crenshaw), but also those who have addressed intersectionality as a method in various disciplines (Lutz). Building upon the insights of these scholars, I explore the portrayal of Indigenous protagonists within Chilean Canadian literature, framing their experiences as migratory journeys. By examining

how their encounters with exile empower them, I shed light on their ability to navigate the complexities of the Canadian borderlands. Moreover, I address how Chilean Canadian postcolonial playwrights, in solidarity, represent minorities and racialized groups of Latina/o Indigenous peoples in Canada as a way to decolonize Anglo-Canadian stages.

Not only in their literary texts but also during live performances, Chilean Canadian playwrights are offering a space from where Latina/o protagonists gain visibility while creating awareness and representing themselves legitimately as a Latina/o diaspora: that is, recognizing and evaluating diverse cultural knowledge and visions that challenge a Canadian structure of power and inequality within a modern/colonial and postcolonial standard. In this context, in this chapter, my analysis moves from postcolonial methods into decolonial approaches that will allow me to study the representation of a migrant Indigenous Chilean Mapuche protagonist. I concentrate my analysis on how playwrights give space to other racialized voices (as a decolonial effort) to give agency to certain racialized protagonists. I focus on the representation of Indigenous voices, because, in the context of Guevara's play, *Journey to Mapu* connects Mapuche and First Nations cultures, creating what Noell has called a "trans-Indigenous" vision (349).

This final analysis features a Chilean Canadian author from the 1st generation of Chilean political exiles in Canada, Lina de Guevara, who due to her commitment to representing the voices of her Latina/o Canadian society in Victoria BC, and her training in Transformational theatre, Theatre of the Oppressed and Commedia dell'Arte, is able to communicate not only exiled Latina/o life experiences; she goes beyond exposing and representing a racialized Mapuche minority group. While there may be criticism regarding the representation of Indigenous visions in Guevara's work as a form of appropriation, it is not my intention to argue that Guevara speaks on behalf of this racialized Indigenous minority. Instead, as a researcher, Guevara actively collaborates with Indigenous groups in Chile and Canada, demonstrating a commitment to representing these untouched voices. Latina/o playwrights represent

such racialized groups and in so doing, respond to the institutional calls to decolonize the Canadian arts.¹⁴

Taking a cue from Hazelton who argues that with the original main wave of exiled Chileans, “Latin America has come to Canada, bringing with it new linguistic, literary, and cultural relationships that increase English speaking Canadian and Quebec awareness of the North as being part of the Americas” (“11 September” 194), I argue that this affirmation continues to have value today since Guevara, for example, continues to represent the overseen community of Chileans, but now incorporates a renewed view. Representational intersectionality between Mapuche stories and First Nations’ values in Canada aims for a unified Indigenous vision of the Americas that represent intersectionality as an effort to represent racialized minority communities in Canada, as I address in the following subsection.

1.3.1 Intersectionality: From Postcolonial to Decolonial Practice

When examining English-language Chilean Canadian literary works, one observes the enduring importance of the post-1973 Chilean era as a foundational element in many stories. However, playwrights have introduced new protagonists to convey a more inclusive Latina/o history and culture, thereby expanding the representation beyond the historical context. Chapter four seeks to elaborate on marginalized Indigenous voices and experiences, centering them in the analysis and resisting the standardizing tendencies of dominant discourses. Through its emphasis on intersectionality, this approach aligns with decolonial efforts to undo colonial/postcolonial structures and foster a more inclusive and equitable multicultural society in Canada. In other words, I aim to show how Chilean Canadian literary texts can be read under the scope of representational intersectionality because it would help us reinforce the significance of representing racialized migrant voices within this diasporic and postcolonial Latina/o Canadian literature. I understand representational intersectionality as an analytical

¹⁴ See *Decolonizing the Canada Council for the Arts: A Historical Perspective* by Paxton Rodriguez, 2022.

framework that helps us examine how multiple social categories (of migrants and Indigenous peoples) overlap to shape individuals' exile experiences and identities. This approach would also contribute to recognizing the connection of different forms of oppression and resistance while highlighting the complex and nuanced ways in which Latina/o migrant individuals are affected by various aspects of their identity. This approach aims to uncover marginalized experiences and challenge dominant narratives, fostering a more comprehensive understanding of socio-political Canadian dynamics. In this context, employing representational intersectionality as a method would aid us—as readers and audiences—in gaining a deeper comprehension of the life experiences of Latina/o Indigenous protagonists, which are intertwined with the social and political (colonial/postcolonial) struggles faced by First Nations in Canada. By analyzing the intersecting characteristics of character's Latina/o and Mapuche identity, I aim to explore how these factors empower him to self-identify as an Indigenous activist, but also how these relations of power reflect on First Nations life experiences.

This expanded perspective allows for the addition of three renewed identity characteristics—of gender, class, and race—as part of the representational intersectionality approach. Critics such as Crenshaw, argue that race, gender, and other categories of identity, such as class, “are most often treated as mainstream liberal discourses as vestiges of bias of domination;” that is, entailing intrinsically negative frameworks in which social power operates to exclude or marginalize those who are “who are different.” Nonetheless, such power of domination, as she states, “can instead be the source of social empowerment and reconstruction” (“Mapping the Margins” 1242). From this context, the social empowerment of the protagonist in *Journey to Mapu*, and his identity reconstruction will be the focus of my intersectional analysis in this chapter. These intersectional approaches are useful in my analysis because the Mapuche identity feature of the protagonist, helps him to move in between relationships of power, claiming agency for his Indigenous self. Within an oppression/resistance perspective, some protagonists show how due to their intersectional characteristics, they can present themselves as thinking decolonial.

Following Mignolo's concepts of decoloniality and delinking, helps us readers (and live audiences) to delink, or separate from a Eurocentric (and contemporary Imperial) thought, and/or hierarchies of colonial knowledge that enable us to imagine other forms of "existence" on Earth, and to consider other Indigenous views ("Delinking"). In this perspective, within border studies methods, Mignolo suggests that such the method itself is already the way academics and critics approach a decolonial project. That is, border thinking creates "the conditions to link border epistemology with immigrant consciousness and, consequently, delink from territorial and imperial epistemology" ("Geopolitics" 132-33). Migrant consciousness, therefore, is seen in this analysis as the representation of Chilean political refugees, but also the inclusion of other racialized voices such as Indigenous visions in this chapter. Continuing with Mignolo, in this analysis, we observe that the Mapuche protagonist, clearly demonstrates the moving away from a delinking process, showing how he makes an effort to demonstrate that he is a human being equal to those who placed him as second class ("Geopolitics" 134). I conclude chapter four, then, by claiming that due to the intersectional identity, Tato/Lautaro does not end up being represented as lacking individual power (as a "victimized" Latino/migrant subject), but rather that his renewed form of existing in the world, in Mapu or the Americas, empowers him to even become a Mapuche activist and supporter of Indigenous efforts both in Chile as in Canada. There is an intersected Indigenous characteristic that I aim to further explore in this chapter, that is, the intersected cultures, values, and beliefs of two Indigenous groups from South America and Canada. We can assert that a representational intersectionality approach can be considered as a decolonial effort (or decolonial *project* in Mignolo terms), that helps us recognize the interconnectedness of various social categories such as race, and class, as it challenges and disrupts colonial and postcolonial hierarchies, and power structures.

In "Intersectionality as Method" (2015), Lutz suggests that one first needs to "reflect on partiality" and how characters represent different identity characteristics of themselves because "one can assume that these [characteristics] play a role in the concept of 'self', the view of life" (41). Moreover, by addressing Lutz's three levels of

intersectional analysis, I aim to switch my attention from how structures of racism, discrimination, and sexism determine one's identity. Rather, I aim to observe how a character like Tato/Lautaro, "ongoingly and flexibly negotiate[s] [his] multiple and converging identities in the context of everyday life" (Lutz 41). These are types of protagonists who draw from different aspects of their multiple identities "as a resource to gain control over their lives" while showing how their intersectional characteristics, "invariably linked to structures of domination, can mobilize and deconstruct disempowering discourses, and undermine and transform oppressive practices" (Lutz 41). In summary, the examination of English-language Chilean Canadian literary works in this final chapter underscores the enduring significance of the post-1973 Chilean era; it delves into marginalized Indigenous voices resisting dominant discourses and embracing representational intersectionality. By exploring intersecting characteristics, such as those of Tato/Lautaro, the analysis illuminates the complexities of identity, power, and resistance. Through a decolonial lens, the analysis in this chapter disrupts oppressive hierarchies and recognizes the interconnectedness of social categories, contributing to a deeper understanding of transgenerational Latina/o Canadian, and consequently, multicultural dynamics in Canada.

1.4 Conclusion

This introductory chapter has examined the significance of English-language Chilean Canadian literature and its representations of a Latina/o minority community, highlighting its role in understanding history, culture, identity, the meaning of "home," and a sense of belonging among its authors and protagonists. Through the theoretical framework of constructing an archive of memories, this analysis has focused on the construction and exploration of literary archived memories, encompassing the journey of Chilean exodus to Canada, the formation of a diasporic Latina/o Canadian community, and the emergence of the Chilean Canadian diasporic literature. By emphasizing the contributions of female Chilean Canadian authors in portraying the community's experiences and addressing themes of exile, memory, history, and identity negotiation, this chapter has showcased how these literary texts serve as repositories of memories, preserving and representing diverse transgenerational voices

within the community. Moreover, the utilization of postcolonial and cultural memory theoretical approaches has underscored the need for studying English-language Chilean Canadian literature as an important source of memories and its growing significance within the realm of diasporic literatures in Canada. The subsequent three chapters in the dissertation delved into different theoretical approaches, namely cultural memory studies, border studies and hemispheric perspectives, and representational intersectionality, to offer deeper insights into the construction and significance of Chilean Canadian literary texts. As this study progresses, the following chapters aim to shed light on the evolving nature of this diasporic literature and its position within the Canadian literary canon, ultimately contributing to a better understanding of the complex experiences of Latina/o diasporas in Canada.

Moreover, drawing from insights provided by the *Oxford Handbook of Canadian Literature*, I position English-language Chilean Canadian literature, and by extension, Latina/o Canadian literature, as one of the voices excluded from the Canadian literary landscape. As Sugars suggests,

From the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (established in 2010 as part of the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement) to investigations of varying degrees of citizenship, inclusion, and belonging, many Canadian critics are today exploring the ways in which literature contributed to the formulation of a national imaginary, consolidated in a national literary canon, at the same time that many voices remained excluded or misrepresented. (5)

In the context of my analysis of the Chilean Canadian diaspora as an excluded minority within the Canadian imaginary, it becomes evident that despite initiatives such as the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and investigations into citizenship and belonging, I acknowledge the significant role literature plays in shaping the national imaginary and, consequently, the Canadian canon. It is apparent that numerous voices, nonetheless, including those of Chilean Canadians, have been misrepresented within this paradigm.

In the subsequent chapters, I aim to demonstrate how Chilean Canadian literature offers a representation of the journey undertaken by Chileans in Canada, and in doing so, it contributes to our understanding of the process through which a sense of Canadian *Latinidad* is shaped. Through a close examination of these literary texts, this dissertation will shed light on the complexities of the Chilean community in Canada as a Latina/o diaspora and its evolving position within the broader Canadian literary canon.

Utilizing diasporic, postcolonial, and decolonial frameworks, the analysis of these narratives “create diverging patterns of integration and minority/majority relations” (Armony, “Introduction” 1). Through these postcolonial discourses, Chilean Canadian authors provide a nuanced understanding of the challenges faced by their diasporic community in their interactions within multicultural Canada, as well as the enduring impact of living in exile and navigating multiple cultural identities. Borrowing from Giménez Micó’s concept of “actively incorporation” to Canadian societies in Canada, it could be said that the authors capture the process of embracing (or not) the new Canadian way of life while preserving their unique cultural heritage (“Latin-Americanizing Canada”). Finally, following G. Etcheverry, Chilean Canadian writers have allowed their literary texts to gain “visibility” within the Canadian literary landscape, both among minority and dominant imaginaries. In doing so, they contribute to a transgenerational dialogue, embodying the complexities of in-betweenness, and incorporating diverse marginalized perspectives. This dissertation, ultimately, sheds light on the rich and evolving literary tradition of Chilean Canadian literature, while also highlighting its valuable contributions to the broader landscape of Canadian letters.

Chapter 2

Creating a Historical Archive of Memories: Carmen Rodríguez's and Carmen Aguirre's Work

The problem Estela de Ramírez had when she arrived in Canada was that she had nothing to hold on to ... when Estela de Ramírez was told that tomorrow she was going to Canada, nothing came to her mind. Canada. And when her daughters asked her, Mom, Mom, What's Canada like? all Estela de Ramírez told them was, It's a very big country at the other end of the world.

—Carmen Rodríguez, “Black Hole,” *And a Body to Remember with* (1997)

This chapter on transgenerational English-language Chilean Canadian literature delves into the transformative stories that shaped September 11th, 1973, and The Return Plan into “emblematic memory frameworks” (Stern). As Steve J. Stern states, we benefit from the contributions of Pierre Nora and his *lieux de mémoire*, to better understand “the connection between cultural death of living memory and the freezing of memory into sites of preservation” (4).¹⁵ Therefore, I argue that both September 11th, 1973, and the renewed Return Plan are temporalities that function as *sites* of enunciation for the Chilean Canadian writers. That is, they function as “emblematic memory frameworks” (Stern). As emblematic memory frameworks, both September 11th, 1973, and The Return Plan, represent significant transnational temporalities that symbolize and preserve the verge of the collapse of democracy in Chile and the beginning of one of the most brutal dictatorships in Latin America. The Return Plan, in turn, signifies a

¹⁵ For Pierre Nora, a site of memory (or *lieu de mémoire*) “is any significant entity, whether material or non-material in nature, which by dint of human will or the work of time has become a symbolic element of the memorial heritage of any community” (xvii “From Lieux”). Because of the disappearance of a French national memory, for Nora, it is significant to call for an inventory of *sites* as “places” (i.e., *lieux*) where the meaning of the French Nation is embedded (vii). In this context, because Nora’s analysis mainly focuses on physical sites of remembrances, I make a revisionist account of two Chilean “sites” as temporalities that depict emblematic memories as transnational symbols that define historical significance for Chileans, and by extension, Chilean Canadians.

new site of enunciation that depicts a coordinated effort by the Chilean resistance to get as many exiles as possible back to Chile with the intention to fight against the Pinochet's dictatorship. In this context, for this analysis, the post-1973 Chilean era (1973-to the present), signifies the struggle for justice, and human rights after such a pivotal date in Chile. Drawing on the theoretical framework of cultural memory studies (Erll; Neumann; Pasco; Sounders; Lachmann), this analysis demonstrates how the stories of the post-1973 era serve as reminders of moments that have profoundly impacted the lives, and consequently the memories of countless Chileans whether residing in their homeland or in exile. Within the framework of the "terror" lived by civilians during 1973-1990, new emotions such as solidarity and commitment emerge, and the terror itself undergoes a transformation into camaraderie, as elaborated upon in the subsequent discussion. These enduring narratives, nonetheless, continue to shape the history, memories, and identities of generations of Chileans such as the mother-daughter pairing of the authors featured in this analysis, Carmen Rodríguez, and Carmen Aguirre, who intertextually describe concepts of exodus, survival, fear, commitment, comradeship, return, and healing.

As part of an exilic Chilean Canadian literature, the elder Rodríguez' *And a Body to Remember with* (1997), and *Retribution* (2011), and Aguirre's *The Refugee Hotel* (2010), and *Something Fierce: Memoirs of a Revolutionary Daughter* (2011), serve to explore historical and condemnatory stories about the post-1973 Chilean era.¹⁶ I define condemnatory stories as stories that legitimize events—due to the life experience of the narrator as a witness—so it gives survivors the right to voice their struggle to claim recognition, human rights, and justice. Moreover, within these

¹⁶ While there are additional literary texts from these and other Chilean Canadian authors—Rosa Labordé, and Marilo Nuñez, for example, but also the newest Latina/o Canadian publication of Chilean testimonies by 2nd and 3rd generations of exiles in Canada, *50 Años Después, Uprooted and Replanted in Exile, Reflections on Being Chilean Canadian*, published by Casa Salvador Allende in Toronto, 2023—that depict and interpret the significance of the September 11th, 1973, and the "Return Plan" as sites of enunciation, this chapter focuses on the selected texts that are deemed most relevant and significant for analysis due to its transgenerational accounts.

transgenerational narratives, authors not only expose their individual life experiences and their arrival as political refugees in Canada, but through memories, they also communicate the sociopolitical significance of September 11th, 1973, and The Return Plan. Taking a clue from Pasco's "Literature as Historical Archive" (2004), I posit that Latina/o Canadian literature functions as a "historical archive" of memories, offering a comprehensive understanding of Canada and Latina/o Canadian history. These texts provide valuable insights into the experiences and perspectives of Latina/o Canadians in relation to these historical events and their ongoing impact. Simultaneously, as these diasporic Latina/o Canadian narratives emerge, they carve out a distinct space within the wider spectrum of Canadian literature, asserting their place within the Anglo Canadian canon. As a diasporic and transgenerational literature, furthermore, Latina/o Canadian literature offers a unique hemispheric perspective that redefines history, with its narratives contributing to an intertextual landscape that not only shapes the cultural imaginary of Chilean Canadians but also provides invaluable insights into a collective Latina/o Canada experience.

The epigraph of this chapter, in the voice of Carmen Rodríguez's protagonist Estela de Ramírez, serves as an exemplar of the many exilic and migration stories by Canada political refugees who came to Canada. Moreover, like this narrative, different memory constructing stories in this analysis exemplify a heightened awareness of Chilean Canadian self-representation and the preservation of cultural memory. Chileans' new life in exile started to take form back in the 1970s; as Rodríguez's character, Estela de Ramírez reminds us in her narration, Chileans fled to Canada having "nothing to hold on to," so the continued construction of their identities relates only to the intertwinement of here and there, now and before, past and present; that is, in between a native "home" left behind in Latin America and a "new adopted home" in exile. These exiles fled due to sociopolitical repression in the aftermath of the military coup orchestrated by Augusto Pinochet, on September 11th, 1973, and their arrival constituted Canada's first major wave of Latin American immigration, which no subsequent wave of Latin American immigration to Canada has surpassed.

These socio-historical events are the background of memories that come to inform the plot of generations of Chilean writers both at home in Chile and abroad in Canada. Thanks to the survivors' testimonies, younger generations today can give new meaning to Chilean history. Carmen Rodríguez and Carmen Aguirre write from exile in Canada, communicating stories that illustrate their life experiences allowing us to better understand condemnatory stories from the perspective of the survivors. These stories, furthermore, are transgenerational condemnatory narratives that intertextually communicate previously untold and unheard stories.¹⁷

I situate my analysis on the already mentioned publications by the mother-daughter pairing of authors within the field of cultural memory studies to point out

¹⁷ Intertextuality refers here to highlight the interconnected nature of literary texts within a broader literary framework. It emphasizes that English language texts do not exist in isolation but are influenced by and make references to other Spanish language texts. These references can be explicit or subtle and can serve different purposes, including enhancing meaning, adding layers of interpretation, paying tribute to other works, or engaging in dialogue with literary traditions and cultural and historical contexts. Intertextuality acknowledges the continuous conversation between texts and the interconnectedness of literary and cultural creations, and memories. In this context, Lachmann, in "Mnemonic and Intertextual Aspects of Literature" reminds us that "The mnemonic function of literature provokes intertextual procedures, or: the other way round, *intertextuality produces and sustains literature's memory*" (309; emphasis added). The family pairing of authors featured in this analysis, then, contrast historical frameworks that challenge the official story, and intertextually they create condemnatory stories that open a space for other possibilities of interpretation. That is, during the post-1973 Chilean era, there were thousands of people killed, tortured, and disappeared. This is a period that refers to Chilean society, both in Chile and abroad, and in the decades that followed the September 11th, 1973, that was marked by civilians "living in a state of terror" (Aguirre, *Something* 272). This is also an era marked by Operation Condor, the era when a secret intelligence and operations system emerged, enabling South American military regimes to coordinate intelligence information and execute political opponents through cross-border operations involving seizure, torture, and execution (McSherry 38). During this era in Chile, no one was excluded; young and old, students and teachers, intellectuals, professors, nuns and priests, and naturally, artists and writers whose personal viewpoints made them the regimes' political opponents—the "subaltern"—were victimized, imprisoned, tortured, raped, killed, or "disappeared."

how English-language Chilean Canadian literature has generated a diasporic literature, where a transgenerational and transnational imaginary whereby writers, narrators, and audiences share a network of memories, histories, and identities. Furthermore, the intertextuality present in these texts serves to highlight the communal and cohesive nature of community formation in Canada. Chilean Canadian literary texts cultivate a collective and political enunciation that speaks of a minority community of Latinas and Latinos in Canada. Therefore, I question how English-language Chilean Canadian literature represents the Latina/o imaginary, and how intertextuality produces and sustains this diasporic literature's memory. Ultimately, it could be said that English-language Chilean Canadian literary texts develop an imaginary in which diasporic members give meaning to their life experiences in exile. By constructing emblematic memory frameworks, these stories contain the feelings attached to past events and given spaces: that is, referring to both tangible and intangible (physical or imaginary) elements that hold symbolic value within a community's transgenerational memory. These frameworks, whether intentionally created by human effort over time, become integral components of the community's memorial heritage. Such a Chilean Canadian self-representation communicates expressions of an exiled community, which after years of living in Canada have formed a diasporic community creating and/or representing a sense of Latina/o Canadian cultures and identities (this creates an imaginary of Chilean Canadians in Canada). Moreover, an initial diasporic literature approach allows for reflection on how such Chilean Canadian literary texts have started to enter the dominion of Anglo Canadian letters. In this sense, Chilean Canadian writing belongs to both the major English Canadian and the minority literatures in Canada. This study, therefore, is circumscribed to Latina/o Canadian publications in the English language.¹⁸ As a side-lined literary production, English-language Chilean Canadian literary production exhibits all the defining characteristics

¹⁸ The omission of French-language Latina/o Canadian writers and texts from this analysis is deliberate as they warrant independent examination and analysis due to their intrinsic significance.

that warrant its recognition as a diasporic literature, as it captures the experiences and perspectives of a minority community within the Canadian context.¹⁹

2.1 Archive of Memories in Chilean Canadian Literature

In this section, a comprehensive methodology is assembled to facilitate the study of Chilean cultural memory within the context of English-language Chilean Canadian literature as an archive of historical memories. By delving into the Chilean Canadian cultural imaginary and its impact on the given meaning of leaving a “home” in Chile, this methodology aims to expose the of Chilean historical memory and the construction of a literary archive of memories. Furthermore, by employing this methodology, a deeper understanding of the intricate connections between cultural memory, hemispheric experiences, and literary representations within the Chilean Canadian diaspora can be achieved.

Drawing inspiration from Neumann’s concept of “fictions of memory,” and Fortunati and Lamberti’s exploration of cultural memory structures as a “collective knowledge,” these narratives are seen as embodying collective understanding and narratives that contribute to the Chilean Canadian cultural imaginary. Approaching these literary narratives as symbolic cultural remembrances, they offer insights into the recovery and reconstruction of Chilean Canadian self-representation. The intertextuality of themes prevalent in these texts help us understand the importance of English-language Chilean Canadian literature as an archive of stories representing September 11th, 1973, and The Return Plan as sites of enunciation depicting

¹⁹ I understand the relationship between the production of culture in a Canadian setting and its colonial and postcolonial perspectives, shadowing Gabrielle Etcheverry’s approach to the study of Latina/o Canadian writing and its relationship with the U.S. and Canada. According to Etcheverry, “the study of Latina/o Canadian literature and its (often invisible) position within national and transnational cultural frameworks can provide some fruitful insights into the continued asymmetrical power relations within and between ‘postcolonial’ multicultural societies in the Americas” (15–6).

emblematic memory frameworks. These literary narratives reveal the experiences of Chileans who migrated as political refugees during the post-1973 era, also illustrating the initial presence of Latina/o communities in Canada and how they evolved into a diasporic community. Moreover, through these narratives, a sense of Chilean Canadian self-representation emerges while authors address subjects of history, culture, and identity. The narratives delve into the theme of “new beginnings” for the Chilean Canadian diaspora, capturing both the nostalgia of returning to Chile, and their memories of resistance and survival. The new memories portrayed within these narratives contribute to the construction of Chilean culture and identity, as well as the processes of inclusion and exclusion in Canadian society. Chilean Canadian authors provide new insights into the sense of attachment to both Chile and Canada, conveying an initial sense of resistance to belonging to their new “home” in exile. Nonetheless, these literary narratives serve as vehicles for recovering and recalling individual and collective Latin American experiences while reconstructing Chilean cultural and historical memories of the post-1973 era. Essentially, they reconstruct Chilean historical memory within a new socio-political framework.

Approaching English-language Chilean Canadian literary narratives as *new* memory accounts allows us to study these narratives as representation of how Chilean Canadians, as a diasporic community, continue to develop in Canada. In this context, English-language Chilean Canadian literary narratives are the medium through which narrators and audiences imagine a transgenerational network of cultural and historical highlighting the significance of collective remembering. Through the exploration of historical Chilean memories, these literary narratives, contribute to the understanding of the post-1973 era and the sociopolitical struggles that should never be repeated. Therefore, English-language Chilean Canadian literature negotiates new traits of Chilean individual, collective, cultural, and national stories, memories, and identities for the aims of present and future needs. The intertextuality of themes, images, imaginary worlds, and social frameworks as the stimulus of any given literature, presents new revised versions of the past that allow authors and audiences to recover and reconstruct Chilean official history.

In this context, and by following Saunders' analysis in "Life-Writing, Cultural Memory and Literary Studies," Chilean Canadian narratives are "modes of writing" that "pass into the public consciousness [and] also contribute to the *production* of cultural memory" (323-4). Following this interpretation, authors preserve and reconstruct memories, thereby building a sense of themselves in relation to a whole culture. Such memories also create and transmit new sets of shared fictional stories. According to Maynes et al., personal narratives "serve to reorient theories about the relationship between the individual and the social by calling attention to the social and cultural dynamics through which individuals construct themselves as social actors" (2). The authors featured in the present analysis point out the importance of human agency as the "individual social action," or sociopolitical commitment in connection with "the construction of selfhood in and through historically specific social relationships and institutions" (2). These narratives come to inform the authors' need to communicate facts as social agents where narratives function as sources to explore "a particular *social, categorical, or positional location* and thus address critical dimensions of social action that are otherwise opaque" (6). For this analysis, life-writing narratives are recalled stories whose analytic value rests on the ability to reveal something *new* about the world we all inhabit and about the agent's (i.e., authors' and protagonists') social position shaped by their personal and transgenerational viewpoints and goals. Writers, as representatives of a diasporic group in Canada, transmit new stories and create sociopolitical awareness about the struggles lived during the post-1973 Chilean era. Even more specifically, this is particularly evident within The Return Plan, which has been introduced as a newly coined site of enunciation.

In the following analysis, within the umbrella of cultural memory, I identify how sociopolitical commitment drives writers to persistently publish about the post-1973 era. The act of writing allows authors to reconstruct a cultural imaginary within socio-historical contexts, cultures, and identities while reflecting on their experiences and recalling post-1973 Chilean facts. The diverse voices within these narratives recounts how history is remembered and offers insights into the continual construction of a collective Chilean Canadian story. Once again, the transgenerational modes of

remembering to provide diverse perspectives and meanings to the past, contributing to a historical Chilean Canadian memory. English-language Chilean Canadian literary production serves, therefore, as a cultural institution and archive of memories, expressing collective knowledge and shaping a sense of hemispheric unity.

2.2 Transgenerational Accounts of Memory in the Works of Carmen Rodríguez and Carmen Aguirre

Carmen Rodríguez's featured work in this chapter include her short stories book, *And a Body to Remember with*, published in English in 1997 by Arsenal Pulp Press (but was also simultaneously published in Spanish as *A cuerpo entero* by Editorial Los Andes, in Chile). In 2011, Rodríguez released her debut English novel, also featured in this study, *Retribution*, by Women's Press, earning second place in the Popular Novel category at the Latino Book Awards in New York (2012). This novel was also published in Norway titled *Chiles Døtre*, by Juritzen Forlag of Oslo, with a forthcoming Spanish version titled *El desquite*. Nonetheless, as an author, Rodríguez's literary journey includes her poem "Acuarela" (1973), which received an Honorary Mention in a contest by Paula Magazine. Following this, her bilingual collection of poems titled *Guerra Prolongada/Protracted War* was published by Women's Press in 1992. Her second English novel, *Atacama* (2021) was published by Rosemary Publishing (in Halifax and Winnipeg). Rodríguez's literary skill has garnered recognition, including lectures at the ACH Canadian Association of Hispanists Congress in Vancouver, B.C. (2019); nominations for the Vancouver Book Awards and the Premio Municipal de Literatura in Santiago, Chile (1998); tributes such as the Confederation Poets Prize in ARC Magazine, Ottawa (1996); and numerous writing grants from the Canada Council and the B.C. Arts Council. Moreover, Rodríguez's works have been featured in various magazines and anthologies, including The Apostles Review in Montreal, The Capilano Review in Vancouver, Descant in Toronto, and anthologies like *Canadografía – Antología narrativa latino-canadiense* (Edited by Jorge Etcheverry, 2017), *Cloudburst: An Anthology of Hispanic Canadian Short Stories* (Edited by Luis Molina Lora and Julio Torres Recinos, 2013), *Chilean Poets, a New Anthology* (Edited by Jorge Etcheverry, 2011), *Borealis – Antología*

Literaria de El Dorado (Edited by Luciano Díaz and Jorge Etcheverry, 2011), *La voz y la memoria, Antología de la poesía chilena en Canadá* (Edited by Luis A. Torres and Luciano Díaz, 2009), among others.

Carmen Aguirre's featured work in this chapter include her well-know and international staged play *The Refugee Hotel* (2010). *The Refugee Hotel* was more recently republished in *Fronteras Vivientes: Eight Latina/o Canadian Plays*, a collection of Latina/o Canadian Plays edited by Natalie Alvarez (2013). *The Refugee Hotel* won the Jessie Richardson New Play Centre Award in 2002. Also featured in this chapter, Aguirre's first memoir, *Something Fierce: Memoir of a Revolutionary Daughter* (2011), won the CBC Radio Canada Reads in 2012 and was translated into several languages, including Dutch and Italian. Nominated for numerous awards, *Something Fierce* received recognition by publications like the Globe and Mail, Quill & Quire, and the National Post. Her memoir was a finalist and winner of the 2012 BC Book Prize and received praise from BBC Radio in the United Kingdom, becoming a national bestseller. In addition, Aguirre has published several plays, and has been nominated for twelve local and national awards. *Chile con Carne*, was first published in Blizzard Publishing's collection *Rave: Young Adult Drama* (2000) and later featured in *Undoing Border Imperialism* (2013). *In a Land Called I Don't Remember*, and *Qué pasa con la Raza, eh?* (both published by Talonbooks 2019), were initially part of *Along Human Lines: Dramas from Refugee Lives* (2000) by Playwrights Guild of Canada. Other plays published by Talonbooks encompass *The Trigger* (2008), short-listed for the Jessie Richardson Award, and *Blue Box* (2013). Moreover, Aguirre is known for over sixty credits in film, TV, and stage acting. She holds various accolades, including the 2011 Lorena Gale Woman of Distinction Award and the 2012 Langara College Outstanding Alumna Award. She has received nominations for esteemed theatre awards and was an Artistic Associate for the Stratford Festival's 2021 Anti-Racism Initiatives. Aguirre's latest publication, *Anywhere but Here* (2021), is also featured in this study in chapter three, and I summarize it below.

The Chilean Canadian literary texts to analyze in this section explore themes of sociopolitical unrest, resistance, survival, and the construction of cultural memory.

These texts represent the significance of the September 11th, 1973, but also the post-1973 era as a unique and substantial period in Chilean history. These narratives offer stories that intertextually connect and give significance to historical facts and, by doing so, also shed light on how survivors in exile continue to construct their culture, identity, and an archive of memories from the dichotomy of “home” and exile. By doing so, Chilean Canadian authors provide insight on the significance of September 11th, 1973, and The Return Plan as sites of enunciation depicting emblematic memory frameworks. Like the already established “site” of September 11th, 1973, The Return Plan is also intertextually signified in other literary texts. The Return Plan is directly represented in a whole chapter in Aguirre’s *Something Fierce* (2011, 1-96), and it recreates the meaning that encompasses the collective efforts and aspirations of individuals who, after being compelled into exile as a result of the 1973 Chilean coup, sought to return to South America and actively resist the dictatorial regime. It also symbolizes their yearning to reunite with their homeland to reclaim their civil liberties and contribute to the establishment of democracy and social justice in Chile and beyond. The Return Plan, therefore, symbolizes the struggles of the post-1973 era, but also the hope for a brighter future and the pursuit of justice for those affected by the coup, including displaced individuals, their families, comrades, and the victims who were killed or disappeared. As I explore below, these transgenerational stories end up reconstructing the Chilean cultural memory of the post-1973 era while also creating a historical archive of memories.

Within the framework of the post-1973 era that I have been trying to frame until now, in this section I reveal the profound significance of transgenerational and intertextual connections within the memory of this Chilean Canadian diasporic literature. English-language Chilean Canadian texts not only provide invaluable insights into the post-1973 era and its pivotal role in Latin American history but also emphasize the interplay between narratives, creating a rich tapestry of shared memories and experiences. By interweaving individual and historical accounts, these literary works contribute to the ongoing reconstruction of Chilean cultural memory, while simultaneously communicating the Chilean commitment to write and publish

about these sociopolitical events as emblematic memory frameworks that have transcended borders and generations. From transgenerational and intertextual dimensions, therefore, these narratives reconstruct historical facts while simultaneously, authors endure the power of memories and their transformative impact on the individual journey through their lives in exile, as well as the transgenerational consciousness.

In what follows, then, I analyze the works of Carmen Rodríguez and Carmen Aguirre to demonstrate the power of collective and transgenerational storytelling, which, through intertextuality, effectively creates and preserves the memory of this diasporic literature. The Chilean Canadian narratives within Carmen Rodríguez's *And a Body to Remember with* (1997), and *Retribution* (2011), and Carmen Aguirre's *Something Fierce: Memoirs of a Revolutionary Daughter* (2011), and *The Refugee Hotel* (2010) create a space from which authors, narrators, and readers share stories that produce and continue to give meaning to September 11th, 1973, and coin The Return Plan as a new site of remembrance (but also commemoration). I analyze both female Chilean Canadian authors *in parallel*, to elucidate the significance of employing a transgenerational approach by comprehensively examining multiple texts authored by these writers, thus providing a clear and thorough analysis of how this methodology enhances our understanding of their collective significance of these intertextual works. I first illustrate the stories that depict the meaning of exile and the arrival of Chileans to Canada as political refugees, then I address the significance of September 11th, 1973, and finally, the consequences of its aftermath throughout the exploration and meaning of The Return Plan.

2.2.1 The Arrival: Chileans Going into Canada as Political Refugees

Let us commence by addressing a clear example of how the works of Carmen Rodríguez and Carmen Aguirre intertextually refer to emblematic memory frameworks that make of this the memory of this literature. A simple initial example is sufficient here, the memory of the arrival to Canada as political refugees. In Rodríguez's *And a Body to Remember with* (1997) different short stories stress how Chileans were the

first main wave of Latinas/os to arrive in Canada. In an introductory short story, the “Black Hole,” by Estela de Ramírez’s voice, her arrival at the *Ace Motor Hotel* in Vancouver (which does not exist anymore), is one example of how authors set off an intertextual play of images that illustrates a collective understanding of the theme of “new beginnings” for the Chilean Canadian diaspora. Rodríguez informs us how, as the protagonist, Estela de Ramírez and other political exiled Chileans were forced into exile without any previous knowledge about Canada. Estela de Ramírez states that she starts falling “into a black hole called Canada, with nothing to hold on to” (*And a Body* 21–22). In a similar vein, giving another transgenerational perspective, in *Retribution* (2011), from the perspective of a 2nd generation of political refugees in Canada, Tania expresses: “I wasn’t born here [in Canada]. I was only three days old when I came to Canada, which basically means I’m Canadian, but I was born in Chile. My mami, my grandma and I came here as refugees. [After] My dad was killed, my uncle was killed, [and] my mom was in a concentration camp” (Rodríguez, *Retribution* 15).

These stories intertextually echo Carmen Aguirre’s work, *The Refugee Hotel* (2010), and her first memoir, *Something Fierce: Memoir of a Revolutionary Daughter* (2011). In *The Refugee Hotel*, Aguirre portrays a group of Chilean exiles arriving at a hotel funded by the Canadian government, providing a temporary residence for Chileans before securing more permanent housing. These arrangements were coordinated by a white Canadian who spoke broken Spanish, along with other volunteers from church organizations. Moreover, in *Something Fierce*, Aguirre makes also reference to the arrival of Chilean refugees in Vancouver, where they met their gringo friend Bill (73). In 1974, she writes, “We’d been one of the first families to arrive ... [and my uncle] had been the first Chilean refugee to arrive in Vancouver after an epic solo journey that took him from Valparaíso to Santiago to Seattle and then across the border into Canada” (*Something Fierce* 6, 12). This is an example of how Chilean writers intertextually transmit the arrival of Latinas/os in Canada.

From a diverse spectrum of female voices, Rodríguez’s collection of short stories, *And a Body to Remember with*, not only portray how one starts to make a living as a political exiled in Canada (“Black Hole” 19–35), other stories present the

nostalgia and the protagonists' dream of returning to Chile ("In the Company of Words" 59–61; "3-D" 93–97). Other narratives communicate the stories of the day of the coup ("Hand-made Times" 73–76), also represent the "disappeared on the eleventh of September 1973" and memories of how women lived under and contributed to the resistance in Chile ("The Mirror" 37–43; and "Adios Pazzolla" 47–56), and more significant for this story, how women return from Canada to South America to be part of the underground resistance movement ("Trespass" 79–100). The ending of Rodríguez's whole collection of short stories concludes by recognizing that there are memories that have never gone away,

[Even though] Chile, the long and narrow strip of land sliding silently into the Pacific, now lives only in the past, [there are still] phantoms that don't let [Yolanda, the narrator] live in peace ... [These phantoms are memories] that cross borders, travel through entire continents, [and] learn other languages.
(122-3)

The diverse female voices within Rodríguez's collection, then, resolves with an emphasis on the meaning and title of the whole collection. The narrative voice suggests that "even if [she] wanted to forget, [she] can't. [She does] have *a mind and a body to remember with. Forgetting is not an option*" (149–66, emphasis added). Like this storyline, the literary voices within English-language Chilean Canadian literature expresses transgenerational memory frameworks that speak of the construction of Chilean culture and identity as well as the processes of inclusion in and exclusion from Canadian societies. As diverse stories of memory, these narratives help us to conceptualize "a sense of the continual presence of the past" as a framework "in which historical remembering occurs" (Crane 1373). It also explores the impact of the struggles these survivors experienced and how their past stories continue to shape their present history, as I will expose in the following section.

2.2.2 Arrest, Imprisonment, and Torture before Going into Exile, an Intertextual Story

From a sociopolitical context, Chilean Canadian literary narratives also inform us about surviving civilians who were fortunate to flee Chile even after being captured, imprisoned, and repeatedly tortured despite having nothing to do with the resistance movements. These are, therefore, not only migration and exilic stories but also condemnatory accounts about torture and surviving; they represent stories of those who were imprisoned and tortured, but somehow liberated and sent into exile in Canada. To illustrate, there is the character of Sol, Tania's mother in *Retribution* (Rodríguez), Flaca and Fat Jorge in *The Refugee Hotel* (Aguirre), and Manuel in Rodríguez's short story "Black Hole" (*In a Body*). "Manuel Ramírez," Rodríguez writes, "thin and wasted, but neat, and with a big smile, sitting in 20C of the Canadian Pacific Airlines economy class [was] handcuffed to the seat." It was not until the airplane took off that he was released from the handcuffs "for the first time since the night of October 2nd, 1973, [so he] was able to hug his family" (20).

Carmen Aguirre, in a similar fashion, incorporates her life experience stories about her arrival in the "hotel for refugees the Canadian government had paid for when [she and her family] first got to Vancouver" in 1974 (*Something Fierce* 9). In her play, *The Refugee Hotel*, however, she tells the stories from the perspective of other people—aunts, and uncles, as she describes them—who endured similar circumstances. To illustrate, in *The Refugee Hotel*, Aguirre incorporates the stories of Flaca and Fat Jorge, a married couple who, like Manuel and Estela in Rodríguez's story, and Tania's mother in *Retribution*, were imprisoned in Chile but then liberated from the concentration camps after being physically and emotionally tortured. Flaca and Fat Jorge communicate (in different scenes in this play) how the sociopolitical struggles and violence as lived in the post-1973 era made even family members keep secrets about each other's participation in the resistance movement. Flaca, in this context, tells Fat Jorge about her story for the first time. She is sorry because Fat Jorge was captured even though he was an innocent man with no relationship to the resistance movement. Indeed, Fat Jorge was imprisoned and tortured; consequently, he

has nightmares that make him scream at night due to his PTSD. “I’m sorry you were picked up [Fat Jorge] ... sometimes it is the price one pays [for being part of the resistance]. But one doesn’t regret it,” Flaca states (31). This quotation illustrates how sometimes women were the first to intervene in the resistance movement, and how some Chileans, as a community, participated in such an opposition movement against the military junta, even putting not only their own lives in danger but also those of their family members. For instance, from exile, and after being liberated from a clandestine prison, Fat Jorge asks Flaca for the truth; he asks her, “They were telling the truth [about your intervention with the resistance and the death of the] businessman from the American Embassy, weren’t they?” Flaca replies, “Businessman? That gringo’s with the CIA and he came to train torturers. Anyway, that’s not true. None of this is true. I was not involved in that [death]. But I would die for what I believe in. And I would kill for it” (31-33). This stories intertextually illustrates one of the numerous ways Chileans arrived in Canada immediately after being liberated from concentration camps, while depicting how the Canadian embassy assisted them in going into exile during the Chilean post-1973 era. Additionally, it creates a renewed political framework for survivors and participants of the resistance movement who reference historical facts as part of their commitment to recounting their experiences, the story of their friends, family, and *compañeros* who were captured, torture, and in some instances, disappeared. These stories aim to raise awareness about previously untold stories, as I will further analyze below.

2.2.3 The Other Story, in Support of Pinochet’s Dictatorial Regime

I would like to briefly explore the other side of the story. While most Chilean Canadian literary texts represent the life experiences and stories of survivors, there is also a need to delve into the perspective of Chileans who supported Pinochet and his dictatorial regime. Stern opens his first chapter in *Remembering Pinochet’s Chile: On the Eve of London 1998* (2004) with the following:

One person’s criminal is another person’s hero. To appreciate the memory question in Chile, on the eve of General Augusto Pinochet’s October 1998

detention in London, requires that we understand the Chileans who saw Pinochet as a hero as well as those who condemned him as a criminal. Pinochet's detention responded to an extradition request by a Spanish judge pursuing crimes against humanity covered by international law. For some Chileans, the arrest proved an apt culmination of the previous quarter century. For others, it violated history. (7)

From these observations, while I do not conduct a comprehensive analysis of the "other-side-of-the-story" (i.e., the story of the supporters of Pinochet's dictatorial regime), it is significant to recognize that Chilean Canadian literary texts also refer in some instances to such alternative narratives. To illustrate, in Aguirre's memoir, while visiting their extended family in Santiago after a short stay in Vancouver, and in her way to reunite with her mother, the narrative voice communicates the story of her extended family, mainly her grand-aunts Milagros, Remedios and Perlita, who "supported Pinochet through an organization called Fatherland and Liberty." Aguirre explains a lunch-episode where two military men joined them at the table, they were the two sons from her grandmother's younger brother Gerardo, who were enrolled into a military academy by her grand-aunts. "There was so much I wanted to know but dared to ask [the narrative voice claims]. Mami had warned us to be careful what we said in Chile. Remember that the enemy is mostly likely in the heart of your family, she'd told us" (*Something* 66).

A more significant case is that presented by Carmen Rodríguez in her transgenerational story *Retribution*, where there is a contrast of political views from the family's 3rd generation character, Tania's grandmother, Soledad, and the 2nd generation Sol, Tania's mother. In this story, Soledad is first represented as a supporter of Pinochet, who "didn't want Chile to become another Russia or Cuba. So, when [President Salvador] Allende won the election [Soledad states], I was devastated" (146). However, Sol is a represented of the members involved in the underground resistance movement, who supported a socialist initiative even before the 1973's Chilean coup. Moreover, in *Retribution*, Rodríguez describes how before and during the post 1973-Chilean era, the Chilean society was divided, even within the same

family units. Sol, daughter of Soledad states: “I couldn’t believe that my mom, an intelligent, resourceful woman, had fallen for the right-wing propaganda. How could I make her open her eyes and use her head ... my brother talked me into letting it go; every family in the country seemed to be divided” (152). Moreover, on September 11th, 1973, while the coup was starting to develop, and without knowing where to go, Sol finds herself wondering the streets and thinking about her aunt Amparo, who was living in her new house on Pedro de Valdivia Norte, just a few blocks from where she was. “Aunt Amparo made me sit down in the living room ... [then] She left the room” —Sol states. When Sol’s aunt Amparo came back into the dining room, turned the television to hear the current military junta’s communiqué, then she notices. “My heart bleeds just thinking that my only niece turned out to be a communist ... Who knows what my sister Soledad did to deserve abnormal children, heaven forbid” (165-6). The story does not end here, after a discussion about political principals and the two women different opinions, Sol claims:

Our conversation was interrupted by the screeching tires of a vehicle turning the corner at full speed and breaking in front of the house. My aunt ... let in three military men, accompanied by two hooded individuals dressed in black, with swastikas printed on the front of their shirt. Without uttering a word, they pulled me off the armchair, blindfolded me, tied my hands behind my back and pushed me out of the house. When I woke up, I was lying on the cement floor of a dark place, together with dozens of other bodies, soaked in my own urine. (169)

Like this last quote illustrates, authors help rewriting the Chilean stories to complete the historical archive that comes to inform us about surviving stories of resistance, but also communicate the “other story,” as to how there were members of the Chilean society who supported Pinochet’s regime. Like Flaca’s narrative in the previous subsection about torture and survivor, Sol’s story also shows another level of civilians’ role with the coup and its aftermath, but both stories raise contemporary sociopolitical consciousness regarding the involvement of the CIA in South America during the post-1973 Chilean era, and the support of Chilean civilians. As we see in the following subsection, however, these dialogues not only described Chilean Canadian stories of

resistance, survival, and solidarity, also demonstrate the collective experience of stories of “terror” from a transgenerational and hemispheric perspectives.

2.2.4 Chilean Canadian Commitment Memory Frameworks within a Hemispheric Standpoint

From a hemispheric context, these sociohistorical life experiences of political repression that Chileans lived after the 1973 coup have not died with the people who experienced them. These stories have survived even while crossing the border into exile, even as these stories take place in Canada. Post-1973 Chilean stories are moments from a Chile and diaspora, as their lives continue to mark both their individual and collective existence. For all the new generations of Chileans at home and in exile, such moments continue to influence their history, memories, and identities. The sentiment that marked living under the dictatorship has not gone away, even though, sometimes, “Terror paralyzes ... [and] eats [you] away like cancer,” as Flaca states in *The Refugee Hotel* (71). Terror allows for new emotions to arise—solidarity and commitment—, and terror transformed into *camaradería*, as I explain below. These are not only the stories of politically exiled Chileans; they represent the feeling that also concerned the whole generation of Chileans at home. For example, Cristina, another character in Aguirre’s *The Refugee Hotel* argues, when someone is taken away from the military in the in the middle of the day, and their neighbors do not do anything to help, that is, they do not intervene when people are been captured by the military junta, it is because of the terror of being captured and imprisoned for no reason. It is “cause they don’t have arms to fight with, sister!” Flaca replies. The character Juan, however, offers another explanation: “There is nothing worse than fear. Fear is the mind-killer” (71).

Nonetheless, with or without fear and terror, from exile, the Chilean writers featured in this analysis write their stories (and those of their comrades) to support the resistance back in Chile. The feeling of camaraderie makes both Rodríguez and Aguirre continue to make public events that have marked the lives of thousands of Chileans both at home and in exile. No matter how long it has been since their escape and arrival in Canada, camaraderie continues to fiercely impact authors who, even

from exile, continue writing about and publishing their individual traumatic experiences and those of their community. For instance, a character in Rodríguez's narrative suggests, "we have kept [the] memory [of our comrade Mario] alive not only because of everything he meant to us personally, but because his life and assassination cannot be forgotten because *they are part of our history and of Chilean and world history*" ("A Balanced Diet" in *And a Body* 159; emphasis added). This quotation demonstrates how narratives invite us to reflect on such stories as local Chilean and yet also hemispheric; in the post-1973 era, these narratives serve as a site of recollections, fear, comradery, migration and exile, survival, but also healing and resolution (i.e., entailing an imagined journey from when they left their homeland, their arrival to an exiled "home," and their—physical or imagined—return to Latin America).

In this context, September 11th, 1973, serves as a crucial point of expression, representing a significant memory framework for individual survivors and subsequent generations of writers. As represented in transgenerational accounts within Chilean Canadian literary texts, such as in Rodríguez's *Retribution*, September 11th, 1973, marked the life and memories of young and adult, both in Chile and in Canada. Moreover, emblematic memories depicting the significance of September 11th, 1973, continue to reflect on younger generations—i.e. the 1.5 generation studied in this analysis—due to the significance this implied, and continue to denote for first generations of refugees in Canada.²⁰ To illustrate, in Rodríguez's "Hand-made Times" story, for instance, a female protagonist narrates to her daughter how civilians discussed the possibility of a coup, that is, how the day of the coup they were all getting ready, training to fight and waiting for the military to come to the university where the protagonist was supposed to give a lecture. But on this historical day she

²⁰ As mentioned before, there are new publications by 2nd and 3rd generations of writers, who in their testimonies describe the continue significance of the September 11th, 1973, as a temporality that today, in 2023, when these testimonies were published, still mark the lives, memories, and identities of Chilean Canadians (*see 50 Años Después*)

was not waiting for her students, the protagonist states, rather, they are waiting together for the military to come, “I’ve come to the end of the path” (*And a Body* 73). She continues,

I never believed those who insisted that the day would come when we would have to defend ourselves. I didn’t want to believe them. What happens to our peaceful road to socialism? Allende was selected by popular vote. The Chilean military are supposed to be professionals and their job is to defend the elected government, not to overthrow it. I thought that these things only happened in the so-called “banana republics,” not in Chile ...

This quote not only illustrates the significance of the coup day but also raises awareness about civilian struggles while condemning the intentions behind the military actions. She proceeds,

They say they’re coming now ... It’s hard to hear, the noise is terrible, the earth shakes. We have to be ready. We get into lines to receive them. In the sky the army helicopters look like dragonflies with huge eyes, watching us ... we can see the American tanks in the street with the poplars. The tanks have blocked all the access. [She restates] They have come to the end of the path ... I look at the dozen or so familiar faces that surround me, in search of comfort, but I find only sadness and fear. (73-76)

This quote serves as a clear example of how September 11th, 1973, establishes emblematic memory frameworks that delineate the events of that day. Despite some individuals being aware of the potential for a coup and many being more or less prepared for it, the actual occurrence took many by surprise, evoking emotions of sadness and fear, as suggested by this last quote.

In another literary text, *Retribution*, by Carmen Rodríguez’, two different protagonists—Sol (daughter), and Soledad (mother)—express similar situations where they capture the shocks Chilean people experienced on this date. Before Sol was taken from her aunt’s house by three military men, she explains that, on “The morning of

September 11, 1973, we woke up to the road of helicopters hovering over downtown Santiago. We turned the radio just as Allende was beginning to address the country. It wasn't easy to hear him—there was a lot of static and interference, plus the whole building was shaking and tikling to the rhythm of tanks crawling down the street” (159). In the following section of this novel, now in the voice of Sol's mother, Soledad, the narrative voice explains,

The morning of September 11 was sunny and bright. As usual, I got up early, took a shower, put the kettle on and turned on the radio to listen to the seven o'clock news while I prepared breakfast. Instead of the unusual newsreel, the announcer repeated the same communiqué over and over again: “Sectors of the Armed Forces have revolted and are advancing towards La Moneda, the president palace” ... I felt a huge sense of relief; finally, the country would go back to normal. Andresito [Soledad's younger son] had spent the night at home, so I woke him up and gave him the news with a big grin on my face. He got dressed in a hurry and left [yelling] “Stop celebrating because the coup will not be successful.” (170–1)

The depiction of the immediate actions by the military junta and civilians on September 11th, 1973, as demonstrated by these last two quotes, establishes an intertextual relationship between these narratives. Within the September 11th, 1973's context, Chilean Canadian diasporic narratives capture the profound shock and disbelief experienced by the narrators as they witness the violent overthrow of the elected government in Chile. The narrator's initial skepticism and disbelief about such events occurring in Chile highlights the significance of this historical moment, as it shattered preconceived notions of political stability and peaceful transitions of power. The vivid imagery of military presence and the emotions of sadness and fear conveyed by the narrators emphasize the lasting impact of this event on individual lives and the collective memory of Chileans at home, but also of the Chilean diaspora in Canada.

Within a similar framework, as a younger author from the 1.5 generation of writers in Canada, who experienced the coup at a young age, Carmen Aguirre states:

On the morning of the coup in Chile, my mother [Carmen Rodríguez] and my father had called Ale [my younger sister] and me into their bed. Together, we'd listened to President Allende say goodbye over the radio as warplanes flew above La Moneda Palace. "Compañeros, surely this will be the last opportunity for me to address you. My words do not express bitterness but disappointment. May there be a moral punishment for those who have betrayed their oath: the soldiers of Chile ... I am not going to resign ... I will pay for your loyalty with my life ... (*Something Fierce* 53)

Aguirre introduces her experience of September 1973 by referencing this speech by Salvador Allende in order to establish a connection between her personal story and the larger sociopolitical and historical context. By including Allende's words, she highlights the significance of that moment in Chilean history and the profound impact it had and continues to have on her and many other Chileans. Aguirre's intention as an exiled writer in Canada is to bring attention to the events of the past, to preserve the memory of those who were affected by the political turmoil, and to provide a voice for those who were silenced, the killed and disappeared. Through her writing, Aguirre seeks to raise awareness, create empathy, and contribute to the collective memory of the Chilean diaspora, ensuring that the stories and struggles of the past are not forgotten, she continues:

There had been a whistling, then the sound of bombs exploding. My parents, who had joined the student movement in the sixties, had sobbed quietly as they held us, and when we tried to speak, they pressed a finger to the pursed lips and whispered, "Listen, Compañero Allende has something important to say, and no matter what happens to us, *you must always remember this moment.*" (*Something Fierce* 54; emphasis added)

These stories demonstrate how intertextually, the meaning attached to generations of Chileans connects them as a unified community. As a sociopolitical framework, the September 11th, 1973, is the backbone of English-language Chilean Canadian literature, it continues to communicate untold stories and facts to spread awareness

about how things happened on this date because, as the last quote explains, this is a moment that Chileans should always remember.

2.2.5 A New Emblematic Memory Framework within English Chilean Canadian Literature: The Return Plan

Chilean Canadian literature, which initially emerged as politically motivated Spanish literature in the 1970s, has, in the last few decades, also been conveyed in English, articulating the struggles and turmoil stemming from September 11th, 1973, and beyond. One can argue, therefore, English-language Chilean Canadian literature is today a medium for authors, and new generations of readers, including non-Latin American audiences to share emblematic memory frameworks, but also re-create stories, and re-construct their identities. The Chilean historical memory, as represented now in the English language, therefore, has helped rewrite the official Chilean story. Consequently, this renewed literature in the English language can be studied today as a historical archive of memories which can reference the September 11th, 1973, as a sociopolitical and transnational emblematic memory framework. The Return Plan becomes an additional framework for recalling emblematic memories, shaped by the repercussions of this historical date. It has started to leave an imprint on the lives of generations of survivors and exiles, constructing a revitalized framework that narrates how Chileans went back to South America after been in exile to fight against Pinochet's regime. These renewed emblematic and condemnatory stories reframe the leveling of resistance and survivor narratives.

In this context, Carmen Rodríguez, the mother writer discussed in this chapter, refrains from labeling stories about the resistance movement in South America as part of The Return Plan because when her work *And a Body to Remember with* was published in 1997, this remained a top-secret matter—see for example, the short story “Trespass” (79-92), analyzed below. However, for the younger writers highlighted here, such as Carmen Aguirre, a member of the 1.5 generation of authors who published her first memoir years after the coup, it becomes more pertinent to refer to this period in Chilean history by stating the name given by the resistance participants and the MIR—Movimiento de Izquierda Revolucionaria. Nonetheless, there is a need

to recognize these authors' intertextual stories to better understand the pivotal role of the 1973 Chilean coup, as how it happened, who is to blame, but also how the effects of the 1973 Chilean coup continue to disturb survivors today. The stories of the aftermath of the September 11th, 1973, including the renewed framework of memories of the Return Plan, nevertheless, help contest and complete the official Chilean story while giving a renewed or restored meaning to a single date in Chilean history.

The sociopolitical struggles caused by the Chilean coup are not the only memories Chilean Canadian authors communicate. September 11th, 1973 is only the beginning of sociopolitical turmoil, and therefore, analyzing memories that encompass the immediate effects of this date and its aftermath provides a comprehensive understanding of the long-lasting social, political, and cultural impact of the event. The aftermath memories, as I analyze as follows, allow for a deeper exploration of the collective suffering, and ongoing struggles experienced by individuals and communities affected by the coup. The continued recognition, acceptance, and spread of The Return Plan as a new framework of remembrance of emblematic memories, is worth noticing. There is the need, and female Chilean writers have the determination to communicate the continued participation of Chileans in exile, while denoting the meaning of camaraderie of the survivors, to create awareness and spread their sociopolitical message. This duty to communicate what happened during the post-1973 Chilean era, how it occurred, and its sociopolitical effects, is what today describes the commitment of the Chilean Canadian imaginary.

The Return Plan, suggests Carmen Aguirre in her introductory chapter, was when many Chileans, including herself and her family "had quietly left Canada to join the underground" (*Something Fierce* 13). As a young Chilean, she suggests, "I hadn't realized that we were [already] in the resistance," while living in Vancouver, "I'd just thought we were in solidarity with the resistance." She continues, "The resistance was underground, my mother said in low voice. That meant it was top secret. We couldn't tell anybody, under any circumstances" (5). Once again, the "secret" significance that these stories had before the publication of Aguirre, is what makes her mother, Carmen Rodríguez in *And a Body to Remember with*, for example, not to call the returning to

South America, the return plan. The Return Plan stories for Carmen Rodríguez are, nevertheless, described by narratives full of terror, torture, and survival. First, in “The Mirror,” and in “I Sing, therefore, I Am,” Rodríguez communicates the life of women affected by, and working for the underground resistance movement. In “The Mirror,” she tells a love story narrated by Clara, a famous actress, who for a while takes care of Cristina, a young woman who had “join the armed resistance to the dictatorship” (42). Cristina is captured and later tortured, therefore is taken by Juanita and Manuel to Clara’s house to be taken care of. “Everything imaginable had been done to you, as well as everything unimaginable. It never occurred to me [Clara suggests] that there would be doctors right there, during the sessions themselves, to stop the torturer at the crucial instant, the fragile line that separates life from death” (39). In “I Sing, therefore, I Am,” likewise, Rodríguez presents a third personal singular narrative voice explaining how “She was going to die ... in the Andes ... She was going to die without fulfilling her task ... [and] Her comrades wouldn’t get to know where the weapons were hidden” (54). The story continues with the narrative voice suggesting that she still had to many things to conclude, and that “Her son would learn to read without her, [and] fall in love without her” (54). But she needed to survive so that she could finish “the sleeves for her son’s sweater ... She went on walking ... [but later] She was greeted by a slap on the face from a man in uniform” (54-55). She is captured, and during a torture session, she calls out for her mother, while her torturer asks her to talk, “your mommy is not here, Lorena, I am here, your sugar daddy. Sing, Lorena, sing. Where are the weapons?” To what “Lorena” can only replied, “with all her soul: *Gracias a la vida que me ha dado tanto* ... [followed by] The electric shock burned her left breast and spread with roars of mocking laughter up her neck” (55). The story concludes suggesting that the narrative voice survives, and that “Her mother, her son, and the cultural attaché to the embassy are waiting for her. A car with diplomatic plates followed by a military jeep takes them to the airport ... The yellow sweater, with no sleeves, is in her handbag. Her son will need the sleeves before winter arrives in Canada ...” (56). This last part of the story is recounted by Rodríguez later in a similar plot, in *Retribution* (2011).

Nonetheless, there is a short story that indicates how these female stories reflect The Return Plan, that is the case of “Trespass,” where Rodríguez continues to describe the world of the underground from another female perspective, but this time, the narrative voice is telling her *comadre* in Vancouver how is it to live under the resistance. “In Vancouver, we never imagined what life underground would really be like. It’s a full time-job, and I don’t mean eight hours a day, but twenty-four,” she suggests, “Life underground is no bowl of cherries, *comadre*, that’s for sure” (79). The story goes on by the female narrative voice explaining how she cannot talk to anybody about her past life in Chile, and that this is why she is telling her. “Somehow I know you can hear me up north ... I have to take good care of myself [and the girls], I can’t let the military get me. I feel terrified thinking that they may do something to the girls”—her two daughters (79). In this context, this narrative voice goes on explaining something readers can also find in Aguirre’s stories in *Something Fierce*, as to one of the first principles of living underground: constantly moving from one place to another so they do not get captured. Likewise, she explains, “One of the hardest things to get used to has been my new name ... [I] feel weird about having to learn the story of a borrowed life ... in order to stay safe” (80-81). The plot of the story is resolved when the narrative voice describes that one of the best things underground is

the satisfaction of knowing that we have trespassed the limits, pass the boundaries of the dictatorship’s territory; that even though that the military is so powerful, it is also very vulnerable; that we can tap on its vulnerability to get to know it better, in order that we can sweep it out. It’s a great feeling—she concludes. (81)

With this intervention, Rodríguez shows how one of the jobs of the underground resistance was to *trespass* the limits of the dictatorial regime; that is, to become someone else in order to find out more information about how the military was functioning, and find ways to overcome it, to sweep it out of power, as the quote suggests. The narrative voice goes on telling her *comadre* in Vancouver what she remember about their life in Chile when they were younger, the story of Lautaro, “the Mapuche hereditary chief who was trained from birth to lead his people in the war of

resistance against the Spanish *conquistadores*,” and when they used to read Neruda’s poem about Lautaro (82-83), her frustration about not been able to have a relationship, or a fling, also about how she thought about all other women who decided “to pursue this kind of life in spite of the difficulties” (84), but finally how other Chileans were proud of her work underground, like the old man who whispers anti-dictatorial speeches in her ear and tells her “that not even his sons turned out to be such good revolutionaries” (85). These different parts of the stories are intertextually connected with other short stories within Rodríguez’s work, but likewise with the works of other female Chilean Canadian authors like her daughter Carmen Aguirre, and Lina de Guevara—featured in this study, and studied in chapter four with a similar story about the Mapuche chief Lautaro.

Rodríguez’s short story “Trespass” concludes mirroring the autobiographical story of her daughter Carmen Aguirre, in the sense that it compares the life underground with their life as political exiles in Canada. In fact, the narrative voice in “Trespass” ends up confessing to her *comadre* that, she never thought she would miss Vancouver, “particularly when fear wants to take over my body and my mind, I think of Vancouver and I feel a lot better,” the narrative voice argues (86). Moreover, Carmen Rodríguez’s story is similar to Aguirre’s work in another significant way; both writers express the sociopolitical commitment that describes Chileans both at home and in exile, and how, no matter what path one chooses, life continues. “Life is no tango, but shit, it sure seems like it sometimes ... I’m waiting. I’m waiting for you [*comadre*],” the narrative voice concludes (92). While in many instances Carmen Rodríguez communicates the underground resistance, there are very few stories where, whereas readers, can depict that such stories are from people coming back from Canada to South America to be part of the resistance movement, as this last story suggests. Nonetheless, encountering a spectrum of female voices, in *And a Body to Remember with*, with its fourteen different women stories, Rodríguez also communicates how many women went back to South America to join the resistance—suggests Aguirre (*Something Fierce* 5).

Carmen Aguirre's memoir, beyond presenting similar stories where she introduces the experiences of other people in her narrative, also communicates specific events that give her dialogues further historical significance—as I will show in the following subsection. However, even as an individual life-experience narrative, in *Something Fierce*, Aguirre also represents other people. To illustrate, only in the first chapter, The Return Plan (1-96), Aguirre communicates how other international individual were also involved in the resistance. She focuses, however, in the representation of some Canadians who “were being held [in the national stadium in Santiago] in Chile, right after the coup, and [that] the Canadian embassy got them out. Out of jail, out of the country and onto the dictatorship's blacklist” (6). One of those Canadians is Bod, her stepfather who is intertextually represented in various literary texts such as in *Something Fierce*, in *The Refugee Hotel* (he is a Canadian who knew broken Spanish and helps the Chilean refugees to find jobs and permanent houses), and in *Anywhere but Here* (2021) (as the hippie, with whom Laura has a romance: “Bill O'Neil, from Burnaby, BC, son of a longshoreman ... Member of the Chilean Movement of Revolutionary Left, The MIR.” In 1973, he “managed to get himself arrested,” he is the Santiago's stadium, “With Prisoners. Fresh from the shantytowns, with students, and some men in suits, yes, some middle-class people too” (97-101)). Once again, this is another kind of intertextuality, where certain characters construct the stories of characters, giving these literary texts a collective vision.

To be in the resistance, nonetheless, Aguirre argues, “is a matter of life and death. To say the wrong thing to the wrong person is a matter of life and death. And it's impossible to know who the wrong person is. You must assume that *everyone* is the wrong person. In the resistance, we agree to give our lives to the people, for a better society” (7). Once again, this definition about being on the underground, offered by one of the female members of the resistance, and a survivor of Pinochet's regime, illustrates the Chilean commitment to fight, both physically and expressively (in writing as these publications demonstrate). The meaning of The Return Plan symbolizes the desire to reclaim Latin American civil rights, but mainly contributes to the restoration of democracy and social justice in Chile (and beyond). The Return Plan

also represents hope and the changes from stories of “terror” into condemnatory stories to create awareness for a better future and for the pursuit of justice for those who were displaced by the coup, their family members, their comrades, and *campañeras/os*, and also for those killed and disappeared. This sense of commitment was deepened in Carmen Aguirre during her initial journey back to South America to participate in the resistance movement, “I was glad my mother had chosen to take us along, because I wanted to fight for the children, for the people of the world,” Aguirre writes (8). With this quote, we observe that the sentiment of commitment in such a young character such as Aguirre herself, exemplifies the commitment of many other Chileans, it is, in fact, the result from where Aguirre carries her social and political awakening, leading her to join the resistance at the age of eighteen (*Something Fierce* 193; *Mexican* 13). As a young adult, like her mother before, Aguirre goes back to South America to join the resistance movement because at that time, she was already a daughter of a revolutionist. Even when she was aware of the potential danger she could face, Aguirre follows her mother’s steps to join an underground resistance movement after being granted refugee status in Canada. Her return, therefore, does not denote the sentiment of nostalgia for returning to a native “home” back in Latin America, she returns to fight against the dictatorial regime in South America.

2.2.6. Transgenerational Interchange: Memory, Trauma, and Identity

Carmen Rodríguez and Carmen Aguirre craft a memory framework comprising diverse voices within their texts, allowing them to effectively convey sociohistorical topics. This approach enables the authors to communicate their intended collective and political messages. Rodríguez’s collection of short stories, *And a Body to Remember with*, not only depicts the experiences and transformations of its protagonists living in exile and striving for a better life away from their loved ones and familiar environments but also delves into the profound embodiment of memories. As a refugee in exile herself, Rodríguez represents her version of the trauma caused by the coup and its aftermath, the arrival of Chileans in Canada, and consequently, the nostalgia to return to Chile, the frustration and anger of political exiles and civilians living under the dictatorial regime, the survival, and sort of “healing” in response to the profound

effects of the 1973 Chilean coup as individuals and communities seek to come to terms with the traumatic experiences, rebuilding their lives in exile, and finding ways to address the historical wounds inflicted by the post-1973 era. Moreover, Rodríguez's three-generation storyline in *Retribution*, as a transgenerational account frames the post-1973 era, and represents how such a temporality continues to influence the identities of second- and third-generation exiles in Canada. Tania, the second-generation narrative voice in *Retribution*—daughter of Sol and of the man who tortured and raped Sol when Sol was imprisoned by Pinochet's regime—concludes her first intervention in the novel by testifying that, for herself, the aspects that so characterized the lives of her mother and grandmother cannot be easily described, yet they continue to be present in her own existence:

sit[ing] here, surrounded by a disarray of memories, keep-sakes, images and words, I wonder if I will ever be able to do justice to the stories that took my family through its many journeys. I don't know if I would manage to convey the ordinary, yet unique ups and downs of my mami and grandma's daily existence before the Pinochet coup; *if I'll have the courage to portray the horror that followed; if I'll dare trace and bring out the underlying force that shaped my mother and grandmother's lives.*

Most daunting of all, though, is the unavoidable challenge of having to delve deep inside myself. If I really want to understand my family's history, I will have to do my best to understand myself as well. After all, a good part of who I am is a result of that history and, conversely, a good part of that history was shaped by my passage through this world. (28; emphasis added)

This quote illustrates the importance of analyzing English-language Chilean Canadian literature as a source of images, histories, memories, and identities from the Chilean Canadian imaginary of the 1st generation of writers, like Rodríguez herself, but more importantly, this signifies another part of the female transgenerational bond by violence (and rape), but mainly survival. This quote notes the significance of the message Chilean Canadian migration and exile stories aim to communicate. Tania, as a

member of the 2nd generation of Chileans in Canada doubts about been able to *trace and bring out the underlying force that shaped her mother and grandmother's lives* because of the horror a whole generation of survivors went through, but also because would be almost impossible to express the same sentiment of what it was to live under Pinochet's regime. Nonetheless, Tania concludes her first intervention in *Retribution*, suggesting that, even though she does not want to know who her real father is, now she is ready to go back to Chile, "... now I feel ready. Now I know that I want to go" (340). This conclusion implies that the transmitted stories from Tania's grandmother and mother, presented throughout the novel, have fulfilled their purpose, and Tania is now prepared to confront her other Chilean identity. As a literary text, *Retribution* thus revitalizes the memory framework for younger generations. For the second-generation voice, the sociopolitical and historical storytelling in this work functions as art: "Art will be my compass, my lens, my tool / Art is memory / Art is healing / Art as creation and beauty / Art as truth," Tania concludes her first intervention (28).

Like in Rodríguez's accounts, similar themes are portrayed in Aguirre's autobiographical story. In Aguirre's memoir, literary narratives also serve to present factual historical events, incorporating new literary themes such as the demand for sociopolitical awareness, echoing the "never again" sentiment supported by human rights groups in Latin America in response to state-sponsored terror involving torture and disappearance. These narratives shed light on various social and political issues that, for example, were "officially denied by the governments in question" (*Something Fierce* 22). Like Rodríguez's short stories in *And a Body to Remember with*, and her transgenerational storyline in *Retribution*, in *Something Fierce* (and other works), Aguirre proposes an alternative historical reading that allows audiences in Canada and around the world to retrieve and recreate the South American stories reframing sociopolitical matters that may have otherwise remained hidden from the imaginary of its readers. For Instance, Aguirre writes:

During the Second World War South America had flourished, Mami explained, because the United States was otherwise occupied. But by the mid-fifties, the U.S. had turned its full attention back to the South ... Bolivia was pressured to

adopt economic programs that were to the benefit of the United States ... In 1971, General Hugo Banzer, who had trained at the U.S. Army's infamous School of the Americas, was installed by Richard Nixon after the military coup overthrow the left-leaning president, Juan José Torres ... Bolivians were imprisoned and tortured. Many disappeared, and hundreds were murdered. (*Something* 36-7)

As this quote demonstrates, Aguirre's intentions to write and publish her story go beyond publishing about her life during the Chilean dictatorship and how she returned "home" from Canada to South America; she contributes to fighting a battle that, today, still marks Latin American history, memories, and identities. Aguirre intertextually connects with other Chilean authors whose goal is to reach as many people as possible with condemnatory stories about the post-1973 era, but also how, for example, while living in Bolivia—like in Rodríguez "Trespass" short story—, Aguirre also suggests that, while listening to Victoria Parra's songs, her hearth ached for her people in Vancouver (*Something* 46). Even more significant, and with this story, I would like to conclude, is the account of how, at a young age—merely 12 years old—Aguirre and her sister, Ale, were escorting Trinidad into Chile by train, when at the border between Bolivia and Chile "a guard yelled out: 'Everybody off the train ... stand in line for inspection'" (61). Carmen, and her sister Ale had clear instructors about what to do and what to say if the guards at the border asked any questions:

Remember that you met Trinidad for the first time on the train ... your passports say that you were born in Santiago ... [you must say] that you left Chile to Canada in September 1970, because your parents are in the mining sector ... The guards will understand this to mean that you come from a right-wing, pro-Pinochet family. You will tell them that your parents are in Bolivia on business at the moment, and that you are going to visit your grandparents, who live in Iquique ... If Trinidad is taken away at the border, stay calm and get back to the train. Once you reach Arica, watch out for a young, well-dressed couple at the station. They will be waiting for you to approach them and will take care of you. If the couple are not there, or if you think it's not safe

to approach them use your fifty dollars to take a taxi to the bus station and by tickets to Santiago. Your grandparents will be waiting for you there at the station. Do not under any circumstances tell your grandparents about this letter. (59)

With this story, I aim to illustrate how Aguirre surpasses mere narration of the lives of Chileans in exile, under Pinochet's dictatorship, and including their experiences in the underground. In this narrative, Aguirre goes beyond depicting tales of survival, showcasing how even children played an integral role in the resistance movement. At the border, while forming a line, Aguirre continues,

My knees started to shake. Their accents, their impeccable uniforms had brought on the Terror. I'd been scared lots of times since we'd left Canada, but this was this kind of fear that felt as if a rat was walking up and down your spine ... It was a kind of fear that gave you sick ... I remembered the conversations I'd overheard many times among adults. The thing was to hold on to any information you had for at least twenty-four hours after you were picked up, they said ... not to break in the first twenty-four hours. (*Something* 62)

The next day in the morning, nonetheless, Aguirre and her sister Ale were boarding the bus from Arica to Santiago. In this moving passage, Aguirre vividly captures the profound "Terror" experienced by herself, and other people, during their encounter with individuals representing the Pinochet's regime. Her trembling knees were triggered as reaction to her fear that transcends the common anxieties of her life living in the underground. Such a fear, akin to a rat walking along the spine, underscores the gravity of living under constant threat. Finally, the reference to the adults' conversations emphasizes the collective awareness of the dangers they faced, urging one another to hold onto crucial information during interrogation, and torture sessions. Despite the terrifying encounter, the subsequent day, the boarding of the bus reveals the resilience and courage embedded in the narrative. This passage encapsulates the multifaceted emotions of fear, resilience, and survival experienced by Aguirre, who

became the protagonist survival in the underground resistance against Pinochet's dictatorship.

2.3 Conclusion

Aguirre's individual story represents emblematic memories and the historical life experiences that permit us to expand our understanding of Latin American history since, "when you read history because it is in a memoir, it's somebody's firsthand experience of history like ... *Something Fierce* ... you retain that story because it speaks to you and into your heart directly" ("Canada Reads 2012 Day 4: Anne-France Goldwater."). Like Aguirre's *Something Fierce*, English-language Chilean Canadian literary life-writing narratives permit us to better understand Chilean history and the struggles that characterize the identities of a whole generation of Chileans (and other Latin Americans, such as those from Bolivia, Argentina, Uruguay, and Brazil). Chilean Canadian authors, like Rodríguez and Aguirre, rewrite the historical Chilean memory and stories that inform the connection between past and present life experiences as a way of constructing the cultural memory of the Chilean Canadian diaspora. Similarly, even though I do not further explore Carmen Rodríguez newest novel *Atacama* (2021), this is also a narrative that from exile continues to define the pre- and post-1973 Chilean era as a site of remembrance and commemoration. *Atacama*, as noted by reviewers in the Advance Praise of the novel, is a "historical fiction at its best ... [It] opens a view that will be unfamiliar to most Canadians — that of Chile in the first half of the twentieth century ... [as] a homage to human resilience and to everyday people's ability to stand up to terror and oppression" (Cover page). This novel depicts sociopolitical stories from the pre-1973 era, and due to its historical representation won an honorary mention in the "Best Historical Novel" category at the International Latino Book Awards in 2022.

Rodríguez and Aguirre, as female voices representing the *renewed* Chilean Canadian literature in the English language, the Latina/o diasporic group in Vancouver, and, more importantly, as survivors and ex-members of the resistance group in Chile, show their commitment as Chilean writers in exile. Such commitment aids Chilean writers, both at home and abroad, to demonstrate their social duty of

continuing to write and publish in order to inform us about the crimes committed against thousands of civilians during the last wave of Southern Cone dictatorships (the mid-1970s to late 1980s). The publication of these Chilean Canadian literary narratives intends to pursue social change and create political awareness. As Rodríguez's narrative voice suggests, Chileans cannot forget—for they “have a mind and a body to remember with” (*And a Body* 159). Moreover, as in Estela de Ramírez's story, Chilean Canadian narratives communicate their arrival and how immigrants in exile live abroad in an in-between of cultures—which I further explore in the following chapter. While portraying the efforts one must go through to survive in a new environment, narratives also represent the troubles people go through to form a changed life in exile. Such stories go further, including thrilling moments, such as when Estela de Ramírez and her entire family are “very proud to become Canadian citizens” (26) or when Estela de Ramírez finds out, after thirteen years in exile, that she is able to go back “home” to Chile—she is “off the blacklist ... invaded by a mixture of excitement and *terror, anxiety, and nostalgia*,” sentiments that have accompanied her since her escape from her homeland (30-32, emphasis added). These sentiments not only mark Estela de Ramírez's experiences but also partake in a dialogue with other narratives by Chilean Canadian authors. For instance, after Estela de Ramírez gains her Canadian citizenship, she decides not to go back to Chile, because even do she felt sad, she was also proud to become Canadian citizen; she states, “it does not have to be black-and-white ... one day we will go back” (Rodríguez, *And a body* 26). She continues to tell her mother over the phone, “Mom, you don't stop being who you are because you become a Canadian citizen, you know ... The girls [her daughters] are excited ... they were very proud to become Canadian citizens. ... Yes. Mother. ... Yes, I talk to them about being Chilean. ... Yes, now they say they are Chilean-Canadian. ... No, she hasn't said anything about wanting to be blond anymore” (26). This story delineates the experience of many political exiles who, after living in exile, begin to consider Canada as their home. It also portrays how certain individuals start to feel as though they are leading hyphenated lives, not just fitting into a clear nationality but embracing a hybrid identity, like Estela's daughters identifying as Chilean-Canadian with a hyphen. Readers, nonetheless, never find out if Estela de Ramírez and her family

return “home” or if they establish Canada as their “adopted home” in exile. Such sentiments of the in-betweenness are characterized by an imaginary life in a constant state of transition, from a not-here-nor-there identity that made Estela de Ramírez fall into a “black hole called Canada” (22). This is a Chilean Canadian literary theme that I will further explore in my following chapter as the continued journey Chileans experience in exile, at the Borderlands.

To conclude, the analysis of Chilean Canadian literature in this chapter has revealed its significance as an intersectional and diasporic literary tradition. Through its renewed English language production, Chilean Canadian literature has not only contributed to the creation of an archive of historical memories, has coined a new site of remembrance from where *The Return Plan* communicates the existence of an underground resistance movement, and ultimately, has also established a distinct space within the broader Canadian literary canon.

Adopting a framework of diasporic literature, and employing cultural memory analysis, proved to be highly beneficial in this study. The focus has been placed on English-language Chilean Canadian literature, which serves as a valuable literary tool for exploring the intersections of history, memory, culture, and identity representation among Chilean Canadians in a diverse Canadian and Latin American context. Moreover, individual life-writing narratives were recognized as vehicles for constructing cultural memories that facilitate a deeper comprehension of collective Chilean Canadian self-representations. This analysis positions Chilean Canadian writers as both contributors to and participants in the diverse fabric of Canadian society, representing a distinct Chilean Canadian group within the larger framework of diasporic communities in Canada. The methodology employed in this analysis, characterized by an intertextual approach and a transgenerational generational perspective, has further validated and imbued significance into these literary narratives. The intertextual elements and transgenerational approach have allowed for a comprehensive understanding and a hemispheric interpretation of these texts as part of an archive of exile memories that shape the collective journey of political exiles in

Canada and the meaning attached to the September 11th, 1973, and The Return Plan as emblematic memory frameworks.

Chapter 3

Carmen Aguirre's *Anywhere but Here* (2021): Chilean Canadian Literature of the Borderlands

This chapter delves into the analysis of Carmen Aguirre's play, *Anywhere but Here* (2021), focusing on the representation of the 1st and 1.5 generations of Chileans as political exiles, and their journey to understand their identities in the context of Canada. The objective of this chapter aligns with the broader theme of the dissertation, which explores the notion of home and belonging within the Chilean Canadian diaspora and Latina/o Canadian literature. Analyzing how the play's protagonists navigate their sense of belonging to different places—whether in Canada, South of the border, or a combination of both or neither—and considering the impact of their exile experiences on identity formation, suggests that their identities undergo substantial shaping through hybridization. This process, characteristic of living abroad in exile within the borderlands, emerges as a central aspect of their experiences. Consequently, I posit that as a literary text, *Anywhere but Here* can be effectively studied within the framework of border studies—drawing inspiration from Anzaldúa and Bhabha—because it represents a sense of in-betweenness for Chileans in Canada. Aguirre's play is analyzed as a literary text because, despite being meant for live performance, as a literary text, it offers audiences and readers a unique vantage point into the Latina/o Canadian imaginary.²¹ As a literary narrative, *Anywhere but Here* stages the encounters between cultures and identities, constructing the voice of a minority community in the Chilean Canadian diaspora, and creating a third space of enunciation. In this context, *Anywhere but Here* represents the turmoil of exile, that is, it's "unmistakably a seminal Latinx production that shines a light on the ongoing struggles of migration and its many unspoken stories" (Cover page). An approach to border studies and hemispheric perspectives, therefore, enables us to explore complex

²¹ This approach will also take effect on my forthcoming chapter where I analyze Lina de Guevara's play *Journey to Mapu* (2013).

questions, as to how the protagonists in the play represent the 1st and 1.5 generations of Chilean migrants after living in exile, and how do they continue to evolve their identities in this context. For instance, how does the iconic theme of a nostalgic return to a home in Chile, shift and transform for younger generation of migrants? Ultimately, how do the experiences of this 1.5-generation of characters reflect our understanding of diasporic Latina/o identities and cultures, and the ongoing negotiation of belonging between Latin America, Canada, and the borderlands?

Unlike the previous chapter which focused on distinct topics pertaining to cultural memory and the construction of new emblematic memory frameworks, this chapter centers on the interplay of identity and belonging among the Chilean Canadian diaspora through the lens of border studies, and hemispheric perspectives. By examining the characters' responses to their migratory experiences and their negotiation of identities, this chapter contributes to a comprehensive understanding of the complexities of diasporic Latina/o communities living in Canada. Moreover, by immersing ourselves in this literary play, we embark on a journey alongside exiles in Canada, which illuminates the ongoing evolution of the diaspora and, consequently, Chilean Canadian literature. This broader exploration of Latina/o Canadian literature and its portrayals of home and belonging, once again, offers valuable insights into the continuous formation of Latina/o migrant identities, and how after living in exile, the protagonists are represented as hybridized individuals.²² Ultimately, through this analysis, we discern how the protagonists in *Anywhere but Here* embody the lived experiences of inhabiting the Canadian borderlands, characterized mainly by hybridization, and a perpetual identity transition, but also resistance.

²² In the context of this chapter, the term "hybrid" refers to the blending or mixture of diverse cultural elements, identities, or experiences. A "hybridized individual," on the other hand, describes a character who embodies this mixture of cultural influences and identities, resulting from their experiences of living in exile or at the borderlands, and the ongoing negotiation of belonging between their home country and Canada. A hybridized individual also represents the complex and constantly evolving nature of their cultural and identity formation.

3.1 Border Studies: Working Definitions

From a border studies standpoint, the term “borderlands” primarily reflects Anzaldúa’s conceptual framework, wherein it is characterized as “a vague and undetermined place ... [in] a constant state of transition” (*Borderlands* 25). A borderland space, moreover, can be perceived as a “utopian” or “liminal” space where conventional perceptions of “reality” are relinquished, allowing for the flourishing of creative thought (Pearlman iv). Following this conceptual context, within the field of borderlands in Canada and the continued formation of Latina/o Canadian identities and cultural construction, resistance refers to the act of opposing dominant cultural norms, while hybridization involves the creation of new and unique cultural expressions through the blending of different cultural sources. These concepts help explain the dynamic and complex processes at play in the formation of Latina/o Canadian identities within the Canadian borderlands as experienced by the protagonists who think they belong *anywhere but here*.

In this play, *Anywhere but Here*, Aguirre represents how living in exile in Canada makes peoples’ identities change, all resulting in a degree of transculturation and/or hybridization. However, these changes are different depending on the generation these characters represent; while Chilean exiles in Canada mainly from the 1st generation have nostalgia for and a desire to return to their native home in South America, the 1.5 generation of exiles exhibit indications of gradually developing a sense of belonging to Canada rather than to their native Latin American country. The analysis, therefore, is framed within the conceptual exploration of culture, identity, in-betweenness, and hybridization to understand how the 1.5 generation of migrants evolves into hybrid individuals, some inhabiting an imagined third space beyond Canada and Latin America.

In this context, the term “home” can be defined in this research as a multifaceted concept that encompasses not only a physical dwelling but also a symbolic and emotional space of belonging, attachment, and personal identification. It

not only signifies a place where individuals or communities feel a sense of security, comfort, and familiarity. “Home” extends its meaning beyond the “physical” boundaries of a house or a specific geographic location and encompass broader social, cultural, and emotional dimensions, reflecting one’s sense of identity, cultural heritage, and personal connections. “Home” may also encompass the notion of a transformative “hybrid” and “imaginary” space, wherein individuals negotiate their sense of belonging and navigate the complexities of their hybridized identities and cultural formations.

3.2 Organizing this Chapter: Exploring Identity Shifts in Aguirre’s Characters

In terms of structure, first I present how *Anywhere but Here* contributes to the Latina/o theater traditions (Alvarez 2013a; 2013b), then, I move into presenting my understanding of the concept of borderlands, to later delve into the use of hybridity and third space. In my last section, the text analysis focuses on four protagonists from the same family: 1) Manuel, representing a father from the 1st generation who continues to communicate the Latina/o Canadian literary theme of nostalgic return to Latin America, and who, initially, seems to have undergone minimal identity changes, but by the play’s conclusion, undergoes a significant shift in personality; 2) Carolita, the youngest of two daughters, who appears to have adopted Canada as her “home,” and who thinks that moving back to Chile would be going into exile; and 3) Lupe, Carolita’s older sister, who exhibits clearer signs of in-betweenness and the constant process of transition as characterized by individuals inhabiting the borderlands, attributed to her change of mind midway through their journey to the border between the United States and Mexico. The fourth character, the mother Laura, in turn, is a 1st generation migrant and radical feminist, who embodies a sense of absence and presence in the play as she is left behind in Vancouver, and therefore does not take the trip south with her family, but instead, follows behind them on a solo journey in order to catch up with the rest of the family at the US-Mexico border.

In examining these four main protagonists, this analysis will also explore their interactions with secondary characters in the play. Specific dialogues contribute to the

construction of the main characters' representations and shed light on how and why they shape their hybrid identities. Moreover, it delves into their individual experiences in exile, exploring whether they are inclined to return to South America or return to exile in Canada. All four main characters showcase, to some extent, nonetheless, the impact of living in Canada as exiled individuals, demonstrating signs of having undergone experiences in the borderlands. This aligns with Anzaldúa's notion that once one experiences the border (i.e., living in exile), a constant process of in-betweenness ensues. My approach to this postcolonial play of migration and exile, therefore, contributes to a comprehensive understanding of the characters' complex identities and experiences within the diasporic context, shedding light on the continued development of Latina/o Canadian culture and identity, where some decolonial dialogues also arise.

Anywhere but Here unfolds as a family drama centered around a trip from Canada to Latin America, where the protagonists grapple with their experiences of exile. The play captures the tensions arising from migrants' return to Chile and their separation from their adopted country, exemplified in characters like Carolita, who sees Vancouver as her home. Throughout the narrative, the characters continually contemplate their state of exile, reflecting on the meaning of home and where they truly belong. This exploration mirrors the construction of identity in borderland contexts, fostering a border consciousness characterized by the perpetual negotiation between native and adopted homes. Distinct generational perspectives emerge, with the 1st generation, represented by Manuel, claiming Latin America as their "rightful home," while younger generations, like Carolita, identify with Canada. Laura's unique perspective introduces a sense of belonging in a third space, embodying the in-betweenness experienced by those living in exile. The family trip prompts debates on home and belonging, echoing the nostalgic themes prevalent in Chilean Canadian literature. Manuel's narrative, for example, reflective of the 1st generation's experiences post-1973, illustrates the profound impact of historical events on all Chileans. The characters' journey becomes a metaphor for the dynamic life of

migrants, embodying an active transition between states, as portrayed by a secondary character, the Monarch Butterfly metaphor in the play.

To summarize, my analysis delves into the complexities of identity formation for migrants in the Canadian borderlands, treating the analyzed literary texts as narratives of the border/borderlands. Significantly, we explore the themes of in-betweenness and liminality, conducting a parallel text analysis of key characters—Manuel, Lupe, Carolita, and Laura. Through this examination, we unravel the diverse outcomes shaped by their experiences in the Canadian borderlands, offering insights into the ongoing evolution of diasporic identities.

3.3 Positioning Carmen Aguirre's *Anywhere but Here* within Latina/o Canadian Theatre and Performance

In this section, I begin by providing a summary of how Latina/o Canadian plays, like *Anywhere but Here*, serve as a medium for the representation of the diasporic Latina/o Canadian experience. I summarize the works of Natalie Alvarez and other critics who have contributed to the understanding of “Latina/o Canadian Theatre and Performance” traditions, interventions, and their influence on the Canadian stage. This summary draws from the two anthologies that have played a pivotal role in showcasing these works: *Fronteras Vivientes: Eight Latina/o Canadian Plays* (2013) and *Latina/o Canadian Theatre and Performance* (2013). The intention of this summary is to demonstrate the presence of Latina/o Canadian playwrights on the Canadian stage since their arrival in the 1970s and their aim to use theater as a means to express the experiences of immigrants and diverse minorities because as noted before, these stories represent the silenced, isolated, and disbelieved Latina/o community in exile. The objective is an attempt to place *Anywhere but Here* within its distinct context of literary production, i.e., how it might be fit in, or be conversation, with other plays that have paved the way for this type of Latina/o representation.²³

²³ This is also the case with Lina de Guevara's play, *Journey to Mapu*, which will be analyzed in the following chapter.

Like in *Anywhere but Here*, a renowned play by the Argentinean Canadian Guillermo Verdecchia, *Fronteras Americanas (American Borders)* (1997/2013), has represented Latina/o migrant experiences, bringing attention to postcolonial and hemispheric viewpoints, and the intersection of Latina/o voices of the Americas. This analysis, therefore, aims to shed light on the representation of these diverse Latina/o voices and their significance within the context of postcolonial, hemispheric, but also decolonial discourses. *Fronteras Americanas* works as a catalyzing movement and initiates a historical and creative exploration of the condition of *Latinidad* in Canada (Alvarez, “Latina/o Canadian Theatre” x), and therefore it serves as an initial construction of such a Latina/o Canadian imaginary. Understanding how *Fronteras Americanas (American Borders)*, a play which despite its title is written in English, paved the way for other Latina/o Canadian playwrights to address the misrepresentation of Latina/o Canadian voices from a hemispheric perspective, helps us distinguish how authors such as Aguirre, and Guevara in the forthcoming chapter, but also elsewhere, (re)present Canadian *Latinidad* through hemispheric, postcolonial, and decolonial lenses.

Although Aguirre’s *Anywhere but Here* is not part of Alvarez’s *Latina/o Canadian Theatre and Performance* anthologies (2013a; 2013b), this play contributes to join the movement initiated by *Fronteras Americanas* in exploring the condition of *Latinidad* in Canada, contributing to the construction of a Latina/o Canadian imaginary. This analysis positions plays like *Anywhere but Here* as part of a broader exploration of Latina/o Canadian voices from already mentioned perspectives. Like the playwrights featured in Alvarez’s collections, Carmen Aguirre also offers compelling narratives rooted in her life experiences of transnational migration and border crossings. Latina/o Canadian playwrights have carved out a space within the Anglo-Canadian stage and English-language publications, contributing to the “horizons of Latina/o theatre” and staking claim to an intercultural landscape (Alvarez, *Fronteras* ix). Building upon Alvarez’s work, I highlight how Carmen Aguirre—like Lina de Guevara in the subsequent chapter—and other playwrights and Latina/o writers in Canada, have utilized this theatrical and literary terrain to challenge nationalist and

ethnocentric values, creating a distinct “literary and dramatic canon” which has served authors also as a “mechanism of estranging *those who did not fit*” into traditional values (ix; emphasis added).

In this sense, the publication of one of the most renowned Latina/o Canadian plays, Guillermo Verdecchia’s *Fronteras Vivientes* (Alvarez 2013a), signifies a significant effort in documenting, historicizing, and critically situating theatre and performance practices by, for, and about Latin Americans in Canada. In this context, as argued by Katherine Zien, Alvarez’s anthology blends artists’ production histories with the present-day imaginaries of Latina/o identity formation in Canada (409-10). Echoing Verdecchia’s *Fronteras Americanas*, other Latina/o Canadian playwrights, including Carmen Aguirre approach *Latinidad* within a hemispheric context.

In this way, Carmen Aguirre as a younger playwright, like Guillermo Verdecchia in *Fronteras Americanas*, but also Lina de Guevara (explored in the next chapter), also creates a hemispheric imaginary that involves the interconnected struggles of cultures and the sociopolitical dynamics of the Americas. In line with Alvarez’s observations in the *Fronteras Vivientes* anthology, both Aguirre’s *Anywhere but Here*, and Guevara’s *Journey to Mapu* aim to expose the misrepresentation of racialized minorities in Canada. Aguirre and Guevara, like Verdecchia, seek to bring visibility to perspectives that have been excluded from the dominant settler nations’ ethnic and cultural frameworks, which historically defined Canada’s national borders (Alvarez, *Fronteras* iii). The eight plays showcased in Alvarez’s *Fronteras Vivientes* explore the complexities of living within borders and offer hemispheric perspectives that give rise to postcolonial and neocolonial discussions. Primarily focused on migration and exile, these plays delve into initial conversations surrounding political and familial violence, injustice, oppression, the experience of exile, and the legacies of conquest, as well as the ongoing impacts of neocolonialism and neoliberalism in Canada (Alvarez iv). From this perspective, I argue that while all the plays in this anthology contribute to the collective imagination of Canadian *Latinidad* for both playwrights and their characters, it is crucial to further analyze them from different theoretical lenses: Aguirre’s *Anywhere but Here* from a border studies methodology,

and Guevara's *Journey to Mapu* through a decolonial lens within the framework of representational intersectionality—the latter in chapter four.

Playwrights like Carmen Aguirre and Lina de Guevara, and other writers such as Rosa Labordé and Marilo Nuñez, adopt a similar approach in representing *Latinidad* and amplifying the voices of other marginalized racialized groups within their works. They aim to depict not only their own Latina/o (Chilean) identities but also explore their intersectional connections with other minority communities. For instance, Aguirre's play *The Refugee Hotel* (2010/2013), included in Alvarez's anthology, portrays her experiences as a Latina/o migrant and political exile, intertwining the stories of other Latina/o migrants who arrived in Canada during the late 1970s and 1980s. Another work by Aguirre, *Qué pasa con la raza, eh?* (1995), although not featured in this anthology, also highlights the experiences of Latina/o migrants and exiles. These plays serve as platforms for sharing stories by and for the Latina/o community. The aim is to reclaim representations of the Latin American diaspora in Vancouver that were overlooked by a predominantly Anglo theatrical tradition and plagued by harmful stereotypes (Alvarez, *Fronteras* xix).

This transgenerational Chilean Canadian literature underlines the authors' commitment to the resistance movement and solidarity, forming the bedrock of this diasporic narrative of migration and exile. These observations take my study into the two following subsections: first, to better understand the concept of borderlands, and then, hybridity and the third space, followed by my text analysis on Aguirre's *Anywhere but Here*.

3.4 Borderlands: A Space for Latina/o Canadian Arts and Cultures

The objective of this subsection is to present my scholarly engagement with Anzaldúa's work, *Borderlands / La Frontera* (1987) as well as with scholarly glosses by other critics. I aim to demonstrate how this theoretical approach, which was first developed in the United States, can be useful for the analysis of Latina/o Canadian literary texts as part of a borderland literature. *Borderlands* represents Anzaldúa's

efforts to address the Mexico-US border as a paradigm of multiple crossings. In 1987, Anzaldúa was already talking about her border/borderland experiences in which she sees herself as becoming a new *mestiza*, where a process of hybridization originates. In *Borderlands*, Anzaldúa talks of the border/borderland as a space of transit but also as a place one could inhabit. Beyond the physical border between Mexico and the US, there are also imaginary and untouchable borderlands. Anzaldúa asserts that “Borderlands are physically present wherever two or more cultures edge each other, where people of different races occupy the same territory, where under, lower, middle and upper classes touch” (19). In this sense, the image of a border not only represents a physically borderline but has also become fully meaningful when we “decenter it and liberate it from the notion of space” (Benito and Manzanar 3). Major cities in Canada, such as Vancouver, represent a multicultural borderland space in which more than two cultures verge with each other, where various dialogues encompass ethnicity, identity, and community. Within a multicultural Canadian borderland, therefore, minority groups’ cultures and identities are twisted anew due to the borderland’s liminality (as I will explain further below). This twisting (or constant recreating of oneself) is what Anzaldúa associates with “one’s shifting” of identity. It is at the border where “dormant areas of consciousness are being activated [and] awakened” —where a new border consciousness is born (19). Borderlands, as extensions to physical borderlines, are oftentimes not visible or tangible. They are neither “comfortable territor[ies]” (19); they are places of confrontation and experimentation, inhabited by multiple minority ethnic groups like Latin American migrants and exiles both in Canada and in the United States.

Borderlands are also a state of mind that comes from experiencing “the emotional residue of an unnatural boundary” (Anzaldúa, *Borderlands* 25). Let us not overlook that “The border is the locus of resistance and tolerance, of rupture, and of putting together the fragments. By disrupting the neat separations between cultures, like Chicana/o artists, migrant writers also create a new culture mix, ‘una mestizada’” (Anzaldúa, “Border Art” 47). Borderlands, then, are like border zones or “liminal spaces which allow for mestizaje, and racial and cultural hybridization” (Benito and

Matanzas 4). In the same fashion, these liminal spaces, or liminality, are areas where a border transgresses itself in a “threshold,” namely, “If a border is viewed as the line, imaginary or real, which separates these two spaces, then the threshold is the opening which permits passage from one space to the other” (Aguirre et al. 6). The process of writing helps Latina/o authors in Canada represent their borderlands as a liminal space that requires its own negotiation, from where cultures and identities are constantly in a route of becoming. As minority social members, Latina/o Canadian writers occupy a liminal space that helps them move to or to create a new *third space*. This is to say, like many other members from minority groups in Canada, while inhabiting a space where cultures constantly crash and are reborn, they also transformed anew, travel from one class to another, and construct and reconstruct their identities. For authors such as Pratt, borderlands are “contact zones,” which refer to “social spaces where cultures meet, clash, and grapple with each other, often in contexts of highly asymmetrical relations of power, such as colonialism, slavery, or their aftermaths as they are lived out in many parts of the world today” (4). Like Anzaldúa’s *Borderlands*, therefore, I see major Canadian cities as frontiers, contact zones, and liminal spaces. These are places where Latina/o Canadians co-inhabit with their various identities and cultures. In addition, in Canada, due to its multiculturalism, more likely than not, Latinas/os would also have contact with other minority groups. As I will show, Aguirre’s literary narratives exemplify the encounters or clashes between cultures and identities, and how this constant contact between cultures, memories, and discourses helps construct *another* voice, that of a minority community trying to take on space, creating, at the same time, a third space of enunciation, that of the Chilean Canadian diaspora.

At the borderlands, then, Latin America and Canada become one metaphoric space in which Latina/o Canadian culture and identities are reconstructed and reclaimed. Latina/o Canadian writers, therefore, use border crossings and the border itself as literary themes that express their life experiences of exile, and develop transcultural and crosslinguistic discourses, and connect personal views within ethnic, diasporic, and postcolonial/decolonial frameworks of inquiry from where they can imagine and write their world. Indeed, following Anzaldúa’s perspective of the

Borderlands as a way of “reading the world,” this inhabiting a place of constant change is, for Latina/o Canadian authors, the way of “creating knowledge ... a system that explains the world.” It is from this perspective that I analyze English-language Chilean Canadian literary texts to argue that the *borderlands* are the place from where Aguirre, in *Anywhere but Here*, recreates a new form of the in-betweenness (of cultures and identities), where processes of hybridity result in *una mestizada*.

3.5 Cultural Hybridity and Its Third Space

This subsection introduces the concepts of “hybridity” and the “third space” as described by Bhabha in *The Location of Culture* (2004) and their significance in understanding the creation of hybrid identities in the borderlands. According to Bhabha’s postcolonial view, there is a “third space” in which various forms of hybridity are created, including both cultural and hybrid identities. A third space can be described as a space of resistance, struggle, and negotiation. It is a space of constant change; it is a cultural flux of endless exchange between cultures, languages, spiritual, political views, etc. Such exchange allows for an analysis of the cross-cultural interaction that happens at the borderlands. As we will realize, at the borderlands, outcomes could be seen as “something different, something new and unrecognizable, a new area of negotiation of meaning and representation” (Bhabha 211). It is due to its hybrid characteristic that a third space can nourish multiple probabilities for those inhabiting the borderlands, and therefore, have multiple possible outcomes.

Borderlands are the nests in which cultures are recreated within a third space, new forms of cultural meaning are produced, migrants continue to construct their identities, and the limitations of existing boundaries and categorizations are re-established.

In a postcolonial world, where being and living in exile has become the new norm, there are no pure cultures. It is the contact but also the exchange that happens in the third space (i.e., at any given borderland) that produces and reforms today’s cultural hybrid identities. From a postcolonial perspective, furthermore, cultural, and national identities come to exist due to the mixing of both colonized and colonizer cultures—that is, already existent cultures and new cultures brought by minority groups such as Latinas/os in Canada. For this study, it is the mixing of Chilean with

Anglo-Canadian cultures that produces these characters' identities of the borderlands. At the same time, it is the negotiation, resistance, and acceptance that gives agency to certain characters to speak from a place of postcoloniality, as racialized migrant voices. It is the voices of such migrant social groups in Canada that Aguirre presents in her play as Chilean Canadian discourses, yet such voices are, nevertheless, influenced by the experience with "dominant/hegemonic" (i.e., Euro-Canadian, English, and French) cultures. It is, therefore, their physical—but more importantly, imagined—position as migrants and exiles, as well as racialized peoples, that emphasizes a postcolonial discourse within a multicultural framework of inquiry.

Furthermore, in contemporary Canada, one can argue that there are not only two major Euro-Canadian English/French identities but also multiple minority groups' identities that inform a view of Canada as a multiethnic society. Multiculturalism, regarded as a pivotal element of the national imaginary, defines how Canada is envisioned as a multi-ethnic territory. However, there are still minority social groups that are overlooked in such sociopolitical, and even literary contexts. These *other* migrant voices from Latina/o Canadian writers, for example, with their publication in one of the two official Canadian languages, aim to be included in major discourses about what constitutes today's Canadian multiculturalism.

The negotiation of cultures and identities in contact zones such as the borderlands contributes to our understanding of how identities are also constructed in Canada due to the inhabiting of a hybrid space. Within a borderland, there is a third space that "provide[s] the terrain for elaborating strategies of selfhood—singular and communal—that initiate new signs of identity" (Bhabha 2). Following this idea of in-between spaces and new cultural formations, Latina/o migrants and exiles in Canada, as hybrid individuals, hold a unique position of power between two cultures and ideologies. Bhabha suggests that "This third space displaces the histories that constitute it, and sets up new structures of authority, new political initiatives, which are inadequately understood through received wisdom" (211). This affirmation touches on the notion of the border as a cultural frontier. It is from here, from the borderlands, where exilic and migrant artists communicate their life experiences. History, based on

personal remembrances and stories, is reconstructed, and culture and identities are reclaimed. It is their condition as exiled and migrant writers, but more importantly, as members of a minority group, that helps authors develop a literature from the borderlands. Like Carmen Aguirre, Latina/o Canadian authors write from a third space of enunciation where hybrid transformations arise.

According to Bhabha, “all cultural statements and systems are constructed in this contradictory and ambivalent space of enunciation” (55). He continues: “It is that third space, though unrepresentable in itself, which constitutes the discursive conditions of enunciation that ensure the meaning and the symbols of culture have no primordial unity or fixity; that even the same signs can be appropriated, translated, rehistoricized and read anew” (55). For Ashcroft, such a space of cultural identity is also “the space of postcolonial transformation” (108). Following this thought, a new cultural postcolonial identity emerges from the contact between two cultures and negotiations of power. Bhabha’s third space is a suitable space for the interaction between Latina/o Canadians as a diasporic group, within major cultures such as Euro-Canadian (English and French) cultures in Canada. In addition, the notion of hybridity and the third space makes a “host” Anglo-Canadian culture aware of Latina/o cultures and, therefore, identities. Moreover, this also illustrates how one’s national identity (like any other type of identity) is always in flux. In short, English-language Chilean Canadian literary texts, such as the ones studied in this dissertation, do the work of incorporating Latinas/os as part and parcel of the multicultural Canadian imaginary.

This analysis aims to entertain the idea of the *border* as a theme and unique borderland space in which Latina/o Canadian literary texts communicate processes of new beginnings as well as being and belonging.²⁴ Borders, like borderlands, are

²⁴ Bhabha envisions a “bridge” connecting temporalities and perspectives, symbolized as a stairwell. He discusses an installation by African American artist Renée Green, using the concept of a “stairwell” as a border that links upper and lower places, much like the North and South in a play. Green describes the stairwell as a liminal space marked with plaques about blackness and whiteness (qtd. in Bhabha 5). This liminal space is central to Bhabha’s notion of in-betweenness within a third space. Postcolonial theory

significant for Latina/o Canadians as both physical and imagined in-flux spaces, as universes in a continuing transformation. It is any given space, in any given temporality—at the Canadian borderlands—that helps Aguirre portray her characters with all their liminal qualifications. It is their emotional position at the borderlands that helps characters link past stories with present and/or future temporalities. At the same time, such a borderland position connects perspectives, sentiments, and beliefs about their sense of nationality and allows them to come up with a new set of cultural characteristics, mainly within hybridized identities. Bhabha applies such an image of the border/stairwell as the center of cultural hybridity that connects my analysis to postcolonial discourses created out of occupying a borderland (5). The borderland space is a liminal space in which ephemeral (or nonpermanent) images are created. Aguirre’s work, in this way, portrays images of any given present within the resonance of potential futures. In other words, occupying, but also writing from the borderlands creates a state of becoming due to the continued processes of transcultural and transnational interchanges. If there is one major argument in Bhabha’s *Location of Culture*, it is that cultures (like identities) are always in flux. In this chapter, Bhabha’s concepts of hybridization and third space establish the characteristics of the ever-changing location of culture and identities in the Latina/o Canadian borderlands. As argued by Benito and Manzananas, “Hybridity—in identity, community and in literature—is the offspring of the border” (10).

I interpret Chilean Canadian literature as a network of stories that contributes to letting us understand Canadian *Latinidad* as it might exist in the “real” world. Like *Anywhere but Here*, Latina/o Canadian literary texts, help create (or let us imagine) a collective sense of what *Latinidad* “is” or could be. How does literature from Latina/o

uses the idea of a third space to capture the cultural, linguistic, and subjective middle ground, reshaping both individual and group identities. This intermediary space, bridging two cultures and identities, is rich with sociocultural interactions, yielding hybrid outcomes. Bhabha explains, “The stairwell as liminal space... allows, prevents identities at either end of it from settling into primordial polarities. This interstitial passage... entertains difference without an assumed or imposed hierarchy” (5).

Canadians depict the ongoing nature of Latina/o hybrid cultures and identities, while also expanding into decolonial perspectives? I would posit that Latina/o Canadian authors engage in reinventing, reinterpreting, and retransmitting their individual and collective life experiences while in a position of exile, engaging with or in tensions with their sense of what it means to be an exiled writer (or the offspring of exile or political refugees in Canada).

In the following section, I present Carmen Aguirre's case study—that is, my approximation to *Anywhere but Here* as a narrative of the borderlands. I illustrate how Aguirre's characters exemplify *new* cultural and identity characteristics of hybridity and hybridization, those that are born out of a borderland experience. Taking cues from Bhabha, those who cross over and cannot escape their state of exile will never be in a state of final arrival to a utopian identity; there will always be an ongoing process of hybridization of cultures, and therefore, there will always be migrants and exiles experimenting with cultures and identities that make them believe that they belong *anywhere but here*.

3.6 Carmen Aguirre's Belonging *Anywhere but Here*

*If I claim you, South, will you claim me too? If I leave the North, when will I arrive at you?
Does the leaving ever end? Does the arrival ever begin?*
—Carolita, in Carmen Aguirre's *Anywhere but Here* (2021)

The text analysis in this section delves into the intricate process of experience that represents both the 1st and 1.5 generations of political refugees, as they embark on a journey from Canada to South America. Immersed in the borderlands near the United States-Mexico border, the family's collective vision unfolds through shifting temporalities, blending past, present, and future in a magical realist narrative. Aguirre's use of theatrical techniques, such as different temporalities marked at the beginning of each scene, invites readers to reflect on the characters' crossings of physical and imaginary borderlands. Through these practices, the meaning behind attempting to cross borders is unveiled, as encounters between the Chilean family and other Latina/o migrant characters going North illustrate both differences and

similarities in their migrant experiences.²⁵ Additionally, the presence and invisibility of certain characters in specific scenes prompt thoughtful questioning about the significance of their interactions and the implications of exile. Through Aguirre's masterful storytelling, readers are led to ponder the intricate complexities of diasporic identities and the transformative power of the borderlands' liminality.

The text analysis section is structured as follows: Firstly, I provide an overview of the main characters' collective journey, which represents the return from exile towards South America (though for Carolita, the journey embodies a sense of going into exile). Subsequently, I delve into the analysis of the four protagonists to illustrate the diverse outcomes resulting from living in exile or experiencing the borderlands, where the crossing of physical and imaginary borders highlights these differences. I start with the father figure of the exiled family. Then, in parallel, I focus on the two younger generations of protagonists, Carolita, and Lupe, as they symbolize clear characteristics of experiencing the borderlands, exhibiting a border (or migrant) consciousness and symbolizing hybridization. This dual analysis enables a comprehensive examination of how Latina/o Canadian literature continuously shapes Canadian *Latinidad* through the experiences and transformations of the characters in the play. The final text analysis is centered on Laura, the "absent" mother. Although

²⁵ While I touch briefly on the migrant experiences of secondary characters in the play migrating North, particularly to the United States, a more extensive analysis within Aguirre's play *Anywhere but Here* would offer a comprehensive insight into contemporary migration experiences, shedding light on the illusion of the American Dream, "a daily nightmare of work," Young Man with a Balloon in His Hearth suggests (84). This exploration would serve to uncover the nuanced and contemporary meanings that underscore their endeavors to cross borders in the context of 2020. Additionally, the interactions between the Chilean family embarking on a Southward journey and their fellow Latina/o migrants headed North offer a lens through which both the disparities and shared aspects of their respective migration experiences are illuminated. In this vein, this analysis seeks to emphasize the intersections between the central protagonists, comprising the members of the Chilean family, and only those secondary characters who play a pivotal role in shaping our understanding of the concept of "home," but also prompt us to critically engage with the multifaceted implications of returning from, or venturing into exile.

originally, she remains in Vancouver while the rest of her family embarks on their journey south, her presence is constantly evoked through the dialogues of Carolita, Lupe, and Manuel. Despite Laura's physical absence, the characters' conversations shed light on her character, her life experiences in exile, and her significant impact on their lives. In addition, I have opted to analyze this character last because, in her play, Aguirre chooses to present Laura—and other secondary female characters—with a fresh perspective, illustrating and representing female protagonists from a revolutionary, feminist viewpoint. This fresh activist framework aids me in examining new literary themes, including decolonial perspectives, which I delve into more in chapter four.

3.6.1 Interconnected Narratives: Contrasting and Comparing Experiences in the Canadian Borderlands

After structuring the text analysis, it becomes inevitable to contrast and compare the experiences of the protagonists, which allows for an analysis where I first discuss the almost interchangeable nature of the characters. As their journeys unfold in the borderlands, common themes of displacement, identity negotiation, and hybridity emerge, making their experiences and transformations highly interconnected. Through this approach, I examine how these characters, despite their distinct backgrounds and generational differences, share similar challenges and dilemmas as they navigate the complexities of living in exile and encountering the borderlands. This section highlights the universality of the diasporic experience while emphasizing the nuanced traces that define each character's unique path in the play.

Anywhere but Here mainly narrates the story of four Chilean migrants: Manuel and Laura as well as their two daughters, Carolita, and Lupe. It is a story that describes this Chilean family's experience while on their trip to return "home" to South America. As the narrative unfolds, Manuel, Carolita, and Lupe embark on their journey together, while Laura, upon realizing her family has already left for Chile, embarks on a solo journey. This family exemplifies Chileans from both the 1st and 1.5 generations of political refugees who arrived in Canada following the 1973 Chilean coup. Their trip back to South America, in 1979, therefore, "reverses the refugee's

path” while allowing its characters to also refuse their “state of exile” (Cover page). This temporality—i.e., the year 1979—, creates in this play a significant date of nostalgic returning to a beloved “home” left in South America, but it also represents a historical date signifying the date Chileans from all over the world went back from exile to take part on the resistance movement—a temporality I raised in Chapter two as The Return Plan, a new emblematic memory framework in Chilean Canadian literature in English.²⁶ Additionally, the depiction of 1979 is in contrast to that of 2020, particularly representing the different migration paths and goals, stands to juxtapose how Latin Americans sought to move north (primarily to the United States) in search of improved lives. This storyline consistently questions the value of their northbound journey, as evidenced by the perspective of the Teenaged Girl traveling north: “The cost is high. Is it worth it? ... Is the cost worth it?” (45, 46). More significant for this analysis, however, is the space where *Anywhere but Here* is situated, at the borderlands, as the following synopsis demonstrates,

near the United States-Mexico border, [where] a family from 1979 drives back towards Chile from Canada. As time and space shift and blend, the family experiences a series of *encounters* ranging from poignant to comical to fantastic. Encircled by past, present, and future, *their journey becomes a collective vision* that immerses us all in the compelling *experiences of people attempting to cross or guard borders*. (Cover page, emphasis added)

This synopsis makes us inquire about the series of *encounters* in the play but also about the meaning behind *attempting to cross borders*, which opens the possibility of thinking about both physical and imaginary borderlands. In the play, such *encounters* are scenes that illustrate differences and similarities between the Chilean family (as travelers going South) and other Latin American migrants going North. Such

²⁶ See also Marilo Nuñez play, *El Retorno/I Return*, a “story of a Chilean family living in political exile in Canada who travels to Europe in 1979 to become part of The Return Plan, an international effort to topple the Pinochet dictatorship from within” (Trevorboffone).

encounters also happen in different temporalities; past, present, and future posing mysterious scenes because their characters come from different eras. Aguirre uses magical realism techniques to make all of this happen. She states that the play builds different temporalities: “1979, 1973, 1996, and 2020 [and all these] eras occur simultaneously” (*Anywhere* 3). While these features may be easier to represent in a live performance, Aguirre prepares her readers with theatrical directions within the text. Such directions include, for example, how temporalities are marked at the beginning of each scene. In Scene 5, for example, “GENERAL JUANA AZURDUY DE PADILLA, riding a horse and holding an 1850s gun, arrives at the shrub in 2020” (44). Further directions illustrate how certain characters come from different temporalities: “The convertible [with Manuel, Lupe, and Carolita] travels south in 1979. On a different part of the stage, [another character,] ARCANGEL, ... rides on top of a train in northern Mexico ... He is in 2020” (30). Through such techniques, the reader is invited to reflect upon such magical realism practices to identify how some characters cross different imaginary borderlands and why. Not only Carolita demonstrates the ability to summon characters, as I will illustrate shortly; other main characters, like Laura, in different scenes are either visible or sometimes invisible to each other. Yet, their dialogues are interconnected, reflecting a sense of mutual awareness. These techniques, for example, assist Aguirre in portraying themes like migration and feminism in the play, prompting readers to explore similarities and differences while raising awareness about contemporary migration matters. To illustrate, in Scene 5, a reader needs to think of the invisibility of Carolita (Manuel’s younger daughter), who is witnessing the whole scene without intervening. Carolita witnesses an encounter between General Juana and a Teenage Girl who discuss both contemporary migration inquiries (in 1996, and 2020) about the worthiness of migrating to North America, but also the historical significance of female characters in Latin American history such as General Juana herself, who was “born in 1780 in the Altiplano, half Indian, half Spanish ... who fought for our independence from the Spaniards on the front lines with [an] army of two hundred women ... while pregnant, in what is now Bolivia and Argentina” (44-50). General Juana is a “ghost [that] announces its arrival with a particular [jasmine] scent” who appears on the Teenager

Girls' migration path because she needs General Juana "now and in the immediate future" (44-45). Teenager Girl also mentions other female Latin American icons like Frida, Adelita from the Mexican Revolution, Comandanta Ramona of the Zapatistas, Comandanta Celia of the Cuban Revolution, and Comandanta Ana María of the Salvadorian Revolution (46). These are other "signs" she calls it, as female revolutionary women who are there to help her on her way north, to give her straight and overcome obstacles—a theme that I will further describe below while analyzing Laura's feminist character.

Moreover, Carolita is omnipresent in such an encounter, and by the end of the scene, readers realize that the meaning of such is to communicate a conscious message that connects both migrants: the teenage girl with Carolita via their experiences and the significance of leaving/returning to one's homeland. This theme is evident in multiple encounters involving various main and secondary characters throughout the play. Additionally, one can recognize the importance of representing General Juana as a female revolutionary character. She embodies a message of awareness, emphasizing the significance of living in the present, "What is going to happen and what you're going to do doesn't matter as much as what's happenING and what you're doING [now]," General Juana notes (49). Furthermore, she conveys valuable lessons to both Teenaged Girl and Carolita, emphasizing the importance of repeated motif, "Luchar es altamente femenino" (49). As a reader, one must think about both the significance of this theatrical technique and how the magical realism used in the play helps Aguirre challenge her audience's understanding of the meaning of exile while illustrating, challenging the meaning of migration between 1979, 1996, and 2020, but also emphasizes the progressive feminist message highlighted in these dialogues. This strategy can lead us to a productive line of questioning. Why, for example, are characters sometimes visible to others? Why do their encounters come sometimes with dialogue and sometimes without? Why are characters sometimes invisible in certain scenes? Why is Carolita invisible to General Juana and the teenage girl in this scene? The significance of these theatrical and strategic scenes becomes clearer when examining Carolita's actions in the opening scene of Act 2, where various secondary

characters present the migration motives in 2020. They are in the Southern side of the wall, discussing the Northern side of the border, starting with the Chilean's family convertible car that just crashed the wall: It is "all crashed up with smoke coming out of it. Right here. A man [Manuel] and a girl [Lupe] are lying on the ground around it, eyes closed, not moving at all. I don't think they're breathing," suggests a Chiclet Seller (80). However, later on, the audience/readers discover that they are not dead. Carolita is conscious after the crash, she is on her 1979 temporality, watching from above the wall, but "The others can't see or hear her" —offer the stage directions (79). During the whole scene, different characters discuss the life south of the border. All of them are from the South, except for Young Man with a Balloon in His Hearth who declares being an immigrant that just died. While talking to General Juana, he asks, "Is this limbo, heaven ... or am I south? (83). Young Man with a Balloon in His Hearth represents a contemporary migration life in the United States, he continues, "I got up this morning a healthy twenty-five-year-old who worked the strawberry fields at the crack of dawn. Then I clutched my chest in pain ... At least my recurring dream will haunt me no more. ... The American Dream is nothing but the daily nightmare of work ... Hunger" (83-84). With this intervention, Aguirre juxtaposes the different struggles of living in exile, while there were political reasons what made the first wave of Chileans to go into exile in 1973, later, both in 1996, and 2020, the economical struggles in Latin America have also made migrants aiming for the so-called American Dream.

In another context, this scene illustrates the importance of the *collective vision*—as suggested on the cover page—about how migrants identify their home from their state of exile while *attempting to cross or guard borders*. Such messages also inform us about why certain migrants are attempting to cross borders either to go South (such as the Chilean family) or North (like all other migrant characters in the play). This allows us to better understand what is "the cost of exile and the true nature of home" that Aguirre notes. The main question to approach while analyzing Aguirre's *Anywhere but Here* is, therefore, what is the value of *home* while constructing one's identity from the Canadian borderlands? Ultimately, the answer to this question will

help us better understand how new English-language Chilean Canadian literary narratives continue to construct Canadian *Latinidad*. This is to say, as communicated in this border narrative, younger generations of migrants and exiles do not seem to belong any longer to their native homes in Latin America, as is the case of members from the 1st generation of refugees. Instead, members of the 1.5 generation of migrants in Canada show a degree of Canadian acculturation. Like Carolita in this play, members of the 1.5 generation of migrants also choose their adoptive homeland as *home*. As the epigraph of this section demonstrates, Carolita starts to experience a border identity, asking, on scene 2, Act 2, *still sitting on the wall, straddling the wall*, the scene direction suggests, “If I leave the North, when will I arrive at you? Does the leaving ever end? Does the arrival ever begin?” (90).

It is mainly during encounters between the secondary and main characters—Manuel, Lupe, Carolita, and Laura—that the reader learns about the Chilean family’s trip and all the characters’ secrets, wishes, and beliefs. While all characters contribute to our understanding of Latin Americans living or *traveling and guarding borders*, in this chapter, I analyze all main characters, Manuel, then I concentrate on Carolita’s and Lupe’s messages because these characters represent the 1.5 generation of exiles, next I analyze Laura, and finally some of the secondary characters. Distinguishing between the features of the 1.5 generation and those of the 1st generation allows us to see how, in their own way, all characters communicate their reactions to living in a state of exile as a central theme of the play. As we will notice, the realization of who they are as Chileans in exile is dictated by their wishes to either go back to Vancouver or to continue their trip to Chile. It is, in fact, their inquiry about the location of their “home” that makes them all reflect on Manuel’s desire to drive all the way to South America. In what follows, I will revisit this analysis while examining the various protagonists in the play, while pointing out how they explore their state of exile. Moreover, I will indicate different borderland features in each of the main protagonists, mainly in Carolita and Lupe and then the mother Laura. But first, however, let us commence with the family’s father, Manuel, since initially, he is the only one who wants to go south.

3.6.2 1st Generation of Chilean Migrants: Representing the Nostalgic Sentiment to Return Home after Exile

Manuel's attitude toward his trip south primarily represents diasporic members who nostalgically reference their longing to return to their homeland, a recurrent theme in diasporic literature. However, Manuel's physical return is also seen as a relief to his state of exile. He does not realize, moreover, that such a journey is also taking him and his two daughters, Carolita and Lupe, into a cathartic drive. Manuel's character faithfully resists any notion of altering his Chilean identity, refusing to accept his shifting identity as a Chilean in exile. He also reaffirms his devotion to heteronormative social traits. Manuel is a Chilean living in exile in Vancouver. He was forced to leave his homeland during the post-1973 Chilean era. He is married to Laura, but they are separated, she now lives in a women-only commune. In the initial scene, on the night Manuel decides to start driving to South America, he discovers Laura "making out" with the hippie at the commune where men are only allowed in during weekend parties. "He freaks out. He tries to hit THE HIPPIE. [But] LAURA gets between them" —the stage directions note (7). Moreover, this event makes Manuel decide to return to his beloved home. He immediately "grabs CAROLITA, and wakes LUPE up, and leaves the house with both of them" (7).

In exploring Manuel's character, it is evident that his trip to South America and his separation from Laura hold significant gender themes that underscore his quest for agency and power within a heteronormative context. The event where Manuel discovers Laura in a romantic encounter with the hippie not only makes him distressed but also acts as a catalyst for his decision to return to his beloved homeland. This event can also be seen as a desire to reclaim a sense of control and authority. In the realm of traditional masculinity, this scene starts to illustrate the attempt to "find an opening" and regain a sense of potency. Manuel, Carolita, and Lupe cross the Canada-US border with the music at full blast and the top of their VW convertible down; they travel through Washington State while discussing how they are going to cross the next border into Mexico without passports. "We'll find an opening," suggests Manuel (71). Expressing his desire to depart from the hated North America — suggests Carolita (36)

—, and to find a way to cross the border that separates him from his beloved South, Manuel continues saying this as a type of mantra: “We have to find an opening” (72), “we need to find an opening” (92). This motif of “finding an opening” could be interpreted as an effort to reconnect with the maternal space of his elusive and unattainable home in Chile; but can also mean his need to restore his family structure, as I will explore further below. Nonetheless, Manuel’s status as a Chilean living in exile in Vancouver adds layers to his longing for a sense of belonging and power in a world shaped by displacement and the struggle to navigate the borderlands of identity and home.

Being a representative of the 1st generation of Chileans in exile, Manuel’s most important feature is his nostalgic sentiment about returning to Chile. The need to return home after being in exile and reversing his trip to the place left behind in South America is what also helps Manuel to romanticize his return. During their trip south, while pointing at the sky in front of them, Manuel states, “Look at the cloud formation! Just like a condor” (27). The portrayal of a condor, a significant symbol in Chilean and other South American cultures, evokes the Andes and a sense of ancestral land and plays a crucial role in Manuel’s perception of his journey, leading him to romanticize it as if the condor were a promising sign guiding them toward their long-awaited return home.

In addition, Manuel sees his exile in Canada as a temporary inconvenience. Like most Chileans who arrived in Canada as political refugees in the 1970s and 80s, Manuel does not foresee staying in his exiled home forever; he suggests that his entire family might have chosen to remain in Chile, and he cannot believe how he “got kicked out of [his] soon-to-be-liberated country for [Laura] ... your mother was the one they wanted. Dead or alive. Not me. Not us. We could have stayed” (119). Since the beginning of the play, nonetheless, Manuel blames Laura for their misfortune to not being able to return to Chile, as Carolita suggests, “We are forbidden to enter” because they are on a blacklist like Chileans in exile who are forbidden to return to their country. “That’s all your mother’s fault” Manuel responds, “Due to being a radical who left you behind to take up arms on the day of the coup ...” (11). Towards

the end of the play, nonetheless, as part of Manuel's borderland identity changes, audiences/readers can notice how he now wants to continue his trip south not only to reunite with his beloved country, but as he suggests: "We are going back to join the struggle. We know the triumph is coming. ... Yes. *We can go underground*" (123; emphasis added). This exemplifies how residing in the borderlands led this family, like many Chilean exiled families, to undergo continual shifts in culture, identity, and even political viewpoints. It also signifies Manuel's yearning to reunite the entire family, following Laura's initial path of joining the resistance.

A recurring theme in Latina/o Canadian refugee narratives, moreover, is a sense of guilt for having left one's homeland. This sentiment also appears to be present in Manuel's character, reflecting the guilt he feels for leaving Chile and his family and friends behind. This is depicted in the encounter between Manuel and Arcangel, where both characters conclude the scene "look[ing] at each other and start[ing] weeping" because of their nostalgic feelings associated with leaving their homes and families behind (115). Manuel is ready and has always been ready since his arrival in 1974, to return home. This feature in 1st generation migrants distinguishes them from the members of younger generations. Those from the 1st generation, like Manuel, are often represented as holding on to memories that make them always nostalgically think about their return home. In other words, they often have stronger and more crystallized memories of their home in Latin America. This helps characters like Manuel to keep their Chilean memories active, and therefore, their Chilean identity remains an important feature in their lives (even in exile). They not only retain memories but also hang to anything that evokes a connection to their homeland, anything that brings them closer to their native home. As an illustrative example, Manuel finds himself unable to present and leave behind an envelope containing Chilean soil at a shrine located at the Mexico-US border. Lupe asks him, "Dad, add that envelope of Chilean soil that Grandma sent you [to the shrine]. The one you always carry in your shirt pocket, right next to your heart." But Manuel is not capable; all he can reply is "I can't" (94). This makes us think about how important it is for the 1st generation of exiles in Canada to

keep their Chilean memories alive, to never forget where they came from, but more importantly, the socio-political reasons that made them go into exile originally.

Moreover, as 1st generation Chilean political exiles reconstruct their identities from the Canadian borderlands. Their return to their homeland is not only romanticized by memories, but other memories underscore also how certain gender roles persist in characterizing male figures. As mentioned earlier, Manuel attributes his marital breakup to exile but also implies Laura's departure resulted from her quest for self-discovery, as an escape from her duties as mother and married woman (10). Manuel states,

Girls! Your mother left us! I don't know how to say it without breaking your hearts: she's been sitting cross-legged making macramé in Maria's supposed commune for weeks instead of taking care of you ... She doesn't believe in the maternal instinct. She says it's a patriarchal construct ... [However] If the maternal instinct exists – and it DOES – it will lead her to us. (15-16)

This scene ends up helping readers to start understanding Laura as a feminist and revolutionary character for that age (1979), that is, Laura is a woman who believes that “motherhood is overrated” —suggests Lupe (16). In addition, Carolita restates how the heteronormativity in Manuel's character makes him to leave Vancouver and start driving to South America. Carolita states that maybe one day Manuel also finds someone else, “You took us [from the commune] because you let your emotions get the better of you when you saw Mom with Bill [the hippie]” (18). Again, while this quote continues to indicate Manuel's feelings for Laura, it also constructs Manuel's character as a stereotypical Latin American male figure. Manuel cannot accept how exile had helped Laura move on, becoming another person, he remains thinking about marriage, and male-female gender standards as a universal status quo. Unlike Manuel, as I will elaborate towards the end of this chapter, when analyzing Laura's revolutionary character, her experience as a radical feminist in Canadian exile has propelled her to evolve into an empowered mother figure within a 1979's temporality. First, however, we move to consider the two younger protagonists in the play, Carolita

and Lupe, as the 1.5 generation of migrants representing the construction of identity from the concept of hybridization.

3.6.3 1.5 Generation of Chilean Migrants: Carolita's Assessments

Moving into the analysis of the younger generation of characters, starting with Carolita, we observe a contrast with the 1st generation of exiles in Canada. While the 1st generation holds crystallized memories tied to the 1973 Chilean coup, the 1.5 generation lacks such concrete recollections, making it challenging for them to perceive Chile as their home. For these younger characters, like Carolita, the notion of returning to a place where they feel invisible presents greater difficulties, as I will further describe below. It is a set of different elements that make Carolita, as an example of the 1.5 generation of migrants, not want to continue a trip south. During their whole trip to South America, Carolita constantly reminds us that all she wants is to return to Vancouver (18, 20, 27) because she is invisible to the South (88). In addition, Carolita remembers very few (close to none) things about her life in Chile; and due to her young age and limited life experience living in Chile, she shows rather negative feelings about her life there. She communicates unclear memories of Chile, therefore, there are not any strong memories that may help her to want to return there. It is her detached memory that may have made Carolita forget about her life there and unwilling to continue her trip south.

At the outset, Carolita is only an eleven-year-old Chilean-born girl living in exile in Vancouver, where she has lived for the past six years. She claims, “when I close my eyes and try to remember, all I see is black. And I hear, like, fuzz. Like the buzzing sound the TV makes when it’s trying to find a sign” (19). The reader ends up wondering about the kind of sign Carolita is looking for so that she can continue her trip south. In the context of the 1.5 generation of political exiles in Canada, who experienced the terror of the 1973 Chilean coup and its aftermath as young children, it is suggested that Carolita may require more than a mere symbol or sign to alleviate her feelings. Instead, it is her memories of her present life in Vancouver that have the potential to offer comfort, enabling her to move beyond the trauma of the coup, instead

of her memories from the past that linger with her in the form of a taste of “metallic taste of fear on my tongue” (29). During their trip south, all Carolita does is question how she can continue her trip to Chile and how Chile can be her “rightful home if [she doesn’t] even remember it” (18). Carolita mentions that all she can remember is that she heard stories from other people. Yet, it is intriguing to observe that the children, to varying degrees, retain sensorial affective memories of Chile, even though these memories may not be fully crystallized; nonetheless, they remain relevant in their experiences and identities. For example, when Lupe asks Carolita if she could remember the “*Dos en Uno* bubblegum melting in [her] mouth” (29). Again, these embodied and however vague memories notwithstanding, Carolita insists on returning to Vancouver while showing how her character is convinced about what she wants to do, and where she wants to go. Contrary to her older sister Lupe, Carolita is certain about going back to Vancouver to reunite with her mother Laura. she also continually suggests her dad “to turn around and go home” (27), because her migrant consciousness suggest that she is “invisible in the South” (88), and that “nobody can see us there ... I’m invisible to them,” she argues (92).

During the first scene in Act Two, Carolita wears monarch-butterfly wings while listening to the whole scene because the other characters can’t see or her her—the play directions note (79). By the end of the scene, however, Carolita presents another layer of her renewed personality that illustrates how, even at a young age, she has learned to become a feminist, like other female characters in the play, General Juana Azurduy de Padilla, and Teenaged Girl. In a previous scene, Amparo Ochoa’s song “Mujer” is represented by General Juana Azurduy de Padilla. While in a conversation with Teenaged Girl, General Juana *singing and teaching*—the stage directions indicate—sharing the chorus of the song and later both characters singing it in unisono: “Mujer, semilla fruto, flor, camino! Luchar es altamente femenino!” (49). This section of the song is later echoed by the Teenage Girl. After shooting two male guardians at the border—Uncle and Young Man with Guns—she sings, “Mujer, semilla fruto, flor, camino! Luchar es altamente femenino!” —concluding the scene (68). It is Carolita, however, who like Teenaged Girl, demonstrates her learning at the

border. At the end of Act Two, Carolita also signs the chorus after General Juana invites other secondary characters to travel south with her, “Mujer, semilla fruto, flor, camino! Luchar es altamente femenino! ... Why am I invisible in the south?” — Carolita concludes (87-88). This intervention encircles Aguirre’s motive to represent certain feminist characters achieving their goals while crossing borders, but also emphasis, how the experiencing of borderlands helps migrants to learn (or unlearned) various sociopolitical perspectives.

Carolita intervenes several times during the scene, but she is never seen, nor heard: “Hola! ... I’m here! Look at me! ... Hola! Why am I a ‘poor Latina’ girl in the North and an invisible girl in the South? Why?” (79, 80, 81). Through these varied dialogues, Aguirre endeavors to depict the perception of migrants as impoverished Latinas/os heading north. Across different time periods or temporalities, Latina/o migrants persistently face issues of hunger, lack of representation in employment, and discrimination. Primarily, the narrative highlights how exile renders them invisible to society at large. The scene resolves around General Juana inviting Young Man with a Balloon in His Hearth, and the other secondary characters to go with her to Antofagasta, a port city in northern Chile, north of Santiago: “Why [don’t] you walk with me, compañeros? ... They are erecting a monument in my honour,” — “What’s the strategy?” Young Man with a Balloon in His Hearth asks — “The strategy is the same on as always: a potent, unified South. Gringos out ... You are here (*referring to the North*) because the gringos are there (*referring to the South*)” (86-87).

This scene helps Aguirre to construct the imaginary of Latin American migrants both in 1979 and 2020, but more importantly, she constructs Carolita’s character as an inhabitant of the borderlands. Carolita is indeed, physically experiencing the border scene, *watching from above the wall*, wishing to understand her own migration path, her life in Canada versus her moving into an exiled state in Chile, but also questioning her sense of belonging to a particular space within her personal imaginary (in between South America and Canada). It is not only the technique used that expresses this separation between Carolita and the characters on the other side of the wall—on the Southern side—but also Carolita’s identity, which

illustrates how she seems to belong to the North, where women can freely talk about how fighting is truly feminist, as the previous song demonstrates, but also learned by her mother's current living as a truly radical feminist, as I will explore below.

Therefore, Carolita does not belong to the South, where nobody seems to see her.

"Look at me!" she claims, "Wings and all to fly me north" (80). My inquiry here is, in other words, to point out why a girl from the 1.5 generation of exiles feels invisible in her native territory and how this allows for changes in Carolita's character. She had learned to inhabit the borderland, as empowered young woman who now can discuss sociopolitical matters. To illustrate, she defines the second character, Man with TV Dinner as an "imperialist," because he only has a dinner for Bill O'Neil—a Canadian member of the MIR who, in 1973, managed to get detained at the Santiago's stadium concentration camp—, and because he does not want to share the dinner with Arcangel, nor has dinner for the rest of the poisoners (103). In a similar fashion, she defines her dad as a "socialist revolutionary," because, "he believes in armed struggle but only in defensive situations and only against the military ... Let's just say it: My dad is also in the Movimiento of the Revolutionary Left ... Pueblo, conciencia, fusil, MIR, MIR!" (106-7). With this intervention I conclude the analysis on Carolita, showing how even, to some degree, she also represents a changed thought while referring to all of those people "who were never fit to be parents," including her dad, Manuel Javier Gonzalez Zurita, because she finds out in one of the closing scenes, that Manuel, at some point in the past, while they were at the refugee hotel, had "suicide threats"—Lupe argues (120-1). The presence of the smell or taste of fear not only constitutes a visceral memory for Carolita but also distinguishes her from the nostalgic longing represented by Manuel. It is equally significant in understanding her experiences and emotions. Furthermore, Aguirre portrays Carolita (above the wall) as a symbol of a higher understanding regarding matters that describe not only her own experience as a member of the 1.5 generation of refugees in Canada but also those of other migrant characters experiencing the borderlands which distinguishes from her older sister, Lupe, as we can examine below.

3.6.4 Generation of Chilean Migrants: Lupe's Evaluations

By moving into analyzing Lupe's character, we can notice, right from the start, that a major contrast is that Lupe can remember things about Chile including episodes, scenes, and even (sweet) tastes. Nonetheless, like Carolita, Lupe also wanted first to turn around and go back to Vancouver. After Lupe starts to revive memories from Chile, however, she wants to continue her trip south. Like her dad, she wants to move back there. Even though Lupe is only one year older than Carolita, Lupe has very specific memories of her life in Chile; therefore, one cannot stop to wonder why Lupe, opposite to Carolita, can remember even positive smells and tastes. Lupe remembers the taste of "rosehip jam, the smell of Grandma's yerba mate, [and] a thread of smoke coming from the tip of the volcano in the distance" (20). More significant is the following since these are the memories that make Lupe start to contemplate the idea of joining Manuel to continue their journey towards Chile: "The mud road. The yellow house. The pink rose bush. The monkey tree. Our school smocks. Grandma and grandpa whispering at the dining room table during curfew. The taste of condensed milk. The smell of our leather school bags" (19). This is when one realizes that Lupe, unlike Carolita, is now unwilling to return to Vancouver, because she does not want to go back into exile; when Carolita suggests turning around and go back, Lupe replies, "To What? ... Exile? (72), and therefore, she is now committed to continuing south in search of the traces of those memories.

One of Lupe's noteworthy borderlands characteristics is her inclination to change her mind, exemplifying the impact of living in a state of exile on the development of dual identities. This trait highlights how the experience of exile can lead to a complex and fluid sense of self, where individuals may undergo continuing transformations and shifts in their perspectives and allegiances. As a migrant, one is unsure about where one needs to be, and live, not to mention where one belongs. This is illustrated by Lupe while on her way south, *in a dream state*—suggests the play directions—, describes how she dreams being "in the middle of a storm" dancing to a Brazilian batucada, "And I am alone in this kilt in the North dancing a dance I've never danced before ... and I know what this dream is trying to capture, it's the two

poles pulling me apart, like the horses the Spaniards used to tear Túpac Amaru, the Inca leader who resist them ... I am Túpac. And I am also the equator ..." (55). These two contrasting poles that set Lupe apart symbolize the north and south: her existence in between Vancouver, an unexpected life, and her native land in Chile, resisting exile. The equator, moreover, signifies Lupe's in-between experience as she undergoes certain identity transformation on her trip south. While approaching the wall between Mexico and the United States, furthermore, Lupe suggests, "I feel a change running from my fingertips up my arms," to which Manuel replies, "That's the magnetic pull of our beloved South" (73). This shift, again felt in the body, demonstrates the uncertainty of one's experience living between two cultures, between two imaginary worlds, one in Canada and one down South. Moreover, a longing now manifests itself at the visceral level, sensed in the body as an electric charge, akin to a magnetic pull drawing Lupe toward her ancestral home. This is illustrated also in the play as the result of having lived in the borderlands; now, one always carries both native and "adopted" homes, or as the Virgin Mary character concludes in the play, after exile, one always carries one's inner and outer homes (136-9). One wonders, therefore, if going back to Chile would help Lupe find out where she belongs, or if returning to Chile is possible at all. What is going to happen when Lupe arrives in Chile and realizes that, as she changed, everything has also changed? What is going to happen if Lupe cannot hear her name being called from across the way in her mother tongue? Chile "is beautiful and ours" Lupe states, "You and me in matching outfits ... the volcano in the distance ... the sound of my name being called from across the way. Lupe! Lupe! Lupe! (20). As we move towards halfway in their trip, however, Carolita continues to remind us to go back to Vancouver, but Lupe replies, "To What? Exile?" (72).

Continuing the comparative analysis of these two characters, this last intervention underscores the distinct trajectories that Lupe and Carolita have taken, despite both being part of the 1.5 generation of exiles in Canada. While Lupe—like Manuel—seeks to transcend her state of exile in Canada, Carolita's perspective on exile is more complex. For her, exile would entail returning to Chile. Towards the

play's conclusion, Carolita indicates a departure from North America, moving towards a South where her identity will not be perceived as if she is experiencing a reverse exile (123). Their experiences of exile in Vancouver lead to divergent responses concerning the idea of returning to their homeland, prompting questions about their current sense of national identity—where do they truly belong, in Canada or Chile? Can it be argued that Carolita now identifies with Canada, often referred to as “the land of the cherry blossom” (114)? Can it be argued that both Lupe and Carolita represent the in-between experiences of the borderlands?

In turn, after the initial half of the play, Lupe's allegiance appears to lie with Chile. Is it plausible, then, to propose that either or both Lupe and Carolita are also connected to a border consciousness, i.e., in a constant state of becoming. While Carolita seems willing to return to Vancouver, her desire to bring “pieces of the South there” (85) raises intriguing inquiries into her evolving sense of identity and belonging. Moreover, Carolita's contemplation of her “rightful home” serves as a crucial point of differentiation between Chileans of the 1st and 1.5 generations of exiles in Canada. While those of the 1st generation, like Manuel, hold steadfastly to their memories of their homeland, fueling their unwavering desire to return to Chile, younger generations lack substantial connections to their relatively unfamiliar home country. This results in the formation of fresh memories and the cultivation of new roots within their adopted exile in Canada. Further exploration of this analysis invites consideration of the factors influencing younger generations' ability to preserve memories of their native land. The range of memories, from positive to negative life experiences, contributes to the starkly divergent identity outcomes between the two characters. Trauma experienced in their lives, rather than the mere duration of time spent in Chile versus Canada, could potentially employ greater significance. However, the experience of exile itself yields a spectrum of consequences and outcomes. Lupe, characterized by her continual shifts in perspective, exemplifies the inhabitants of the borderlands—those residing in an ongoing state of transition and immersed in diverse cultures and languages. Conversely, Carolita's traumatic experiences in Chile, marked by memories of fear, propel her desire to return to Vancouver.

Even as Manuel clings to his cherished Chile as a place of both joy and pain, exemplified by his passionate declaration, “The source of so much pain and so much joy! My SOUTH!” upon nearing the US-Mexico border (73), the ambiguity of belonging is profound in Lupe’s case. Straddling the line between Canada and Chile, her perplexing sense of home aligns with Aguirre’s evocative title: belonging neither definitively in Canada nor emphatically in Chile, she embodies an identity that finds its place *anywhere but here*—in the borderlands. The conclusion drawn from this analysis is that both Lupe and Carolita typify migrants who find themselves connected to their homeland while also adapting to their home in Canada. Moreover, even Manuel belongs to the borderlands, as the experience of exile inherently ushers in a perpetual state of transition, a continuous negotiation between cultures and identities situated on the fringes of the borderlands.

Carmen Aguirre does well to evoke the question of “who am I?” which resonates greatly with the analysis of diasporic literary texts. *Anywhere but Here* helps characters question who they are but, at the same time, invites audiences to question their identities. This is illustrated in the play, for instance, when Lupe wears a T-shirt that says, “I know [who] you are, but what am I?” In addition, this is a phrase Lupe herself uses in a dialogue with Carolita (21). Answering this question in the play helps us form a better idea of how Latina/o Canadians represent themselves at the borderlands. My intention is not to generalize but to point out that there may be different outcomes that help us build further the Chilean Canadian imaginary. Further analysis could illustrate how the slogan, *I know who you are, but what am I?* depicts various power relations between the two sisters, as how one wants to continue south, but the other aims to return to exile, to Vancouver, but also how Lupe may relate with both of her parents. From a more radical standpoint, the representation of Laura, the mother figure in the play, offers a new perspective on the exile experience of Latinas in Canada.

3.6.5 Representing a Progressive Construction of Latina/o Canadian Identity

Laura is represented in the play as if her living in exile has allowed her to contemplate and explore further progressive possibilities. The audience knows Laura's character due to the dialogue between Manuel and his two daughters, not necessarily by her first-hand interventions. As mentioned before, Laura is left behind in Vancouver, and she experienced a return to Latin America as a solo journey. Right from the start, she is described by her two daughters as feminist (Lupe's perspective), to which Carolita notes, "No, [she is] A RADICAL feminist" (9). However, Laura's first intervention presents herself as a Chilean political exile from the 1st generation nostalgically thinking about her native Chile, "My beautiful Chile" she states, but also representing herself as a political revolutionist, "what does it mean to be a revolutionary?" she notes (13). However, contrarily to Manuel, Laura does not want to go back to South America to be part of the underground resistance movement, even though she was already part of it before the September 11th, 1973's coup. This pairing of 1st generation characters' political views takes significance in this analysis because it implies a collective commitment, or political consciousness of Chileans in exile. Laura answers herself the last question, be a revolutionary is

jumping up and down on the Alameda the night Allende won, going to the shantytowns to teach reading and writing as part of literary campaign ... studying documents deep into the night detailing the plan to resist the coup we all knew was coming, [and] learning how to use arms from a Mapuche leader ... (13)

This quote illustrates the initial self-description of Laura as a revolutionary woman, but it also implies how she does not want to go back to Chile, instead, she may want to remind in Vancouver where she has learned to be a free liberated woman, as I will further analyze below.

For this feminist analysis, then, more significant is how Laura concludes her first intervention in the play, by inquiring about "What does it mean to be a mother?"

(13). This intervention, one of the few by this principal character, reveals much about how Laura continues to be perceived by her family. Carolita states, while arguing with Lupe and Manuel about why Laura now lives in María's women-only commune: Laura "said she needed time to think. To write poetry. To find what lies between the black and white" (22). With this intervention, Carolita suggests that her mother was in the need to find out how to move away from patriarchal values and ways of living. Carolita continues arguing what her mother had said that Manuel, how he "had to learn how to father and how to mother ... How to cook, how to clean, how to take care of us properly" (22). Without a doubt, these views are presented as advanced thoughts for that age in time, but more importantly, they show how women had the possibility of moving beyond heteronormative norms, and gender stereotyping. As new migrants in exile, therefore, female characters not only represent as a parcel of Latin American migrant minorities; rather, from a postcolonial and decolonial views, female characters in this play are represented as living in a postcolonial society but moving into decolonial individuals. That is, they move into what Walter Mignolo calls, "delinking" or moving away from a postcolonial state of modernity. To illustrate, Laura separates from Manuel to be able to explore living "Not in the white and black," but in the grey, in the in-betweenness (89). In other words, Laura's character exemplifies how some female migrants may benefit from their exiled experiences, i.e., from inhabiting the borderlands. For instance, during her second intervention, Laura ponders what her mother in Chile might be thinking about her, expressing:

Mother, I've been lying to you in my letters to Chile. Things are not okay. I know you imagined me with him until the day I die, raising my girls in the far South. You did not envision me leaving my girls behind, in a dirty white-stucco house ... with a man who can only cook a pot of burnt rice, while I sit on a beanbag in a commune of barefoot women. (56-57)

This quote illustrates that, while Laura may have already been a revolutionary in Chile, her experiences in exile have compelled her to make progressive decisions, contemplating divorce and leaving her daughters behind to live with their father, Manuel. Through this decision, Laura embraces a decolonial choice to delink from

patriarchal norms and explores a progressive lifestyle that challenges the conventional social order. This may be, moreover, a sign of how women in exile can further explore the borderlands and further evolving into decolonial personas while they continue to construct their identity from exile.

This is illustrated in the following scene, in scene 7, where Laura encounters a Monarch Butterfly and discusses the meaning of being a liberal feminist. While encountering Monarch Butterfly, the spirit of her dead Aunt Lili, Laura asks, “Where am I? ... I’m dying?” to which Monarch Butterfly replies, “From the state of exile? ... [No] Sister, you’ll never get away from your state of exile, longing for pre-exile, praying for post-exile, you’ll never be free, ... listen to me, niece, *you’ll always be chained to exile*” (65-66; emphasis added). Laura adds depth to the narrative of other female characters in the play, showcasing the diverse ways in which individuals respond to exile and how the borderlands offer opportunities for transformation and exploration of alternative ideologies. Monarch Butterfly states, “What’s with the liberal feminism?” to which Laura responds, “No time for philosophizing, winged sister. I’m trying to retrieve my daughters, abducted by the patriarchy” (62).

The monarch butterfly represents in the play both South-North and North-South migration. Therefore, Aguirre may want to critique, on the one hand, the liberal feminism idealizing barefoot communes as a space where capitalism can be escaped; on the other hand, however, the contemporary need for migrating north to reach the “American dream,” even though in another part of the play Teenaged Girl questions if it is worth it (45). Nonetheless, as a radical feminist, Laura restates how the patriarchal norms reflect a view where children should be, and raised by their mothers, contradicting what she has stated in the last quote. This is, nonetheless, another sign of yet another character of the borderlands who have started to experience the continuing development of a border consciousness. This is juxtaposed by the description of who Monarch Butterfly is, and what she is doing there, in 1979, as the spirit of Laura’s aunt Lili, “The one you never met. The one was beaten and banished by your grandfather ... whose birth certificate was burned.” She continues, “I used to be a ghost in a woman’s body [in 1926], now I am a ghost in a butterfly body. I asked not to come

back as a woman, because there is no place on Earth where woman can walk free of fear” (63-64). This intervention shows how Aguirre chooses to represent gender-based structures of patriarchal views in contrast with contemporary feminist views. As a socio-political awareness, Aguirre represents female characters juxtaposed in different eras. While in 1926, women were killed by family members because they turned to be pregnant outside of marriage; in 1979, women are celebrated for their revolutionary fights. “You are the only one from our lineage to ever leave the South,” Monarch Butterfly tells Laura, “[and] I am here to witness your journey and to offer support. From one exile to another” (64). With this quote, I aim to illustrate that the continued development of one’s identity in exile, as inhabitant of the borderlands, takes us from one state of exile to another. Laura’s determination to live in the “grey” area, in the in-betweenness, also reflects a resistance to rigid categorizations and embraces the complexity of identity and agency within the diasporic experience.

As a feminist, moreover, Laura’s character underlines the importance of considering multiple perspectives within the diasporic community, highlighting the ways in which different individuals shape their identities and choices amidst the challenges of displacement and hybridity. By presenting Laura, and other female characters as a decolonial force, Aguirre emphasizes the significance of agency and resistance in the face of oppressive patriarchal or heteronormative structures, thereby contributing to a richer portrayal of the Latina American diasporas of the Americas. That is, from a decolonial perspective, women not as objects who let men take them “from one place to the other” (130). Laura implies that she would feel restricted, as if she lacked control over her own thoughts and emotions, unable to make independent choices or “have no agency whatsoever in any given situation” (130). We can conclude that, Laura, is a radical feminist character that symbolizes the possible growth of one’s standpoints after inhabiting the Canadian borderlands.

3.6.6 The Renovated Feminist and Migrant Viewpoints of Other Two Secondary Characters

Like in Laura’s representation above, a similar free feminine spirit is represented with another female character. Teenaged Girl, a migrant character in 2020, is running away

from the *migra* and a coyote, who after raping her took away her water, money, and clothes (38-39). However, is also a character who, after encountering General Juana on the Northern side of the wall (44-50), is represented as an empowered migrant woman wearing General Juana's uniform, and galloping her horse, brandishing her gun, while encountering two male characters who guard the border, "one of those white-supremacist vigilantes," Uncle and his nephew Young Man with Guns. Teenaged Girl discusses with the two men before killing them both (67). "Aim well at the heart of the enemy, shoot, and sing," she concludes, dismounting the men from their guns, and singing, "Mujer, semilla fruto, camino, luchar es altamente femenino" (67-68). Once again, this motif suggests the continued effort to represent empowered female characters, instead of passive voices following colonial or postcolonial heteronormative norms.

Other secondary character, Arcangel, represents contemporary migrants going North in 2020. Arcangel is first represented, like Manuel, doubting if he wanted to reach the United States because of his strong feeling for his native land, Honduras. However, at some in the play, in a conversation with Carolita, Arcangel becomes another exiled family member. Carolita asks him to become her uncle and ends up inviting him to go home to Canada with her, but he cannot. He notes,

Thank you [but no] I am the very centre of a double magnet. One pulls me north, but the other puts me south, back to Honduras, a place I never thought I'd miss. But I do now. With every corner of my soul. The monarch butterfly whispered my name in my ear: Arcangel, Arcangel, Arcangel, to remind me who I am and where I come from. (115)

The audience/readers do not find out the conclusion of all Arcangel's travels. One can imply, based on this affirmation, that if Arcangel stays at the border or continues his journey North, he will start experiencing what Manuel lived once in 1974 after arriving in Canada. This is illustrated at the end of this scene when Manuel and Arcangel look at each other and start weeping for their beloved homes in Latin

America. Like Manuel, Arcangel will continue to miss his homeland—Honduras—the home he never thought he would miss.

In the representation of secondary characters like Teenaged Girl and Arcangel, the play extends its exploration of migration and identity, echoing the experiences of main characters such as Manuel, Carolita, Lupe, and Laura. Teenaged Girl's narrative, though initially marked by victimization, transforms into one of empowerment and feminist resistance. Her confrontation with oppressive forces at the border paints a picture of an empowered migrant woman, challenging traditional heteronormative norms. Similarly, Arcangel embodies the contemporary migrant torn between the economic pull of the North and the nostalgic call of his native Honduras. His inner struggle, reminiscent of Manuel's earlier dilemma, suggests a potential trajectory of longing and nostalgia for his homeland. The brief analysis of these secondary characters contributes to the overarching theme of the play, highlighting the hybrid and borderland characteristics of migrants, while challenging stereotypical portrayals and norms.

3.6.7 Interrogating Belonging and Identity at the Borderlands: Concluding Reflections on *Anywhere but Here*

As a way of concluding, *Anywhere but Here* is a story that first presents the consequences of exile as a marriage breakup, but it also stages both Manuel's physical return, and his reconfiguration of a heteronormative family structure, as a failure. While at the border, in the US side, after being asked by a secondary character if he managed "to escape the firing squad?" He claims: "Yes! No! I mean, yes, obviously, but I didn't manage to escape exile. So here you fucking find me, in exile land, for fuck's sake. (*to the sky*) Why? Why?!" (107). Moreover, Manuel suggests, "This border is tampering with all of my beliefs" (107). In this context, just like Manuel, all other characters have similar resolutions. They all continue to ask who they are, what they must do, even, what the meaning of love is. For Laura, for example, once again, love is not giving up their own identity, nor renouncing to their own beliefs (131). By approaching the border, i.e., a physical wall that symbolizes a bridge, they cannot cross, they continue to question their feelings, their sense of belonging, and their idea

of home. Manuel tells their daughters, "... once we get to the other side of the border, you'll thank me forever," there one can find everything one needs (70). The act of questioning and altering one's convictions is a constant aspect experienced by migrants and exiles. This perpetual contemplation of "what if" scenarios, creates an atmosphere of uncertainty, causing hesitation in navigating individual experiences and potential outcomes. This is also what makes Manuel inquire about his decision to leave Laura and unexpectedly start driving to South America. In a dream state, Manuel hesitates by questioning whether he should turn around and go back with his girls and work things out with Laura. "Or am I at the point of no return?" he asks, "is it exile or a broken heart that led me to this?" (43). Manuel's questioning of whether to turn around and reconcile with Laura or continue the journey speaks to the complexities of masculinity and the societal expectations placed upon men. The juxtaposition of "exile" and "a broken heart" highlights the tension between his identity as a political exile and his emotional vulnerability as a man experiencing "heartbreak". The choice he faces is not merely about physical return but also about navigating the emotional terrain of relationships and the heteronormative expectations of masculinity. This moment in the play presents an opportunity to explore how gender roles and societal norms intersect with the collective experiences of exile, further contributing to the nuanced portrayal of identity and agency within the Chilean Canadian diaspora.

Anywhere but Here does not resolve the narrative tension; specifically, the decision to cross the border or the potential for returning either South or North remains unresolved. Rather, its open ending proves, once again, the uncertainty of possible outcomes. The audience never finds out if the Chilean family ends up crossing the border. One never even knows if they continue their trip South after Laura reaches the Mexico-US border. Likewise, as readers, we do not know if the family decides to return to Vancouver—to their state of exile in Canada. Across the narrative arc of the play, the characters' encounters at the border serve as a constant reminder of their unceasing migration, a condition that defies any escape from the state of exile, as emphasized by Manuel's observations (79). Within this context, the concept of an opening emerges as a symbol of transcending borders, offering an opportunity to

traverse the wall and encounter the prospect of fresh beginnings. This symbolic impossible act, reflecting a persistent state of exile, embodies the ambivalence of hope and uncertainty characteristic of the borderlands. The edging experiences of these characters encapsulate the intricate interplay between migration, exile, and the evolving potentialities awaiting them on the threshold of the borderlands.

In the concluding theatrical direction of the play, Aguirre states, “The piece of highway that the family is traveling on breaks off and they are rudderless, floating who knows where” (139). This final scene symbolizes the characters’ emotions, sentiments, and desires suspended without a clear resolution, fostering the potential for ongoing identity development from a state of exile, particularly from the borderlands. The open ending implies a continual evolution of the characters’ sense of belonging and leaves their journey in a state of uncertainty, encouraging readers to reflect on the implications of the protagonists’ ongoing experiences in the borderlands.

It is the migrants’ physical and emotional state of exile, their experience at the borderlands, that makes Manuel tamper with all his beliefs and makes other characters also show such questioning in their own circumstances. Lupe’s experiences illustrate, for example, her indecision about where she may belong. It is living in exile that makes Lupe indecisive about returning to Vancouver or continuing south toward Chile. As mentioned before, in a dream state, Lupe discovers what the two poles of her dream pulling her apart mean, is “the equator, dancing as the planet spins around the sun” (55). Lupe’s change of perspective, but more importantly, the questioning of her own actions, is what connects her with Manuel. Both Manuel and Lupe are in the in-betweenness, trying to better understand what they are about to do. In other words, if we consider that Lupe’s strong affiliation is with the North, but Manuel’s affiliation is with the South, they moved in opposite directions, but both moving to the middle, the third space of betweenness. What is the crossing of the border going to bring to them? Is it just crossing the border their final goal? What is going to happen if they arrive home in Chile? Will they finally understand where they “truly” belong? At this point, one can confirm that Chile is home only for Manuel, because, he argues, “you [only] belong in your rightful home” (18).

For Carolita, nonetheless, Vancouver continues to be home, “the magnetic North” where she wants to bring her “pieces of the South ... the land of the cherry blossom, where [her] Mom is” (114). Moreover, for Carolita, wanting to bring pieces of the South with her signifies her desire to hold on to her cultural roots and heritage despite being in a different environment. It reflects her yearning for a connection to her homeland, Chile, and an attempt to preserve a sense of familiarity and belonging amidst the experiences of exile and living in a new country. By carrying pieces of the South with her, Carolita seeks to maintain a connection to her identity and cultural identity while navigating the complexities of the Canadian borderlands. However, for Lupe, her indecision does not allow her to clearly express where home is.

To summarize, *Anywhere but Here* contextualizes contemporary migrant issues from the iconic site of migration and exile at the Mexican-US borderland. The different secondary characters that all members of the family encounter during their trip south, or while on the border between Mexico and the US, help Aguirre associate but also contrast the 1979 Chilean journey with major border issues in 2020, that is, to present awareness about a continuing struggle of migration and social norms in both temporalities. This contrast is also seen in the differences between the Chilean family and the secondary characters. While they all have the main goal, which is to cross the border, their intentions are very different. However, they all have something in common; their experience at the borderlands makes them all *compañeros de viaje*, questioning their circumstances while inquiring about their state of exile/migration. Like the experiences of these migrant characters, living abroad or in the borderlands implies that one can never fully escape the state of exile. This suggests that the sense of displacement and detachment from one’s native homeland remains, leaving a constant feeling of being in-between, even if physical borders are crossed or different geographic locations are inhabited. Once one goes into exile, one starts to experience the in-betweenness—that is, living in between two spaces—which results in having one’s memories starting to be formed out of one’s dual experiences and the interconnection between two (or more) cultures. It is this living in a borderland that

makes migrants and exiles not to have a precise principle about the meaning of one's home, or where home "really" is.

This is exactly how *Anywhere but Here* ends up helping us reflect on the consequences of living at the borderlands. At the end of the play, the last character to be introduced by the author is Virgen Mary, whose speech advises the Chilean family about their current situation trying to escape their state of exile in Canada. She suggests, "I am here to tell you ... that your weathered little yellow wooden house [in Chile] is with you... And [that] your white stucco house [in Vancouver] is [also] with you with its uncomfortable couch found abandoned in a west-side alley ... Your two houses are in your inner house ..." (137). This last intervention by this "superior image," suggests Manuel (136), endorses how Chilean migrants cannot escape their state of exile; instead, they will continue living in the in-betweenness. Both, their Chilean, and Vancouver houses define their individual and collective identities. The experiences of all four members of this Chilean family in exile have made them occupy a borderland space that makes them all become someone else. They all develop a new version of themselves out of experiencing the Canadian borderlands. As Latin Americans in exile, like Carolita's wishes, one carries one's own pieces of the South with oneself. Nonetheless, this living in exile, even while carrying one's important pieces from one's native culture with oneself, still could make people feel like Lupe in the play, who still by the end is characterized by her uncertainty about who she really is, or where she "really" belongs, "I know you are, but who am I?" —she reminds us (21). *Anywhere but Here* ends up offering its readers a reflection on the Chilean experience in exile and how this makes its characters develop into border subjects within a border narrative while communicating the similarities and differences between Latinas/os in Canada in juxtaposition with their contra parts in the United States.

3.7 Conclusion

... we can now suggest that transnational histories of migrants,
the colonized, or political refugees
—these border and frontier conditions
—may be the terrains of world literature.
—Homi K. Bhabha

Let us conclude by pointing out, from this epigraph, how *transnational histories of migrants*, like *Anywhere but Here* —a Chilean history of exile— contribute to our understanding of world transnational literature. For this study, Chilean Canadian literature informs us about an intercontinental story exemplified by dialogues of Latin Americans about living in exile in Canada. That is, such a narrative speaks about how exiled migrants occupy imaginary borderland spaces. As a result, according to Bhabha, the location of such border culture could not be other than hybridity. Hybridity is a unique characteristic of stories of the borderlands, and therefore, hybrid cultures and identities are the results of those who cross over to exile in Canada. In addition, exile as a postcolonial constructed concept allows us to reflect on how not only Chilean Canadians but also other exile/migrants (in Canada or any other territory) will result in hybrid consequences (as I will further explore in the following chapter).

In *Anywhere but Here*, even for Carolita, who has adopted Vancouver as home, there is the need to bring her native pieces of the South with her. These memories depict certain stories and feelings that reveal the meaning attached to her native land in Chile (even when these may only help her recall tears of fear). Carolita, furthermore, asks to be claimed by the South, “If I claim you, South, will you claim me too?” (90). This is an intervention that encircles the whole argument in this analysis; experiencing a state of exile makes migrants belong to different places at once. The living in-betweenness, in the *in-between* of cultures, is what characterizes Chilean Canadian and, by extension, Latina/o Canadian life experiences.

I have explored *Anywhere but Here* as a literary borderland narrative that depicts Latina/o migrants’ understanding of living in Canada as a diasporic minority group. The liminality that represents these characters’ trip to South America also illustrates Latina/o migrants’ consciousness in Canada. This is, therefore, a

characteristic of how hybrid Latina/o cultures and identities exist in the Americas today. Manuel, Lupe, Carolita, and Laura also characterize the Latina/o Canadian diaspora while shedding light on a hemispheric perspective of the Americas. That is, the protagonists in question actively contest the shaping of personal identities within the borderlands. When examined through a hemispheric lens, their experiences resonate with the cultural narratives of fellow Latina/o migrants in the United States. This is an approach that would need further exploration when considering the different socio-political values between Canada and the United States, and to observe how Latina/o migrants in the US differ from those in Canada.

Chilean migrant life experiences, the arrival to Canada in the 70s, their path of becoming someone else while in their process of being and belonging either to an “adopted” culture and society in Canada versus a “native” territory in Chile, must be relevant to the experiences of Latina/o migrant and exile members, comprising 6% of the total population of Canada. While some are eager to return to their homeland, others have incorporated into Canadian life. Nonetheless, the feeling of uncertainty about where one really belongs is what must speak to most Latina/o Canadians. Hybrid cultures and identities characterize Canadian *Latinidad* while a revised vision as presented in Aguirre’s work (contrasting 1979 with 2020) also allows audiences to recognize Chilean Canadians as a diaspora, or a minority community whose culture continues to construct the diverse Canadian culture in the present.

Chapter 4

Indigenous Mapuche Voices in Lina de Guevara's *Journey to Mapu: Performing Intersectionality while Decolonizing the Canadian Stage*

The Mapuche demand to be included, demand to be heard!

—Lautaro, *Journey to Mapu* (Guevara 2013)

This final chapter explores representational intersectionality in the Latina/o Canadian play, *Journey to Mapu* (2013) by Lina de Guevara. This play focuses on the dialogues between a Chilean/Mapuche protagonist and First Nations peoples' experiences, values, and beliefs in Canada while offering hemispheric, postcolonial, and decolonial viewpoints. Within this context, in this chapter I mainly examine how these interactions help its protagonist, Tato/Lautaro, to overcome the challenges of living in exile while questioning the meaning of Mapu (the spiritual home for the Mapuche) and ultimately, to accepting his Indigenous identity and advocating for the Mapuche people—as the epigraph suggests.²⁷ Upon his arrival in Canada, Tato, accompanied by his entire family, sought refuge from a history of violence that targeted his father—a victim of torture—within the context of Pinochet's dictatorship.

The objectives of this chapter align with the overarching thematic focus of this dissertation. This research is dedicated to examining Chilean Canadian literary works, serving as a representative facet of the broader spectrum of Latina/o Canadian literature. This analysis is particularly directed at English-language Chilean Canadian migration and exile narratives. Within this context, the study delves into the intricate portrayal of “home” and the profound sense of belonging, be it within the Canadian landscape or the protagonists' native Chilean milieu. In a way, Guevara's work goes beyond the construction of Latina/o Canadian cultures and identities, by incorporating

²⁷ For the Mapuche, an Indigenous group from Chile and Argentina, Mapu refers to the land that gives meaning to their “home” (or homeland) and therefore their culture and identity; from here the meaning to the word Mapu-che, where “-che” refers to people, the people from Mapu.

marginalized Indigenous voices and perspectives, ultimately challenging racism and promoting Indigenous representation in Canada.²⁸

In *Journey to Mapu*, the exploration of life experiences in exile extends beyond the Latino/a Canadian characters discussed in previous chapters. The play introduces Indigenous voices from Latin America and Canada, offering a platform to better comprehend the representation (or lack of representation) of racialized and diasporic groups in Canada. Through an English-language play, *Journey to Mapu* joins racialized communities, Indigenous groups from the Americas with stories and memories that infuse significance into the concept of a hemispheric Indigenous vision, with a focus on preserving Mapu, or Mother Earth in Mapuzungun, the Mapuche language spoken in Chile, and Argentina.

In this chapter, I make use of representational intersectionality as a framework to illustrate how certain dialogues between Latin American/Mapuche characters in the play with other First Nations peoples in Canada serve as a unified voice advocating for Indigenous communities of the Americas. Through the lens of an Indigenous Mapuche

²⁸ Lina de Guevara's community-based work and PUENTE Theatre's objectives hold immense significance in fostering inclusivity, cultural understanding, and social transformation through their initiative "creating bridges" ("Theater and Drama for Empowerment" 324). Through her tireless efforts, Guevara has successfully utilized theater as a powerful tool to bridge gaps between diverse communities, enabling individuals to share their stories, amplify their voices, and challenge social norms. PUENTE Theatre's objectives, guided by de Guevara's visionary leadership, prioritize the empowerment of marginalized groups, the promotion of intercultural dialogue, and the cultivation of empathy and respect among individuals from different backgrounds. This community-based approach not only nurtures a sense of belonging and pride but also fosters mutual understanding, social cohesion, and a deep appreciation for the richness of diversity which aligns with the Two-Eyed Seeing guiding principal that rules Indigenous values in Canada. By placing Indigenous members at the center of their work and encouraging active participation, Guevara and PUENTE Theatre have created a transformative platform that fosters social change, promotes cultural exchange, and celebrates the unique contributions of every individual in building a more inclusive Canadian society ("Theater and Drama for Empowerment").

protagonist's recollection of memories, the story explores the costs and benefits of migrants living in exile in Canada. Tato/Lautaro invites readers—including audiences during live performances—to imagine the impact of exile, but also to question how the interactions with other Indigenous Canadian peoples, cultures, and beliefs may aid him to transcend into an empowered Mapuche advocate. It is an intersection between Latina/o and Indigenous Mapuche stories, but also Mapuche and First Nations communities in Canada, which helps this protagonist—and the audience—to re-evaluate the meaning of “home” for Indigenous communities: that is, how does the recollection of Mapuche and First Nation stories, in contrast with Western views, express the meaning of a mystical “home” for this Indigenous exiled protagonist?

4.1 A Path to Awakening: Indigenous Coalition Across the Americas

As a Latina/o Canadian narrative of migration and exile, *Journey to Mapu* lets us appreciate a “trans-Indigenous” vision that connects Mapuche and First Nations groups as an Indigenous coalition of the Americas (Noell). *Journey to Mapu* first represents a Chilean Mapuche migrant as a “non-Indian,” Latin American protagonist whose experiences in exile and his recalling of his grandmother’s stories contribute to Tato/Lautaro’s awakening at the borderlands: that is, his transformation from being self-identified as non-Indigenous into an empowered Mapuche character. The meaning of this Mapuche character’s transformative arc intertwines with other Indigenous dialogues of the Americas. The play assumes a pivotal role in enabling the awareness of a trans-Indigenous presence, which from a hemispheric perspective, embodies a decolonial stance towards Indigenous cultures.²⁹

²⁹ Guevara, an actor, director, theatre instructor, and storyteller has made significant contributions to PUENTE Theatre in Victoria, BC, through the utilization of techniques such as Transformational Theatre, Theatre of the Oppressed, and Commedia dell'Arte. The primary mission of PUENTE theatre was to create and produce plays centered around diversity, the immigrant experience, and intercultural communication among racialized communities. With this overarching objective, PUENTE Theatre established various programs and workshops that focused on the narratives of marginalized individuals. Through the medium of theatre, these initiatives aimed to challenge and address the issues faced by

This narrative approach allows for a juxtaposition of the challenges faced by Latina/o individuals, as well as other racialized Indigenous groups from the Americas, highlighting the contrasting costs and implications of their respective journeys as exiles in Canada. Even more noteworthy is the intertwined significance of Mapu, later in the play it becomes the very symbol of all connections, the intra-Indigenous vision: Mapu not only signifies a geographical space as the “home” for the Mapuche, but also as a “mother” (or Mother Earth) from where “Our elders tell us that everything on earth is born as a beloved shoot of Mapu”—Lorena, a First Nations character states (372). This is a hemispheric, or trans-Indigenous approach that encircles and gives meaning to Indigenous visions and voices within the play, their cultures, and identities. Ultimately, from a decolonial perspective, as will be elaborated subsequently, Tato/Lautaro’s acknowledgment of his hybrid identity as a Latino/Chilean but more significantly, as an Indigenous/Mapuche character empowers him to advocate for the well-being of both Indigenous groups in Chile and Canada.

4.2 Insights from Dual Perspectives: The Two-Eyed Seeing Principle

Through an imagined return to Mapu, Tato/Lautaro begins to understand the connection between his Mapuche heritage and his grandmother’s hidden Indigenous Mapuche identity; while from a decolonial perspective, i.e., from the Two-Eyed Seeing, an indigenous guiding principle, the audience better understands the significance of the representation of Indigenous groups from Chile and Canada as a hemispheric unison.³⁰ The dialogues of Indigenous characters end up being the voice

these communities. In this context, Transformational Theatre workshops were integrated with the aim of fostering both personal and social transformation (Linadeguevara). It is through this transformative endeavor and its associated awakening process that the storytelling in *Journey to Mapu* finds its essence.

³⁰ The principle of Two-Eyed Seeing, introduced by Albert Marshall in 2004, serves as a guiding framework addressing environmental concerns among Mi’kmaw Elders in Unama’ki-Cape Breton, Nova Scotia, Canada. Although primarily employed to facilitate comprehension of the coexistence of Western and Indigenous philosophies within the realm of science and foster a more thoughtful approach

of First Nations/Mapuche individuals which, in contrast to Western principles, reflects Indigenous visions and values. Such a representation takes on significance in the following character pairings: mainly young Tato and adult Lautaro, but also Tato and Lorena, Tato and Jack, Lorena and Machi, and Tato /Lautaro's Grandmother and Lorena. Then echoing Tato/Lautaro's identity and cultural transformation, there is also another character who experiences a similar change in the play: Jack, a "stereotypical drunken Indian" who transforms into a renowned "Master storyteller and later, a dignified Mapuche elder" —as Guevara offers in her introduction (355).

The recalling of Mapuche/Indigenous events benefits *Journey to Mapu* by creating dialogues from where audiences can observe both Indigenous and non-Indigenous characters, challenging racism, and stereotypes, and promoting (but also denying) Indigenous representation in Canada. Playwright Lina de Guevara's collaborative work, therefore, contributes to the construction of Latina/o Canadian cultures and identities (or *Latinidad*), emphasizing the need to decolonize the Canadian stage by incorporating marginalized Indigenous voices, and their co-existence within the Two-Eyed Seeing perspectives.

By addressing the narratives of exiled Indigenous Mapuche alongside the perspectives of First Nations in Canada, Guevara plays a pivotal role in constructing an imaginary that encompasses both Latina/o and Indigenous identities across the Americas. The significance of Tato/Lautaro's *journey* to Mapu and his pursuit of an imaginary "home" (in Chile) emphasizes the need to further study Latina/o Canadian literature of migration and exile in this chapter. Exploring how Tato/Lautaro distinguishes himself from other Latina/o Canadian characters serves as a valuable starting point for this discussion. Ultimately, it is through the presentation of an Indigenous Mapuche protagonist navigating the evolving meaning of "home" (in Latin

to environmental issues, in this analysis, it is interpreted as a principle emphasizing coexistence and interconnectedness.

America, in Canada, or overlapped on Mother Earth) that the Latina/o Canadian imaginary is reconstructed.

Once again, *Journey to Mapu*, and the noteworthy contributions of Lina de Guevara as a Latina/o Canadian playwright, hold significant collective value for this analysis. Guevara effectively incorporates Indigenous oral histories, derived from workshops, and interviews with Latin American migrants and First Nation peoples in British Columbia, as well as translations of Indigenous poems by Mapuche poet Elikura Chihuailaf Nahuelpan. These elements come together to construct a theatrical and decolonial imaginary that intertwines revitalized voices of Latina/o Mapuche individuals alongside First Nations cultures. Moreover, such an imaginary is represented in contrast to Western views, bringing to the front a coexisting value, that is, how Indigenous members of a society can learn from Western values and cultures, and vice versa. By doing so, Guevara presents a hemispheric perspective that prompts audiences to reflect not only on local Indigenous visions but also on the broader Western context of the Americas. This perspective perceives America not merely as a geographical space but also as a hemispheric realm, where cultures converge, Indigenous alliances form, and marginalized voices advocate for justice in preserving Mapu and their respective ethnicities, histories, and beliefs.

4.3 A Renewed Latina/o Experience in Canada: Exploring Identity, Belonging, and Representation

Lina de Guevara's notable play *Journey to Mapu* is featured in the anthology *Fronteras Vivientes: Eight Latina/o Canadian Plays*, edited by Natalie Alvarez (2013). Recognized for its significance, this work was acknowledged within the collaborative research project because it explores how Canadian theatre addresses themes of race, diversity, and inclusion (Staging Equality). Guevara, having directed many of her plays under the PUENTE Theatre in Victoria B.C. (1988-2011), specialized in Transformational Theatre, Theatre of the Oppressed, and Commedia dell'Arte. Her directorial debut at PUENTE Theatre was with *I Wasn't Born Here* in 1988, which highlighted the stories of migrant women from Latin America. Throughout her career,

Guevara directed several intending to represent other racialized groups. Of particular significance for this study is Carmen Aguirre's *Chile con Carne*.

Lina de Guevara's collaborative efforts with marginalized groups from Latin America and Canada are significant, particularly exemplified in *Journey to Mapu* (2013), a play featured in this study. Initiated as a workshop series in 2005 by PUENTE Theatre in Victoria, B.C., this play "encourage[s] First Nations and local immigrated Latin American individuals to explore the relationship between these two populations" (Noell 351). Drawing on her expertise in Theater of the Oppressed, Guevara extended the collaboration by engaging First Nations playwright and director Floyd Favel for contributions in the final draft of the play. This effort continues PUENTE's tradition of representing marginalized and immigrant experiences in Canada, including the Two-Eyed Seeing guiding principle that helps First Nation peoples to address the significance of approaching learning and teaching from two perspectives and values, First Nation's tradition, and Western viewpoints.³¹ Notably, the play delves into co-existing Indigenous social matters by stressing such a notorious Two-Eyed Seeing guiding principle, but also the works of Mapuche poet Elikura Chihauilaf, recently recognized with the National Literature Award 2020.

Journey to Mapu presents another type of experience of a Latina/o Canadian community in exile in Canada, which, viewed through the lens of Indigenous Mapuche visions, further enriches the imaginary framework that characterizes Latina/o Canadians as a diaspora in Canada. In addition, Tato/Lautaro explores an "imagined" return to South America, distinct from the physical return examined in the previous case of Aguirre's *Anywhere but Here* (2021) in chapter three, where the protagonists literally travel by car on a trip from Vancouver towards Latin America. In *Journey to Mapu*, through Tato/Lautaro's memories, audiences gain insight into the recollection of Chilean and Indigenous Mapuche stories, wherein Tato/Lautaro reimagines,

³¹ Two-Eyed Seeing is the guiding principle brought into the Integrative Science co-learning journey by Mi'kmaw Elder Albert Marshall in Fall 2004.

revalues, and reappropriates these Indigenous Mapuche narratives, traditions, and identities from his “home” in Chile; and one may also question whether it is the cultural exchanges that Tato/Lautaro experiences with other Indigenous peoples in Canada that contribute to his imagined return to a “home” in Latin America. Moreover, the embracing of his Indigenous Mapuche identity empowers Tato/Lautaro to navigate xenophobia in Canada and to embrace his authentic Indigenous self, leveraging his identity as both Latino/a and Indigenous Mapuche. This chapter continues to understand identity, a sense of belonging, and representation from a renewed perspective by delving into the nuanced experiences depicted in *Journey to Mapu*. Through the lens of Indigenous Mapuche visions, the play offers insights into the unique experiences of the Latina/o Canadian community in exile in Canada. Through such exploration, ultimately, this study sheds light on the complexities of cultural exchange and individual empowerment within diasporic communities, as I further develop below.

4.4 Surveying the Methodological Approach

While conducting my analysis in this chapter, I draw insights from the works of Noell and Alvarez, aiming to expand on the themes of living borders and hemispheric perspectives, but under the umbrella of representational intersectionality (Crenshaw; Lutz). The objective is to highlight the ongoing development of a Latina/o Canadian, and yet also Indigenous identity in Canada while critically examining discourses that challenge both postcolonial and decolonial perspectives. In Alvarez’s anthology *Fronteras Vivientes* (2013a), where *Journey to Mapu* is published, Noell introduces the play approaching Guevara’s work through the lenses of border studies, international relations, and postcolonial literary theory to illustrate the fluidity of borders, cultures, and identities (348). Noell argues that Tato/Lautaro’s memories confront questions regarding identity, nationalism, historiography, a sense of place, and indigeneity, thereby inviting scholars to consider “border crossing” as a framework for understanding post/modernity within transnational, transcultural, and transindigenous contexts (348-9). Noell also introduces the term “trans-Indigenous,” borrowed from Allen Chadwick’s Transnational Native American Studies to advocate

for a global perspective when examining Indigenous literature and arts instead of a solely local lens (349).

Utilizing representational intersectionality, along with Lutz's analysis of "Intersectionality as a Method" (2015), I aim to broaden hemispheric perspectives and highlight the representation of racialized individuals engaged in postcolonial/decolonial dialogues about their experiences shaped by class and race. Representational intersectionality is crucial in this analysis as it proves value to a multi-level examination. One facet involves the protagonist's duality young Tato-and-adult-Lautaro, delving into how his self-perception and dialogues mirror an intersectional experience. Simultaneously, it urges us, both as readers and critics, to explore what Lutz refers to as "the other question" of analysis, for instance, how does this protagonist manage to transcend experiences of exile within the framework of Canada's history of racism, while also acknowledging the persisting stereotyping directed at Indigenous peoples.³² Lutz highlights representational intersectionality's efficacy in unveiling different levels of analysis and power dynamics across social practices, institutions, and cultural depictions, but also within further focus on, for example, in this case, racism, and stereotyping. Lutz argues that it is essential to begin by critically examining the categories that initially come to the forefront (40). Consequently, as I continue along this line of inquiry, I investigate narratives within the play, specifically those focusing on the experiences of Tato/Lautaro and other Indigenous characters. These narratives shed light on their life experiences and explore the intricate intersectionality of race and class in their processes of identity construction. Additionally, I investigate how Guevara embodies intersectionality to depict the convergence of her protagonist with other Indigenous visions and perspectives, while also delving into themes addressing racism, stereotyping, and the dynamics of social inclusion and exclusion. While social inclusion and exclusion

³² Lutz's approach builds upon Matsuda's analysis, where the presence of racism prompts "the other question" — "Where is the patriarchy in this?" —, and the observation of sexism leads to asking, "Where is the heterosexism in this?" (qtd. in Lutz, 40).

function as a theme of racism and stereotyping, I am especially looking at racism in connections with race/ethnicity and class-related instances of intersectionality.

In *Journey to Mapu*, the diverse dialogues between young Tato and adult Lautaro, but also with other Indigenous characters serve to challenge social and political perspectives on Indigenous peoples within a modern, postcolonial Canadian context. My focus, thus, lies on examining how *Journey to Mapu* represents racialized Indigenous voices, thereby creating a space for the expression of these historically misrepresented dialogues. Through her play, Guevara establishes a postcolonial and decolonial framework that re-establishes and re-values Mapuche and First Nations cultures, stories, and beliefs. Guevara's decolonial representation offers audiences a hemispheric perspective that conveys overlapping experiences of resistance and survival. While the racialized characters may initially appear as oppressed individuals, Guevara provides them with a space within *Journey to Mapu* where they resist being unseen, as demonstrated by Tato/Lautaro's journey (365).

After this introduction, the structure of what follows is employing: First, positioning *Journey to Mapu* within the broader landscape of Latina/o Canadian literature and its engagement with hemispheric views and the inclusion of marginalized voices (4.5). This landscape aims to draw connections with Latina/o Canadian works like Verdecchia's *Fronteras Americanas* (1997/2013), and Saravia's *Lettres de Nootka* (2008). The positioning of *Journey to Mapu* within this context showcases how these literary works share thematic concerns in Latina/o representation, establishing a foundation for further exploration of Guevara's Indigenous representation. This contextualization is extended to encompass Alvarez's theater and performance anthologies (2013a; 2013b), underscoring the scholarly conversation surrounding the integration of marginalized narratives within the framework of "border crossing" and "hemispheric perspectives" respectfully. Second, I highlight the unique importance of Guevara's collaborative approach in involving Indigenous voices within *Journey to Mapu*. My approach aims to show that the representation of Indigenous voices in this play should not be perceived as appropriation, but rather as a collaborative endeavor (4.6). The collaborative work by

Lina de Guevara, and her inclusion of Mapuche and First Nation visions, and in contrast to Western views, follows Canadian First Nation's efforts to understand Indigenous/Western co-existence and interconnectedness. Therefore, this foregrounds the play's unique contribution to the discourse on cultural representation and inclusivity. In addition, this is a collaborative effort that challenges the postcolonial idea of representing racialized minorities. Finally, the concluding section of this chapter (4.7) unfolds in accordance with the play's coherent progression. It initiates with an introduction that lays the groundwork for the subsequent analyses. I start by closely examining the character development of the central protagonist, Tato/Lautaro, with a focus on representational intersectionality. Simultaneously, inspired by Lutz's insights, the analysis critically explores issues of racism and stereotyping in this analysis. In other words, my secondary analysis helps us to approach inquiries about racism, for example, but then also look for how class and gender may come into play. Moreover, I will address major sections in the play where *Journey to Mapu* intersects the different Indigenous visions in contrast to Western views. By engaging with this multifaceted structure, the chapter systematically unravels the intricate layers of intra-Indigenous dialogues, underscoring the playwright's commitment to presenting diverse voices and narratives. Ultimately, in this final chapter of my dissertation, I inquire how the development of a Latina/o Canadian literary field and the live performances of Latina/o plays, such as *Journey to Mapu*, contribute to the decolonization of the Canadian stage by assuming principles to contrast Western and Indigenous visions and values.

4.5 *Journey to Mapu* within Latina/o Canadian Theatre and Performance

In this section, as first presented in chapter three, I observe the significance of *Journey to Mapu* within the context of two Latina/o Canadian theatre and performance anthologies (Alvarez 2013a; Alvarez 2013b), and two well-known Latina/o Canadian literary texts, the play *Fronteras Americanas (American Borders)* (1997/2013) by Guillermo Verdecchia, and the "Lettres de Nootka" in Alejandro Saravia's collection of poems (2008).

Journey to Mapu represents a trans-Indigenous community and therefore, contributes to the imaginary of Canadian *Latinidad* from a hemispheric perspective. Through these dialogues, I argue that postcolonial and neocolonial discussions emerge. Featured in Alvarez's first collection (*Fronteras Vivientes* 2013a), *Journey to Mapu* goes beyond mere representation of the Latina/o cultural imaginary. Lina de Guevara, displaying a profound dedication to her artistic and collaborative work, contains the perspectives of racialized Indigenous peoples both, from South America and First Nations communities. In a decolonial endeavor, by observing the marginalization of such Latina/o voices, particularly those belonging to the Mapuche culture, and by extension, First Nations peoples in Canada, I summarize here the insights of Alvarez and other critics found in her relevant literary works. This summary aims to illustrate how like Latina/o Canadian playwrights in *Fronteras Vivientes*, Guevara nurtures a theatrical culture that emerges from the "realities" (or imagined realities) constructed by Indigenous protagonists. Through her work, these playwrights offer compelling narratives rooted in their life experiences of "transnational migration" and "border crossings" (Alvarez, *Fronteras* iii). Guevara, in her commitment to community collaboration, brings visibility to Latina/o histories, cultures, and identities through theater, reflecting the experiences of immigrants and diverse minorities (Linadeguevara). Guevara's production of *Journey to Mapu* goes beyond portraying Latina/o Canadian migration, as it incorporates the voices of Indigenous peoples. This demonstrates Guevara's dedicated research and her efforts to renew the Latina/o Canadian imaginary and the theatrical tradition of migration and exile by including protagonists from Indigenous groups.

Guevara's trans-Indigenous vision, which embodies socio-political and cultural challenges faced by Indigenous collectives throughout the Americas, functions as a pivotal aspect of the decolonial framework. Through such a trans-Indigenous vision, Guevara's work addresses the challenges of border living and hemispheric perspectives, aiming to overcome Indigenous/Latina/o misrepresentation within multicultural Canada and its literary canon. This allows Indigenous voices to assert legitimacy and agency within Latina/o cultures and identities. *Journey to Mapu* aligns

with this approach, offering a hemispheric perspective on Indigenous cultures and identities, adding to the literary production of migration and exile in Latina/o Canadian works.

Furthermore, by situating *Journey to Mapu* within the context of two prominent Latina/o Canadian works—Guillermo Verdecchia’s renowned play *Fronteras Americanas* (1997/2013) and Alejandro Saravia’s poem “Lettres de Nootka” (2008)—we can grasp the importance of Tato/Lautaro’s transformative journey in relation to the hemispheric and Indigenous perspectives previously explored by these two authors in the Latina/o Canadian context. By infusing Indigenous narratives and cultures with a revitalized Latina/o hemispheric viewpoint, Guevara reintroduces a rejuvenated Mapuche/Indigenous voice that embodies a broader perspective on how Mapu (Mother Earth) came into existence. Like Verdecchia’s *Fronteras Americanas* which originally challenged the concept of *Latinidad* in contrast to other Latina/o groups in the Americas, Guevara also recognizes the fluidity of Latina/o Canadian culture and identities, which from an Indigenous Mapuche perspective, resonates with First Nations views and Indigenous cultures of the Americas.

Moreover, in *Journey to Mapu*, Guevara emphasizes the importance of considering other individuals who come from various corners of the globe, but also those who were here first, our Indigenous ancestors. Like *Fronteras Americanas*, the original iconic play that demonstrates the significance of representing marginalized Latina/o voices on the Canadian stage (and featured in *Fronteras Vivientes*, Alvarez 2013a, previously analyzed), *Journey to Mapu* also urges us (readers and critics) to contemplate those who have been overlooked and to take into account their individual life stories. *Journey to Mapu* represents a hemispheric imaginary that *considers* those other racialized Indigenous “minorities” whose life experiences depict similar postcolonial situations such as Latina/o/Mapuche migrants and Indigenous First Nations in Canada. By doing so, as argued before, following Noell’s opinions, Guevara ends up creating a “trans-Indigenous” or hemispheric imaginary of the Americas: Latina/o/Mapuche and First Nations becoming a single in-flux culture sharing not only spiritual points of view, as to how Mapu (Mother Earth) in

Mapuzungun) was created, but also how some characters in the play represent hybrid Indigenous people such as Jack.

Within the context of situating Indigenous perspectives and their portrayal in Latina/o Canadian literary works, it's crucial to underline the importance of positioning Indigenous voices as the primary inhabitants of the Americas. Similar to *Journey to Mapu*, in “Lettres de Nootka” (2008), authored by Alejandro Saravia, a Canadian of Bolivian descent, the narrative delves into the initial encounters among Latin Americans, Europeans, and Indigenous communities in Canada. Nootka, now known as Vancouver Island, serves as the ancestral land of the native inhabitants, symbolizing, in the context of these two Latina/o Canadian texts, a terrain where Indigenous cultures were initially comprehended through a unified vision of the Americas. To illustrate, in *Journey to Mapu*, the voice of Jack, a First Nation Canadian character introduces such a story, explaining how Indigenous peoples in Canada may also have Chilean blood (377-9). As previously discussed, akin to other works within the realm of Latina/o Canadian literature, *Journey to Mapu* also follows the narrative approach of incorporating marginalized perspectives. This choice by the playwright extends an invitation to the audience to envision an inclusive and collective storyline, where the notion of “home” for Indigenous communities emerges as a universal realm connecting all peoples whose ancestors have been native to the Americas.

In this context, similar to Verdecchia's reclamation *we are all Americans*, which explores the intersectional Toronto/Tierra del Fuego territory, Guevara's journey to Mapu (i.e., rediscovering Mapu) invites us to consider incorporating Canada into the broader understanding of the American hemisphere (Adams, “The Northern Borderlands” 315). Moreover, in Verdecchia's *Fronteras Americanas*, the protagonist Verdecchia/Wideloader embodies a dual identity (an intersectional or hybridized identity) as a Latino migrant, but also a Chicano, residing in the Canadian borderlands. This intersectionality shapes his unique identity as an “Argentin-Canadien!” character (103), derived from Guillermo Verdecchia's own understandings as a migrant and life experiences at the borderlands. The interplay of these overlapped identities leads Verdecchia/Wideloader to proclaim the Canadian borderlands in Toronto

as his true home, stating, “I’m on the Border. I am Home... Je suis Argentin-Canadien! I am a post-Porteño neo-Latino Canadian! I am the Pan-American Highway!” (*Fronteras Americanas* 2013, 103). This embrace of dual or hyphenated identity as a multicultural resident of the Canadian borderland in Toronto is facilitated by the character’s intersectionality while exposing discourses on racialization and stereotyping.

Like Verdecchia’s iconic play, Guevara’s work, also through an intersectionality approach, offers us the opportunity to study the duality of Latina/o/Mapuche identities, a duality now also intertwined with First Nations cultures. In this way, throughout the analysis of Tato/Lautaro and the overlapped stories of other Indigenous characters, *Journey to Mapu* proposes a further perspective of Latina/o Canadian *Latinidad*. These observations lead to the following subsection, where the focus shifts to Guevara’s community-driven work as a Chilean Canadian playwright, theater director, and critic, emphasizing her commitment to representing marginalized voices in the Americas.

4.6 Lina de Guevara’s Community-Driven Work

In this section, I aim to demonstrate that the representation of Indigenous voices in Guevara’s *Journey to Mapu* should not be seen as appropriation, but rather as a collaborative effort that challenges misconceptions of “speaking for” racialized minorities. By referencing Spivak’s analysis on subalternity and subaltern representation, I adopt a position that opposes the idea of appropriating Indigenous voices. Indeed, Guevara, as a committed Chilean Canadian researcher, engages in what Spivak herself calls “benefit-sharing” (“Scattered Speculations”) by interviewing Latin Americans, and First Nations peoples in Canada, and taking inspiration from the works of the Mapuche poet Elikura Chihuailaf Nahuelpan. Moreover, as mentioned before, Guevara’s collaborative work demonstrates new forms of representation that take cues from what Albert Marshall calls a guiding principle that teaches us how to co-exist in the world, bringing together values from both Indigenous and Western communities. Drawing from Spivak’s perspective, and the Indigenous Two-Eyed Seeing principle, I contend that Guevara’s portrayal of trans-Indigenous views in *Journey to Mapu* offers

a renewed globalized perspective, disputing postcolonial concerns with respect to the possible appropriation of Indigenous cultures and the potential *speaking on behalf of* racialized minorities that instructs us on coexisting in the world, incorporating learnings from both Indigenous and Western values.

Again, Guevara collaborates with minority racialized individuals such as Latin Americans and First Nations peoples to communicate marginalized stories. “*Journey to Mapu* started as a workshop series in 2006 with PUENTE Theater ... to provide a bridge for the voices of immigrants and other minorities to a variety of audiences in Canada” (Noell 351). In this context, these workshops encouraged First Nations and Latin American migrants “to explore the relationships between the two populations” where participants told their stories, and “actors develop them into scenarios” (Noell 351). Although I do not explore if, or how Indigenous actors may have been involved (or not) in performing *Journey to Mapu* on Anglo-Canadian stages, because such information is not available, it is worth noting that Guevara draws inspiration from firsthand workshops on storytelling involving both First Nations people and Latina/o immigrants in Victoria, BC, in order to craft the play (Linadeguevara).

Moreover, “A 2010 Canada Council grant funded a workshop led by acclaimed First Nations playwright, actor, and director Floyd Favel, which resulted in the published version of the play” included in Alvarez’s anthology (Noel 351). The involvement of an Indigenous director in Guevara’s work significantly contributes to the interrogation of the practice of “appropriating” Indigenous narratives. Guevara works in collaboration with Favel, and their contribution with marginalized groups of migrants and exiles makes this play a unique representation of Indigenous and cultural diversity in Canada. In addition, by involving an Indigenous director in the final draft of the play, Guevara ensures that the storytelling process is infused with faithful stories in the part of First Nations perspectives and experiences. This collaboration allows for a more respectful and accurate representation of Indigenous cultures, as it draws on the expertise and lived knowledge of individuals from within Latin American and First Nations communities. As an Indigenous director, Favel brings his deep understanding of cultural protocols, traditions, and histories to the creative process, which helps to

safeguard against the appropriation or misrepresentation of Indigenous stories. Favel's involvement fosters a more inclusive and equitable approach to storytelling, where Indigenous voices are not only heard but also given agency in the interpretation and presentation of their own narratives. Furthermore, the participation of an Indigenous director serves as a powerful mechanism for challenging the dominant narratives and power structures that have historically marginalized Indigenous perspectives.

Moreover, taking cues from the Two-Eyed Seeing guiding principle embraced by Indigenous cultures, this analysis extends beyond scientific principles; one method for comparing knowledge between Indigenous and Western traditions is the distinction between “weaving” and “un-weaving,” of knowledge. In the Indigenous context, weaving goes beyond the manual creation of items such as blankets, shawls, sashes, capes, leggings, etc. It encompasses the practice of weaving together traditions and knowledge to transmit values to younger generations. Conversely, from a Western perspective, un-weaving involves the ability to comprehend—environmental—knowledge through analytical logic, the utilization of instruments and methodologies, and the cognitive reconstruction of patterns using mathematical and computer models. The integration of these two perspectives—Indigenous weaving and Western un-weaving—serves as an analogy for understanding how the practice of postcolonial writing “weaves” the transmission of Indigenous values; while Western theatrical techniques can be seen as the analytical structures that help *Journey to Mapu* to communicate such Indigenous learning. That is, from this Indigenous perspective of Two-Eyed Seeing, this analogy strengthens its significance due to the co-existence of both Indigenous and Western teachings.

In this vein, in 2021, *Journey to Mapu* was staged as a collaborative research project exploring race, diversity, and inclusion in theatre (“Staging Equality”). Ultimately, while there is, of course, a history of this type of appropriation by outsiders, in *Journey to Mapu*, Guevara disrupts the notion of outsiders “adopting” Indigenous stories and instead promotes an empowering collaboration that elevates the visions and experiences of Indigenous people in contrast with Western views. Through this collaborative approach, Guevara's work not only challenges the problematic

practice of appropriation but also fosters a more authentic and meaningful engagement with Indigenous stories, ultimately contributing to a more accurate and respectful representation of Indigenous cultures on the theatrical stage.

Within these reflections, I posit that Guevara's portrayal of Latina/o Mapuche culture may be seen as a decolonial act, as it highlights the interconnection of Mapuche culture with other Indigenous groups in the Americas. Through the character of Tato/Lautaro, the play engages with colonial and postcolonial accounts of racism and stereotyping in Canada. Guevara, nonetheless, contributes to a renewed racialized imaginary that seeks to challenge misrepresentation and acknowledges the Indigenous perspectives in Canada's imaginary, and within Canadian *Latinidad*. For adult Lautaro, the Canadian stage serves him to reflect on his own racialized identity, how he merges his life experiences with the diverse narratives of other minorities in Canada, and advocate for a more inclusive Canadian stage. In a context of exile, *Journey to Mapu* portrays the "challenges [young] Tato faces upon [his] arrival ... as well as the friendship and understanding encountered from Indigenous communities in what he considers his new home. The play explores how building cultural bridges "*enables justice for all cultures* and the preservation of Mapu" ("Staging Equality," emphasis added). In this vein, from this quote, Guevara also aims for her audience to see this play as enabling justice for Indigenous cultures. Moreover, Guevara's hemispheric perspective allows her to create cultural bridges between different Indigenous traditions with Western values to enable not only justice as presented in the last quote, but visibility and agency as well. As part of the current reconciliation efforts to incorporate Indigenous (and Black) racialized minority groups in Canadian stages, Guevara represents both Mapuche and First Nations communities as racialized groups, focusing on the injustices, and reflecting transnational protests and discrimination against Indigenous peoples of the Americas.

To summarize, *Journey to Mapu* creates a space for enunciation in which racialized minority groups express their life experiences, because, as a decolonialized space, the Anglo-Canadian stage now empowers marginalized voices, allowing them to reclaim their native Indigenous cultures, identities, and traditions. Through the lens

of representational intersectionality, I observe how Guevara, as a playwright, chooses to portray Tato/Lautaro as a protagonist who embraces his Chilean Mapuche heritage. Furthermore, I explore how Tato/Lautaro's hybridized identity enables him to transcend racialization in Canada. This analysis takes form at the connection of voices and dialogues; therefore, I discuss how Tato/Lautaro's identity intertwines with First Nation characters in Canada, which makes *Journey to Mapu*, a narrative thereby advocating for other Indigenous groups both from Chile and Canada.

4.7 Representing Indigenous Intersectionality in Guevara's Journey to Mapu

Journey to Mapu serves as a narrative that guides audiences through immersive explorations across diverse temporal and geographical dimensions. This narrative shifts between distinct timeframes, spanning from 1990s Vancouver to the contemporary era, bridging the realms of a postcolonial Canada and Latin America. *Mapu*, in this sense, is first envisioned as the imagined space of origin for Mapuche stories. As other characters analyzed in this dissertation, young Tato came to Canada at such an age, with his whole family, as they were fleeing from a history of violence towards his father (who was tortured) in the context of Pinochet's dictatorship. Within the play, Tato/Lautaro presents migrant memories that mirror his personal experiences in Canadian exile, intricately woven with Indigenous Canadian narratives, voices, and beliefs. These recollections reflect Lautaro's identity evolution, transforming him from a young "non-Indian" Tato to an adult Lautaro, an activist campaigning for Mapuche human rights. Lautaro's identity, shaped by his Chilean exile, having arrived in Canada during the post-1973 Chilean era, is further influenced by the interplay between Mapuche and First Nations stories, challenging both colonial and postcolonial perspectives, and attesting to how in exile, one can learn from the contact and values of other communities. This interplay molds young Tato and adult Lautaro's identities while illustrating their harmonized bi-cultural and hybrid nature.

From the start, *Journey to Mapu* unfolds as an adult Lautaro reflects on his youth as a young Tato. His stories narrate the transformative journey of a Chilean migrant in Canada seeking self-discovery and integration into his new Canadian life, a

narrative emblematic of migrant Latina/o imagination in exile. Like other Latin American migrants, Tato/Lautaro confronts socio-cultural and political challenges shaping his personal and cultural spheres. For example, he negotiates being classified as “Indian” rather than Latin American due to cultural nuances. Flashbacks transition his stories into reflections, as adult Lautaro examines his early life as an inexperienced political exile. Oscillating between past experiences and his current activist role exposes Tato/Lautaro’s conflicting ideologies. To illustrate, I explore how young Tato perceived Indigenous Mapuche people as uncivilized, in contrast to adult Lautaro, who had learned to embrace his Mapuche identity. *Journey to Mapu* challenges the visibility-invisibility dichotomy, illustrating that truly “seeing” Lautaro as an Indigenous person leads Manitobans to value his advocacy for Indigenous Mapuche groups (359). This captures the Indigenous perspective of the Two-Eyed Seeing guiding principle that was presented before, in the sense that a single dual character symbolizes the viewpoints of both Western and Indigenous values towards cultural representation. To illustrate, Tato presents his young perspective on Mapuche people, explaining that “The Indians in Chile ... [were] part of our history past ... They are very good people, but they need help, to be brought to civilization ... My father always said: The Mapuche must be brought into the twentieth century,” to what adult Lautaro responds, “I was a confused and scared kid” (366). This play, therefore, exemplifies colonial, postcolonial, and decolonial viewpoints, inviting audiences to grasp the significance of young Tato’s colonial view, and adult Lautaro’s awakening. This last example not only portrays the Latina/o experience but also underscores the misrepresentation of Indigenous/Mapuche culture. Various pairs of characters aid the audience in comprehending such an Indigenous misrepresentation, including interactions among other Indigenous characters like those between young Tato and Lorena, Tato and Jack, Lorena and Machi, and Tato/Lautaro’s Grandmother and Lorena. The depiction of this intersectionality between Indigenous Mapuche and First Nations narratives in the play, furthermore, serves as a catalyst for both the main protagonist and the audience to critically reevaluate and challenge colonial and postcolonial perspectives regarding racialization and Indigenous stereotypes. This

process cultivates a heightened awareness, as I will illustrate in the forthcoming analysis.

To enhance the representation of these pairs of characters and visions, in *Journey to Mapu*, Guevara employs a contrasting scene-by-scene approach, consistently highlighting the intersectionality among characters. As we will perceive in my forthcoming analysis, Guevara employs this consistent pattern throughout the play; she juxtaposes scenes, perpetually highlighting the interconnections among characters—mainly young Tato and adult Lautaro, but also Tato and Lorena, Tato and Jack, Lorena and Machi, Tato/Lautaro’s Grandmother and Lorena—as they play, for example, in the scenes featuring a hockey game or basketball players against the backdrop of the sociopolitical experiences of Indigenous communities. This narrative technique underscores the pervasive theme of intersectionality, allowing for a nuanced exploration of character dynamics and cultural amalgamation. Furthermore, this technique aids audiences in anticipating the importance of reconciling values and highlighting potential strengths (Two-Eyed Seeing principle). When the Indigenous perspective imparts a sense of awareness and knowledge to other characters as well as the audience, Western intersections also contribute value in fostering coexistence within postcolonial spaces, such as Canada, for example.

The trajectory of Tato/Lautaro’s identity re-formation and exile path unfolds as a compelling narrative thread. Nonetheless, in the play’s conclusion, Tato/Lautaro’s transformative arc culminates in a profound realization of his distinct individuality (380). Yet, the initial scenes of the play reveal an alternative facet of Tato’s journey, characterized by an unresolved conflict of identity. This juncture of the narrative is enriched by the presence of Tato’s memories about his grandmother’s oral traditions intricately linked to the Mapuche culture, running in parallel with insights from other Indigenous characters intertwined into the narrative. This interweaving of indigenous perspectives aids Tato/Lautaro in recognizing his inherent identity and fostering a realization and acknowledgment of his Mapuche heritage, which then extends to empowering broader First Nations cultures and beliefs.

Again, through an examination of the dynamics of power shared between the Mapuche and First Nations communities, this analysis employs the lens of intersectionality to portray these two racially marginalized groups as integral parts of a larger hemispheric Indigenous collective. By delving into their interwoven narratives and the symbolism of “home,” a deeper comprehension of the notion of Latina/o Canadian identity emerges within the expansive realm of hemispheric Indigenous cultures. In the capacity of a tale of endurance, *Journey to Mapu* stands as a representation of the experiences of Latina/o and Indigenous migrants. As a merged entity of Latino/migrant/Mapuche identities, Tato/Lautaro firmly asserts his agency within the migrant context, and despite confronting persistent reminders of his “race” and “class,” he ultimately emerges as an enlightened and empowered Mapuche individual.

The first scene, then, presents adult Lautaro imagining a socio-political context that “reveal[s] the deep familiar ties motivating [his] activism for Chile’s Indigenous Mapuche, which becomes tethered to questions concerning land claims and social justice for Canadian First Nations” (Alvarez, *Fronteras* xxvi). The audience comes to understand that Lautaro’s activism is deeply rooted in his experiences as an exiled Chilean in Canada. This connection also serves to highlight the interconnectedness between issues faced by First Nations communities and ongoing land disputes in Canada (Guevara 359).

During Lautaro’s first intervention, the audience realizes how the protagonist starts using his intersectionality to empower himself as an Indigenous Mapuche. Lautaro states, during a conversation over the phone with people from a reserve in Manitoba who do not want to meet: “Once they see me, I know it’s going to be all right ... I bet I’ll get plenty of time with them!” (359). It is this “seeing” (or lack of being seen) that helps audiences to start questioning the intersectionality of the protagonist. The other question about how Lautaro is “seen” or represented in the play depicts his hybrid Indigenous/Mapuche identity. This characteristic aligns with the representation of Latina/o migrant culture in Canada, which Latina/o Canadian playwrights have begun to prioritize to provide visibility and representation for these

marginalized communities (as discussed in the introduction). This increased presence on the Canadian stage serves to challenge preconceived notions and offer a platform for these underrepresented groups. This presence is illustrated by the changes in Tato/Lautaro's character because, when he arrived in Canada, he "was too embarrassed to open [his] mouth, [he] didn't want anybody to see [him]" (384). The embracing of his Mapuche identity, therefore, becomes the force that helps him to advocate, and be vocal for his Mapuche community. Nonetheless, when he first came to Canada, Lautaro states, "I remember wishing I were like [tía Rosario who] never talked to people" (374). It is through the intersectionality of this character that Tato/Lautaro is able to overcome his initial timidity as a young Chilean immigrant, contrasting with his outgoing nature and even his ability to write political speeches back in Chile.

It is this act of "seeing" (in contrast with being "unseen") that serves as a catalyst for the storyline of the play. The paradoxical portrayal of young Tato versus adult Lautaro as an empowered Indigenous/Mapuche becomes an allegory for how Canadian societies perceive and acknowledge Indigenous groups in Canada. *Journey to Mapu* allows audiences to inquire not only about Indigenous Latinas/os in Canada, but also question how Indigenous peoples, cultures, and values are "seen" (or not) by Canadian audiences. How are Indigenous cultures recognized, and if so, how are their cultures and beliefs valued? *Journey to Mapu* challenges the dichotomy of seeing and not being seen; once again, it illustrates that after we physically "see" Lautaro, like the Indigenous person he is, then the people from Manitoba (as the audience) would value what he must say when advocating for Indigenous Mapuche groups.

Moreover, a question arises regarding how Latin American (or indigenous) peoples perceive or value Western/Canadian culture. In an initial scene, following the introduction of Machi and Lautaro, two young hockey players and Tato intervene, inquiring if Tato had witnessed the game. Young Tato responds in broken English, stating, "No, sorry. I not see it" (362). This scene conveys the lack of interest that as Latin American, young Tato exhibits towards Canadian culture. Essentially, when there is a failure in the recognition of people from Manitoba to acknowledge the

presence of adult Lautaro, the counterargument surfaces; young Tato expresses disinterest in hockey and Western culture, a point I will delve into further below.

In the introductory scenes, Lautaro goes on confirming his Indigenous identity by offering a poem in English and Mapuzungun: while *lights fade*, *Lautaro whispers* (offers the play directions), “Kallfu, my grandmother said to me / ... / Kallfu, my grandfather told me / ... / Blue said my parents / Kallfu, deep blue, I tell my daughters / A colour more blue than the blue / Shape the soul of my People” (359). And on the other side, Lautaro presents how his activism relates to issues in Canada because, as he notes, his comparative study is “about the traditional water management customs on the reserve [in Manitoba] ... with some Indigenous communities in Northern Chile” (360). Later in the play, Lautaro reaffirms this cultural coalition while confirming the connections between Chilean and Canadian people: “Their lands are being seized, people are getting killed... Yes, I have documentation, I have pictures... There is a Canadian connection. There are many Chilean-born Canadians ...” (371).

By choosing to introduce Lautaro with a poem in Mapuzungun and English, the playwright effectively highlights the immense significance Indigenous groups attribute to storytelling and the cultural transmission that occurs across generations: that is, how traditional oral transmission of Indigenous philosophies and cultural values from generation to generation, and how this transmission of information can take place in a space such as the postcolonial theater in Canada. Moreover, how does Kallfu (in Mapuzungun) became Blue for Lautaro’s parents?³³ And ultimately, how does Lautaro embrace both of his migrant identities (in English and in Mapuzungun) while transmitting such a story to his daughters, when he says, for instance, “Kallfu, deep

³³ Certain words presented here are closely related with the Mapuche culture, and identity. *Mapu* is the word used by Indigenous peoples from South America to refer to a piece of land or territory. *Mapu*, moreover, is “home” for the Mapuche, since the suffix “che” refers to people, i.e., the people of such a spiritual territory. Similarly, *Kallfu* refers to a spiritual and divined dimension for the Mapuche people symbolically situated “en las alturas (cielo) y cuya tonalidad conlleva a asociar también este concepto con el color azul” (Biblioteca Digital).

blue, I tell my daughters” —a colour more blue than the blue that shapes the soul of his people (359). From this illustration, *Journey to Mapu* starts to portray a protagonist who has embraced his Indigenous identity by acknowledging, but also by transmitting Mapuche stories to younger generations. This is an Indigenous principle clearly emphasizing the need by elders to transmit cultural values to younger generations. It is perhaps the same goal in Guevara’s visions, to represent a hemispheric Indigenous perspective within the context of Mapu, or Mother Earth for both Mapuche and First Nations, as home, from where a cohesive Indigenous view represents a story of acknowledgement and recognition of cultural principles. This renewed Latina/o Canadian vision is therefore addressed here as stories that convey Indigenous learnings (and unlearning) about minority groups on Anglo-Canadian stages. From a decolonial perspective, such a message reflects on how *Journey to Mapu* aims to impart Anglo audiences with Indigenous values as cultures of the Americas. In what follows, I show how intersectionality between race and class helps young Tato acknowledge his Mapuche self while simultaneously addressing racism and stereotyping.

4.7.1 Concerning Racism and Stereotyping in Journey to Mapu

Journey to Mapu presents different situations where Latina/o migrants are perceived in Canada, often being viewed as mere migrants, or even mistakenly labeled as “Indians.” For example, in an initial scene, the play contrasts the life of a migrant Latina/o with Canada’s hockey culture. After Lautaro’s initial poem, there is a dialogue between young Tato and adult Lautaro communicating how young Tato was perceived in Canada as a stereotypical Latin American migrant because of his little knowledge of the English language, but also because he could not afford to buy a snack in McDonald’s, a drink, nor an extra bus fare to attend a hockey celebration downtown Vancouver (362-3). Moreover, Tato is represented first as a stereotypical Latino because, in Canada, he is always expected to know how to play the guitar (363), and because, like other Latina/o migrants, he cannot afford to buy expensive items, as Tato states, “Aquí son tan estúpidos que creen que si no usas Nike o Levy’s *no eres nadie!*” (363-4; emphasis added).

In this sense, *Journey to Mapu* continues to incorporate intersectionality in the protagonist, to also show that there are tensions arising from the complexity of representation, stereotyping, and racialized clashes between different characters due to their class (i.e., ability to buy markers of middle-class mobility) and race. Of course, Adult Lautaro intervenes in the scene by offering an explanation as to why a young Tato did not hang out with white kids, even when they were friendly (362). Once again, this intervention serves Lautaro's argument here, as a counterpart to the Indigenous stereotyping. Furthermore, young Tato cannot go downtown with these kids (Jay and Scott) because, even though they end up inviting him to go see the celebrations of their team's victory, he cannot go because he has no money. Lautaro goes on to describe the racialized context in the following scene, where he offers the readers/audience details about other migrant kids, whose experiences contrast with those of the non-migrant white kids. Like Tato, Tonio and Guille always wanted to get even with the gringos because of the discrimination they faced when dealing with intra-racial encounters. Tonio is from Colombia and Guille from El Salvador, and both express how all Latinas/os should unify against discrimination from white characters:

TONIO: Lo que tenemos que hacer es unirnos todos los Latinos!

GUILLE: Sí, y cuando los gringos nos hagan desprecios, se arma el quilombo!

Again, adult Lautaro explains the scene, offering the reasons why a young Tato did not hang out with his Latin American compatriots either: because he did not want to get in trouble. He continues explaining that even though he had not yet “made friends with a truly Canadian kid,” he wanted to communicate to people that he had significant things to express: “‘I’m not an idiot, I’m not shy, I have important things to say!’ I wanted to tell everyone that I made political speeches at school in Chile, that back home I was a leader!” (354). This scene further emphasizes possible changes in the migrants' identity while going into exile. For young Tato, while he recalls being a well-known kid at school back in Chile—by his own admission, a leader who wrote political speeches—in Canada, he is shy, and the lack of English language knowledge makes him more cautious. In addition, Tato's indigenous appearance makes him represent the

struggles of how Latinas/os (like Indigenous groups) may not be well received in Canada, for they lack a sense of recognition or visibility within multicultural Canada. Instead, as young Tato notes above, Latina/o Canadian migrants may be perceived as “Indians” who are detached from their Indigenous heritage and potentially disregarded as having nothing meaningful to contribute or say.

Another similar contrasting scene follows where the difference in class and race continues to be illustrated with the inconsistencies between Latina/o migrants’ height in contrast with Canadian basketball players. Again, the scene is further explained by the conscious reflection by adult Lautaro, who communicates how “everyone thought [he] was an Indian. I tried to tell them I was not, I was Chilean. People didn’t understand and didn’t care. One Indian is the same as another...” (365). This is a scene where misrepresentation of Latina/o migrants signifies the identification of the “Other” which in Canadian terms, would be the racialized communities of Indigenous groups. Nonetheless, of even greater significance is the representation of Tato/Lautaro’s acknowledgment. Initially rejecting his Indigenous identity, Tato’s response evolves into a hemispheric identification as he enters adulthood.

The racialization of Latina/o migrants as minority “Indians” (and the reference to First Nations peoples) in Canada is seen as a misrepresentation of the Other “Indian” characters. Under a Canadian context, these other “Indian” characters are racialized, and it becomes evident in the play when Tato has an argument with three drunk Canadian males. One of them argues, “It was a good job ... And now we’ve been laid off. Damn Indians forced us to stop the excavation. They said it’s a ‘sacred site,’ a burial place ... Their ‘ancestors are there’ they say... What ancestors? A bunch of drunks! ... Bastards...” (385). Even though the play does not offer much reference to who these Indigenous “ancestors” are, the narrative makes it clear that they are referring to First Nation peoples because of what the story continues to communicate. Alluding to a verifiable historical Indigenous story, a white Canadian drunk person suggests: “Poisoned blankets were too good for them...” (385). This narrative carries a story that “continues to appear in contemporary art produced by Indigenous people” in

Canada, that is, that “the Hudson's Bay Company transmitted smallpox with blankets” (Cram). Furthermore, this historical event is later contrasted when Lorena finishes crafting a button blanket symbolizing the unity of all nations, as I will point out further below.

After this historical reference, while these three drunken Canadian males leave the bar—the stage directions suggest—, “*they walk toward Tato. They look mockingly at him then they start threatening him.*” The scene continues by addressing how young Tato is discriminated against because of his appearance. Ben, one of the drunken Canadians states, “Hey, here's one of them. Another fucking Indian.”

...

TOM: Hey, Indian, what's your name?

TATO: I'm not an Indian...

CUCK: Ohhh, you're denying your... 'heritage'... naughty, naughty” —Ben replies (*mockingly*)

TATO: I'm not. I'm Chilean... (386-7)

The scene unfolds with all drunken Canadians attempting to force Tato into drinking with them, but young Tato refuses. They encircle him, with one of them expressing, “Let me bust his ass, that's what he deserves...” (387). Tato receives several kicks and blows yet manages to escape. As they all exit the stage, adult Lautaro reflects on his childhood fears while living in Vancouver, confessing that he was so terrified at one point that he contemplated suicide. This scene, therefore, is pivotal in illustrating the hostility and intimidation young Tato faces as a marginalized “Indian” individual in Canadian society. The aggression from the drunken Canadians highlights the racial tension and discrimination prevalent in the community. Tato’s refusal to surrender to peer pressure demonstrates his resilience and refusal to conform to negative stereotypes. Moreover, adult Lautaro’s retrospective commentary underscores the long-lasting psychological impact of such traumatic experiences on individuals,

shedding light on the enduring scars left by discrimination and xenophobia. This segment of my analysis leads me to identify what I perceive as the climax of the play. The following portion of my analysis delves into the representation of the 1.5 generation of Chilean exiles in Canada aspiring to return to Latin America, in contrast to the 1st generation characters who are inclined to remain in Canada. This dynamic serves as a renewed characteristic introduced in *Journey to Mapu*, offering, once again, a fresh contradiction within the Latin American exile experience.

4.7.2 Journey to Mapu Climax: A Catalyst Latina/o Exiled Experience

The encounters of young Tato with other people, such as the drunken white Canadians in the last scene, show how Latina/o immigrants in Canada, particularly those racialized and othered as “Indians,” are stereotyped. It is in fact due to such forms of discrimination against him/them—and the fact that young Tato did not feel he fit in Canada—that makes him come to the determination to return to Chile, now that the dictatorship had ended, when he suggests to his parents: “Creo que deberíamos de volver a Chile ... ahora que podemos volver...digo, supongo que podemos volver. Se acabó la dictadura. Ya no hay motivo para seguir aquí” (390). Young Tato’s sentiment can resonate with Chilean migrants (from the first generation of migrants in Canada) who yearn to return to their homeland; however, it is significant to notice here that it is a younger character (i.e., a character who belongs to the 1.5 generation of migrants) who now aims to return “home” instead of remaining on his newly exiled home. It is Tato’s mother who desires to stay in Canada because she sees the benefits of living in exile in Canada; she sees the value of living in Canada, even when some exiles experience stereotyping and racism. Moreover, she expresses how she now aims to take a course to specialize in taking care of old people, even though she was an accountant at home, because “En realidad nunca [le] gustaron mucho los números” (391). Tato’s mother, then, ends up realizing the advantages of their life in exile while demonstrating another level of transformation within Latin American exiles in Canada. Opposite to other Latina/o Canadian narratives, where oppression dictated the need to leave the Canadian exiled life, here Tato’s mother expresses how “este país es tan bueno para Alvarito” (291). Alvarito, Tato’s younger brother, is referenced sparingly

throughout the play and never makes an appearance on stage. Despite his absence, he is characterized with a disability, prompting their mother to assert that he can now attend a special school in Vancouver, concluding that Alvarito “está mucho mejor ahora.” In this context, Alvarito’s representation reflects the challenges faced by families dealing with disability within the Latina/o Canadian community. His absence on stage may symbolize the societal tendency to overlook or marginalize individuals with disabilities, while his mother’s statement reflects the complex emotions and struggles associated with caring for a disabled family member. This brief mention underscores the importance of inclusivity and representation of diverse experiences within narratives of migration and exile.

Tato/Lautaro’s father, likewise, who until now has not said anything during this conversation, “*stand[ing] up [and] violently*” —the stage directions suggest—, finally exclaims, “Yo nunca voy a volver a ese país de mierda!” (391). Once more, *Journey to Mapu* delineates a contrasting outcome to the exile experience encountered by Tato/Lautaro and his Chilean family. This contrast underscores the multifaceted nature of exile experiences within the Latina/o Canadian community, highlighting the diverse trajectories and outcomes that individuals and families may encounter when navigating displacement and resettlement. Now younger Tato wants to return to his home in Latin America, but his parents (character types who in the works of other Chilean Canadian writers would usually be the ones desiring to return to their “beloved home,” as is the case of Manuel’s sentiment in *Anywhere but Here*), now want to remain in Canada and continue to develop their life in exile. Moreover, by juxtaposing different narratives of exile, the play prompts reflection on the complexities of identity, belonging, and adaptation in the context of migration and cultural displacement. This is illustrated in the play with Tato aiming to make an argument about how their social class has changed in exile, and how his father is now working as a janitor when he was a professor in Chile, his mother states that Tato’s father “necesita tiempo para recuperarse [del trauma] ... [tu padre] está mucho mejor [aquí]. A tu padre lo torturaron, Tato... Hemos tenido suerte de que aquí hay tratamiento para él. Tato, tienes que tener paciencia ... aquí las cosas van a mejorar” —again, contributing to the

value of living in a Western country such as Canada where there is treatment for his father (391).

In the following intervention, adult Lautaro reflects on this scene, reaffirming his old feeling to return to Chile but suggesting that he once was “stuck” as a young Tato. Because he could not tell his parents of what had happened with the white drunk Canadians, Lautaro states: “The city looked ugly to me. The parks, the streets, the gardens I admired so much, now were depressingly threatening! I felt tainted... I believed it was my fault that those guys were so full of hate!” (392). This confrontation between the white drunk Canadians and young Tato serves as a catalyst for young Tato’s experience in exile. Now he would like to return to his home in Chile, but he cannot. The passage illustrates a profound sense of alienation and displacement experienced by young Tato in his new environment in exile. His perception of Vancouver undergoes a drastic shift from admiration to fear and hostility. The parks, streets, and gardens that once symbolized beauty and tranquility now evoke feelings of anxiety and intimidation. This transformation reflects Tato’s internal struggle to reconcile his past experiences with his current reality. The encounter with the white drunk Canadians exacerbates his sense of isolation and vulnerability, as he becomes the target of their hostility and aggression. All he can do is take refuge in his memories about how once his father played songs to him. At the end of this scene, the stage directions suggest, “*TATO picks up the guitar ... Starts playing softly, trying to calm himself ... [and] Lautaro sings with him*” —as a sign of nostalgia for his young age and life back in Chile (392). Therefore, once again, this scene underscores the complex dynamics of belonging and identity in the context of exile. Tato’s longing for his homeland reflects his yearning for a sense of familiarity and belonging that eludes him in his new environment. However, the reality of his circumstances — the inability to return home and the hostility he faces in his adopted homeland — underscores the challenges and complexities inherent in the quest for belonging amidst displacement and cultural alienation.

In my analysis, I see this last scene as the climax that represents the change of life experiences, and desired outcomes. The audience becomes aware of conflicting

messages conveyed by the Chilean Canadian migrants depicted on stage. The following scene summarizes this change of sentiments by portraying the significance of the Indigenous stories and beliefs while representing the significance of the changes in Jack, an Indigenous character that now looks “*like a dignified Mapuche elder*”—as offered by the stage directions—while he “*stands beside Machi*,” another Indigenous character, “*to tell the creation story of Trengtreng and Kaykay*” (393). By the end of this Indigenous creation story, the audience once again is forced to question the recognition of Indigenous stories as part of the protagonist’s self-reflection, as I show in the following analysis.

4.7.3 The Two-Eyed Seeing Principal of Co-existence: Teaching, and Learning

In the following act, as the light shifts, and the sounds of drums and *trutucas* echo in the background, the elders share stories of resilience and survival, illustrating the enduring spirit of the Mapuche people. Jack, previously known as an Indigenous character from the First Nation community, initiates the narrative, underscoring the interconnectedness of Indigenous experiences. Through Manchi’s continuation, the audience delves deeper into the ancestral wisdom, symbolizing a collective journey of cultural resurgence and renewal. “Our elders tell the story of how the Mapuche people have managed to endure and survive, no matter how powerful their enemies have been,” starts Jack, an Indigenous character that until now, we know was from the First Nation community (393). Manchi continues, “The rebirth of the Mapuche people is told in the story of Trengtreng and Kaykay ...” (393). This scene continues with these two characters telling a powerful initial life story: as to how “the elders always remind the young ... the customs and ways of their ancestors ... this is why, they say, the life of our people continues until this very day ... following our own paths” Jack and Machi conclude (394). The scene unfolds with the elders sharing stories of resilience and survival among the Indigenous people. Jack, previously associated with the First Nation community, leads the narration, emphasizing the interconnectedness of Indigenous experiences. Through Jack’s storytelling and Manchi’s elaboration, the audience is immersed in the ancestral trans-Indigenous wisdom of these two diverse communities. The elders recount the story of Trengtreng and Kaykay, symbolizing the

collective renewal of the Indigenous people of the Americas. Therefore, the scene underscores the importance of intergenerational knowledge transmission and the enduring legacy of Mapuche culture, affirming the significance of cultural heritage and identity.

This story is juxtaposed with Tato/Lautaro's reflections on his grandmother's Mapuche stories, highlighting his past inability to fully comprehend the meaning of Mapuche stories. The scene shifts to Lorena advising Tato that in Canada, "you have to talk to your teachers" (395). This scene, coming towards the end of the play, summarizes how *Journey to Mapu*, beyond being a migration and exile story, represents the Two-Eyed Seeing cycle of learning and teaching, learning to co-exist while accepting each other's viewpoints. This is not only a mystical story of Indigenous values, but it also signifies the beginning, the rebirth, and the continued transmitting of Indigenous values to younger, and further generations of peoples. This takes my analysis to the culmination of the play when the audience realizes that there have been some changes, or that "something has started to change" —as suggested by adult Lautaro (388)—that is, there has been some learning, and different characters in the play demonstrate it.

4.7.4 Final Intersectionality: Embracing Each Other's Cultures

While in the previous scene young Tato was claiming that living in exile was too much for him, adult Lautaro seems to be acknowledging Tato's feelings. In a reflection, Lautaro states: "It was too much! I hated my life! I hated being a refugee. I hated being here [in Canada]!" (388). Acknowledging these feelings of migration to Canada, adult Lautaro recognizes that remembering his grandmother's Mapuche stories helped him to overcome his struggles of living in exile. "Remembering my grandmother's stories, I felt there was a message in them for me" (395). The sense of exile and the profound resentment experienced by young Tato towards his life in refuge propel him to seek "an escape" from his marginalized status as a Latina/o migrant. This struggle is depicted in the subsequent scene, where his attempt to distance himself from exile parallels the act of evading his reality. This thematic transition is underscored by the introduction of Frankie's entrance, a fourteen-year-old secondary character, running

across the stage. “*He looks fugitive, as if he were escaping*” —the stage directions offer (395). Nonetheless, just like adult Lautaro has been demonstrating during the play, Frankie is a Latina/o Canadian exiled character who, even with the rationalization and stereotyping he experienced at a young age, ended up staying and developing a life in Canada.

In what follows, I demonstrate how *Journey to Mapu* validates the intersectionality among different characters. I start with the pairing of young Tato and Lorena, and then, with Tato and Jack. These interventions and dialogues help young Tato to start accepting his life in exile. The encounter of Tato and Lorena in the following scene shows a connection between Indigenous characters of the Americas. While Lorena is first introduced as a First Nations character, this scene allows us to notice a hyphenated characteristic of her identity due to her trip to Chile and her learning about Latin American culture. Lorena is a soccer player who loves Chile. It is in fact in this intervention when young Tato starts to accept his Mapuche self. In a conversation with Lorena, after she explains that she went to Chile as a Namgis Nation student, in exchange with other Mapuche students who came to Canada, she asks young Tato if he is Mapuche:

TATO: “Yes... No... I’m Chilean. But I think I may be Mapuche too. My Indian is very deep, but it is there... From far back. Ever since I came to Canada, I’ve been thinking so much about my family ... I’m sure now that there were Mapuche great-grandfathers, great-grandmothers, but we had forgotten them... it’s all confusing.

LORENA: I understand. I saw that in Chile. It happens here too... Many people deny their aboriginal roots. But more and more are starting to be proud of them ... (397)

This intervention suggests not only the need for young Tato to start recognizing, and perhaps, start to be also proud of his Mapuche background because when Lorena asks him about his name, young Tato replies: “[It is] Tato, but maybe I change my name” (397). “Why?” —Lorena asks. “Long story,” Tato replies, “But I like the name

Lautaro now” (397). Tato answers referring to the story Jack told him previously in the play while sitting on a park bench in Vancouver. Jack describes the story of his deceased friend whose ancestors came to Canada from Chile, resulting in First Nations peoples having Chilean blood in them too. By the end of the scene, Lorena ends up inviting Tato to see her play soccer and to meet her grandmother with whom Lorena is going to meet, in order to learn how to wear the button blanket she just finished.

During this scene, young Tato refers to Jack’s story as a “Long story” that refers to an Indigenous story about “how some Indians here [in Canada] have Chilean blood in them” (380). Such a narrative is first described by Jack, one of the two trans-Indigenous First Nations/Mapuche characters. Let us analyze the intervention of Jack and young Tato as another Indigenous story transmitted by an elder to a younger character, symbolizing the Two-Eyed Seeing guiding principle of teaching and learning through association. Lautaro states, “One night, in the park, an old Indian guy sat beside me:”

JACK: ‘li ch’o’uy’ul? (*How are you*)

TATO: Sorry. I don’t...

...

JACK: You never learned your Indian language? That’s bad...

TATO: No, I am not from here ... I am from Chile...

JACK: Welcome, namut kwu. I hope we’ll treat you all right ... I heard a story about Chile once ... When I was a boy, younger than you I was, I knew a boy. His grandfather was from Chile ... *He was an Indian, like us.*

TATO: How did he get here?

JACK: He had been a sailor. Hwi-yuneem’ch (*You listen*) ... His name was Jorge Barrientos, but he called himself Lautaro. He had taken the name of a great Mapuche warrior, who, hundreds of years before had fought against the Spanish invaders... (376-7; emphasis added)

Jack goes on to tell the story of Jorge Barrientos, a sailor who at the age of twenty arrived at Vancouver Island after his ship, the *Carelmapu*, broke in two during a storm on November 25, 1915. The story narrates how Indigenous natives from the island saved Lautaro and four other survivors. “This happened off Gowland Rock, in the Schooner Gove, on the west coast of Vancouver Island” (378). The story concludes by explaining how all survivors decide to return to Chile, except for Lautaro who had fallen in love with Mary Ellen. Soon, the survivor “became Larry, instead of Lautaro. He and Mary Ellen had many children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren. One of them is my friend Larry who told me this story ... So that’s how some Indians here have Chilean blood in them. What do you think?” —Jack concludes (379). This story can also demonstrate how we are all connected, that form a Two-Eyed Seeing guiding principle, we can acquire knowledge from each other culture, that ultimately, we are all one single human race.

The most significant fragment of this story is that for the first time, Tato does not contradict Jack when he states that the young sailor from Chile *was an Indian, like them*. It is the first sign giving way to Tato’s non-challenging the possibility of being an “Indian” himself. Moreover, this story ties Chilean/Latin American history with First Nations peoples in Vancouver Island (or Nootka, as mentioned before), one more example of how there is, at least within the realm of the Latina/o Canadian imaginary, a trans-Indigenous group, that is, “Indians” in Canada who have “Chilean blood” in them. Lastly, similar to Lautaro/Larry in this indigenous narrative, young Tato also endeavors to change his name to Lautaro.

The play goes on with another reflection proposed by adult Lautaro to discuss how young Tato did not thank Jack for his storytelling. Lautaro reflects on how much it took Tato to understand the meaning of such a trans-Indigenous story that connects his Chilean roots with First Nations peoples. Tato did not realize that Jack’s storytelling reflected his own migrant experience, even when it had happened centuries after Latin American’s first voyages to Canada. But Lautaro admits at this point that Jack “told you something important [Tato]... but it took you a long time to get it!”

(380). The subsequent interaction with Jack, however, serves as a catalyst for young Tato's emerging awareness of his affiliation with Mapuche culture.

LAUTARO: I started to wonder why my dad always valued so much his father's [Swiss] side but almost never ever mentioned his mother's ... Why did he ignore them? Was he ashamed of them? It dawned on me that my grandmother must have had Mapuche blood...

TATO: No! Abuela cannot have been an Indian! Her name was Spanish, Maruja Paredes!

LAUTARO: In the past, Indian names did not count and were changed to Spanish ones. *My grandmother had a Mapuche presence! This was an important realization ...* To me she was the wisest person on Earth. The most loving, the best... (380; emphasis added)

As this intervention shows, this scene summarizes the awakening process in young Tato and how he started to accept his Mapuche identity. It is, therefore, thanks to his traveling to Canada, and the learning from being in contact with other indigenous and Western values, that he started to make connections and linked his Latina/o/Chilean self with his renewed Mapuche identity. The bridges that help *Journey to Mapu* portray a trans-Indigenous story, also help Tato/Lautaro to empower his authentic self as a hybrid exiled Latino/Mapuche immigrant in Canada. "It was only here in Canada that I realized most of my grandmother's stories came from the Mapuches" —adult Lautaro states in another part of the scene (374). One can argue, therefore, that due to his immigration to Canada, but also due to these Indigenous offerings and stories that connect Mapuche with First Nations in Canada, young Tato starts to realize the significance of his Mapuche, yet hybrid Latin American/European identity. In the absence of such encounters, Tato might have continued to harbor colonial perspectives regarding indigenous peoples and cultures, as instilled by his father, who believed in the necessity of modernizing (i.e., "educating") Indigenous communities. Once again, *Journey to Mapu* could be further examined through the lens of mutual teaching and learning from each other's cultures and values because it highlights the resilience that

emerges from recognizing and valuing the co-existence among diverse social groups in Canada.

This “important realization” is followed by a scene that illustrates such an identity change with an allegory of how Indigenous people embrace their identity. This narrative is further explained by Lorena, who has been present on stage since the beginning of the play, crafting a First Nations button blanket symbolizing the unity of all races, but at the same time, the weaving of one’s knowledge in relationship with other cultures and values. The stage directions indicate, “*LORENA is finishing her blanket and trying it on, admiring herself*” and reflecting on the tree of life that signifies Mother Earth (380). Such allegory illustrates the long-waiting Tato/Lautaro Mapuche faced. It is at this point that Tato has acknowledged and therefore embraced his Mapuche identity. Like Tato/Lautaro embraces his Mapuche self, Lorena embraces her Indigenous identity by “putting on” the blanket that signifies the unity of all peoples. One can think of such a scene as a culmination in the play, a reflection stemming from the dialogue between these two characters. I would like to end my analysis, however, by offering the character of Tato/Lautaro as an intersectional character whose Indigenous identity and culture became documented due to his life experiences as an exiled migrant in Canada, as I present in the following section.

4.7.5 Journey to Mapu: In Solidarity with a Chilean Exiled Experience in Canada

The last pinnacle scene in the play is followed by a communiqué translated by Lautaro, which confirms the empowerment that has led Tato to accept his Mapuche story but also shows how adult Lautaro’s speech reflects his solidarity not only with the Mapuche, but also with the Chilean people:

We, the Mapuche political prisoners incarcerated by the Chilean state in the Temuko jail, to our Mapuche brothers and sisters, to the Chilean people, and to all the Indigenous and oppressed peoples of the world, declared with love and strength of spirit, the following: Starting from today, Monday, July 12, 2010,

we began a hunger strike for an indefinite term, together with all our peñi, our Mapuche compatriots in other jails in Chile.

With this dignified act of resistance, we denounce the abuses, irregularities, and outrages committed by the Chilean justice system, in causes related to the Mapuche land conflict. These abuses are exemplified by the repeated human rights violations ... and enhanced by the Anti-Terrorist Law, or Law 18.314 inherited from the dictatorship of Augusto Pinochet. (380-1)

With this quote, *Journey to Mapu* illustrates the traditional Chilean solidarity that I have addressed before in this dissertation. After his last intervention, Lautaro states that “The dictatorship comes to haunt [him] again ... After thirty years, the military is still in charge in Chile!” (381). As a Chilean playwright, moreover, Guevara presents herself in solidarity incorporating the misrepresented Chilean/Mapuche voices and representing other marginalized groups of Latina/o Indigenous peoples that help construct a more inclusive Canadian *Latinidad*. Moreover, Guevara represents historical stories that help audiences’ awakening process, and promote a set of historical trans-Indigenous learning venues within a Western theatrical context. Similarly, like Guevara herself, Lautaro advocates for the Mapuche people in solidarity with his compatriots back in Chile. By staging underrepresented Mapuche stories, moreover, Guevara illustrates the historical Chilean past that is still “haunting” not only Chileans in Canada but also in Chile and beyond. Guevara incorporates, nonetheless, trans-Indigenous stories in a hemispheric vision aiming to give value to historical colonial and postcolonial events of the Americas.

From the first scene, with Indigenous co-existing interventions, through the rest of the play, Guevara contrasts one scene with the following, continually presenting the intersectionality between characters and cultures. This theatrical technique allows Guevara as a playwright to apply decolonial methods to represent Indigenous cultures in parallel, but also in contrast to Western views and life experiences. To illustrate, before the next Indigenous intervention in the play, there is Tato’s political speech scene where he explains the sociopolitical post-1973 Chilean history, followed by a

scene where Lautaro communicates how “everything changed too fast,” i.e., from being Chilean to being a Chilean migrant in exile, but also how he was only twelve “when the soldiers came to take [his] dad away... [and how his] dad was in jail for three years because he was a leader in the teacher’s union... [how] He never spoke about it... [how] He was a zombie! ... [and how his father] died of cancer ten years ago... but I had lost him years before...” (367). In a sense, this story reflects contemporary Indigenous struggles, and how the struggles of the post-1973 Chilean era contrast with the struggles of Indigenous peoples in modern Canada: but also, how such Chilean past stories continue to help construct the culture, stories, and identities of Chileans today. In this respect, as quoted before, Lautaro states that the dictatorship has come to haunt him once again (380). The protagonist communicates here a condemnatory story of his past, which is contrasted with his “best memories” from the cold part of Chile, the memories that remind Tato/Lautaro of his homeland. This scene, furthermore, introduces the happy stories of Tato/Lautaro’s grandmother linked with those of First Nations’ Lorena: as “*GRANDMOTHER prepares tea and hands out a cup to TATO ... [the] lights change [and continues to sing]*”

LORENA: [*sings*] Flowers, roots, leaves, and seeds,

Many herbs take care of me

Rue for the stomach, Mint for a cold,

Boldo, Rosehip, Chamomile, ... (367)

Lorena continues singing as a way of contrasting the previous scene with Tato’s grandmother followed by Lautaro offering the story of his grandmother (and her two sisters). “*Lights change (again), while LORENA listens attentively*” —the stage directions add, and Lautaro goes on to tell the story of his grandmother and how she lived with two sisters, one of whom was married to a *paco*, a Chilean policeman:

LAUTARO: My grandmother was very respected in the town. She was a healer. People came from other villages and from far away farms to consult her, because she knew everything about medical herbs and roots ...

She hated the police with passion, because of what they had done to the Indians... 'Butchers,' 'Murderers,' she said ... In the middle of the night, a bunch of horse-riding cops led by [my grandaunt] Carmela's husband stormed into the reserve, burning their rucas, killing most of the men, spearing children with their knives. The women who could not hide fast enough were raped, young and old. (368-9)

This quotation establishes a connection between the injustices experienced by the Mapuche people, contrasting them with the colonial narratives of the First Nations peoples during the initial European arrival in Canada. It also serves to cast a parallel over the post-1973 Chilean era accounts, which find resonance in the life experiences of twelve-year-old Tato/Lautaro. Additionally, it echoes narratives of Spanish conquest, as expounded upon by Lorena, thus weaving a tapestry of historical references and thematic resonances: "In 1541, the Spanish conquistador Pedro de Valdivia arrived in Chile with his soldiers, his horses, and his weaponry. A woman rode with him ... Valdivia's mistress, Inéz de Suárez ... [who] became a symbol of bravery and went into the Chilean history books as a heroine to be admired and as an example of how to deal with the Indians" (370-1). The denunciation of this national icon sets up the stage for Lautaro's current stories, which again, connects Spanish conquest history with present struggles by "Indians" or Mapuche people. Simultaneously, this last quote carries a condemnation of contemporary abuses and Canada's implication in the First Nations people's struggles. As Lautaro continues in 2010, he aims to draw attention to "the plight of the Mapuche people in Chile ... [where] there are several elders in jail because they are protesting the construction of dams in their traditional territories ... There is a Canadian connection. There are many Chilean-born Canadians ... Marichiweu! Ten times we will win!" (371).

This intervention takes the audience to better understand how Guevara, as a playwright, represents Indigenous cultures, stories, and beliefs as a hemispheric imaginary. Additionally, this analysis considers how the narratives of the South mirror those of the North and their connection to the Western world. In what follows, Guevara stages the strongest story in the play, which interconnects Western stories of

conquest with Indigenous stories of how Mother Earth was created. This intersection gives life to *Journey to Mapu*, the Great Mother Earth, as Guevara presents Tato's grandmother's perspectives interconnected with Lorena's visions about every being on Earth as a type of intra-Indigenous vision. "Our elders tell us that everything on earth is born as a beloved shoot of Mapu ... there is a place for every being, they say... we talk with Nature ... And Nature talks back to us and teaches us everything we need to know" (372). This intervention is followed by Tato's grandmother starting her own Nature story about how Mapu was first created, as "*LORENA enters and sits by her to listen [while] Tato listens from another part of the stage*" and Tato/Lautaro's grandmother states:

Our elders tell that in those days, the positive and negative energies co-existed in the Wenu Mapu, the Earth above. That's the way it was, they say ... It was at this time that the first Mapuche spirit arrived here, thrown from the Blue ... Then the Powerful Spirit sent a beautiful, shining little star to keep him company ... Her blood was transformed into glass, into flowers, they said ... This is how life started on Earth, our elders say. [To what Lorena responds in unison,] This is how life started on Earth. (373-4)

This important intervention by Indigenous characters as a unified story opens the dialogue by Lautaro, again, as a reflection of what he has been listening to as young Tato. "It was only here in Canada that I realized most of my grandmother's stories came from the Mapuches..." (374). Once again, adult Lautaro communicates the need for further perspectives to learn and finally embrace his Mapuche, yet hybrid identity. Moreover, with this quote, Guevara illustrates the main significance of the play; *Journey to Mapu* communicates the individual protagonist's path toward his home, towards Mapu, towards his true Mapuche.

With this intervention, moreover, I would like to bring this analysis to a conclusion. The storyline reaches its culmination, and the characters begin to demonstrate their growth in trans-cultural awareness. Young Tato's growing awareness underscores the profound significance of his grandmother's narratives,

while simultaneously emphasizing the crucial import of Indigenous peoples' stories across the Americas, both as integral components of his personal history and as catalysts for his recent revelations. As a reflection on how young Tato followed his father's colonial perspectives towards Mapuche people, Lautaro challenges such perspectives with the presentation of his grandmother's Indigenous background and her beloved "two crazy sisters" (374). That is, how and why Aunt Carmela went from loving to hating her Chilean policeman husband, and how Aunt Rosario "never talked to people, [and] preferred the birds" (375). This intervention is followed by a dialogue with the "drunken Indian" and storyteller, Jack, whose story, once again, represents how people in Canada have Chilean ancestry in them (377-80). This story then is presented by an intervention by Machi, the traditional Mapuche healer, who insists on communicating the need to re-establish harmony on Earth, in contrast to what "white" people have done to disturb Indigenous lives: "The winka [white people] have broken the harmony between our Earth Above and the Earth We Walk On ... that's why water has dried up and plants and medical herbs have disappeared ... The winkas are making our Mother Earth ill" (381). This intervention is juxtaposed with what Lautaro offers right after: "The large estates, the forestry companies, the hydroelectric companies, the fish farms, the big mining industries, they are the sickness..." (381). Furthermore, it becomes evident that, as a playwright researcher, Guevara draws inspiration from the Two-Eyed Seeing perspective, emphasizing the interaction of cultural viewpoints and the recognition of the necessity for coexistence and collaboration. In this segment of the play, the Two-Eyed Seeing principle gains additional significance. Initially, it underscores the importance of understanding how one can learn from Indigenous culture, particularly in the context of the creation of Mother Earth.

Lautaro later explains—in a nightmare state—what happened in Chile, how his father disappeared for three years, and later how his migration to Canada as a political refugee had broken him, and how contradictory dialogues started to make sense. Even when at some point Tato/Lautaro asked his parents to go back to Chile (reflecting on the opposite of migrant experiences), contradicting the "usual" character arc of the 1.5 generation who, at least in representation, are most likely to stay in Canada (as

portrayed in my analysis in chapter three with the character of Carolita). In this instance, the portrayal of the Latina/o migrant experience offers an alternative perspective for those undergoing exile in Canada. That is, young Tato wants to go back to Chile, and his father does not want to return to Chile. These renewed Latina/o perspectives in Canada motivate Guevara, as the validation of additional Latina/o visions, particularly those from Indigenous Mapuche and First Nations peoples. This is, I posit, what helps Guevara to achieve a more comprehensive representation of Canadian *Latinidad*.

Journey to Mapu ends with Lautaro's last intervention as a lecture he is giving at the Department of Peace Making and Human Security, where he is going to talk about "the situation of Mapuche land claims ... [making] a comparison with what happens in Canada," he continues by stating that "Controversy is what we want. Indifference is the worst thing that can happen!" (393). On stage, Guevara chooses to illustrate the unity between all Indigenous characters, guided by the sounds of drums and trutucas (Mapuche trumpets), as mentioned before, Mapuche women are waving blue and carrying white flags, all women and men are surrounding their elders. Jack enters looking like a dignified Mapuche elder and stands beside Machi, as an allegory that tells in unison the creation story of Trengtreng and KayKay (393). In unity they explain such a story, restating the importance of learning from such storytellers, the Indigenous elder characters, "from the teaching of our elders" (395). This intervention ends with Lorena explaining that her button blanket signifies the unity of her people, of all peoples. While she puts it on proudly, displaying it for Tato and the audience; Lorena's grandmother also wears a button blanket. She teaches Lorena how to wear it with pride; again, reflecting on the intersectionality between characters, and the passing on of traditions and values to younger characters. Like Lorena, Tato now starts "wearing" his Mapuche self with pride. "*Lautaro walks towards Tato [and] They embrace warmly,*" the stage directions offer, as a sign of resolution. "*Light fades; TATO exits.*"

It is here, by way of conclusion, that the dislocated Tato/Lautaro character presented to us at the beginning of the play has become one single character. Just like

the other Indigenous characters in the play, now adult Lautaro presents a traditional Mapuche story in contrast to Western views. And in this moment, Lautaro starts giving his lecture as a concluding scene, “*in the front of the stage:*”

The history, the tale of a people is a continuum, their hopes, their joys, their struggles, and their dreams are revealed in their world vision. The right of the Mapuche people to be true to their world vision is being denied by force, by violence. It has been said in different places and times: “A people must struggle against oppression. They have the right to defend themselves” ... [Mapuche people] have done nothing but raised their voice to defend the legitimacy of the Itro Fil Mogen: the principle that governs Mapuche life [which] refers to the living world as a whole; *understanding and emphasizing its unity*. According to it, we must have totality without exclusion integration of everything that lives, without fragmentation ... *The Mapuche demand to be included, demand to be heard!* (399; emphasis added)

Just as Lautaro’s last speech denounces here, the aim of *Journey to Mapu* is to demand the inclusiveness of all peoples of the Americas. Guevara aims for the audience to understand “the principle that governs Mapuche life” and “emphasizing its unity.” Therefore, this play is rooted in inclusivity and co-existence, rather than the exclusion of narratives from marginalized communities. “Kallfuley liwen ñi ayliñ / Eymi kay, witrage fotum. / Let go of the darkness, see how Blue is the morning light. / Raise up, my son” —concludes Machi, at the end of the play, inviting Tato and the audience to hear “Our players ... echoing in the rocky abode of the sky” (400). Guevara chooses to present this poem in both Mapuzungun and English as a sign of unification, but also with an allegory representing Indigenous lessons that reflect on Tato and Lorena sitting on the floor, and eating from the same plate, a “*Mapuche friendship ritual*” (400).

1.8 Conclusions

This chapter has shed light on the presence of Latina/o Canadian playwrights on Canadian stages. Hence, *Journey to Mapu* not only delineates the culture and identities

of Latina/o migrants but also signals audiences to envision an intricately woven decolonized world where Indigenous peoples, cultures, and traditions are reclaimed. This play not only addresses the question of identity, which is pivotal to the exploration of Latina/o Canadian literature as a diasporic expression in Canada, but also transcends the confines of *Latinidad*. Guevara's work, facilitated by the community-based research initiative of PUENTE Theatre, moves beyond a mere comprehension of Latina/o or Chilean identity; but she also enriches with the Two-Eyed Seeing Indigenous principle by presenting lessons from both indigenous and Western cultures. Through her play, Aguirre adeptly intertwines Mapuche/Chilean and First Nations cultures and values, imparting onto *Journey to Mapu* the potential to transcend the boundaries of *Latinidad*. By juxtaposing Latina/o/Mapuche characters with those from other Indigenous cultures and Western characters, Guevara contributes to the formation of what Verdecchia terms the "Latina/o cultural imaginary" ("Staging Memory"). Consequently, Guevara's effort restores visibility to both the Latina/o and Indigenous racialized communities in Canada. Furthermore, by integrating a hemispheric Indigenous perspective, Guevara seeks a more all-encompassing decolonial literary landscape. Concurrently, the Canadian stage not only presents these reinvigorated decolonial Latina/o and Indigenous viewpoints but also validates the existence of Indigenous minorities in Canada, thereby empowering these Indigenous narratives and voices.

As a playwright, Guevara has shown a growing concern for the inclusion of other marginalized voices, such as the Indigenous Mapuche voice, as demonstrated in *Journey to Mapu*. This exploration leads to the overarching conclusion of this dissertation, where I delve into the potential future of the committed Latina/o Canadian literary traditions. The ultimate objective of this dissertation is to better understand the meaning of "home" as well as how the sense of belonging by Latina/o Canadians in exile has also transformed. It is logical to observe that the younger generation of characters, specifically the 1.5 generation of exiles in Canada like young Tato in this play, would face a fragmented notion of the meaning of "home" and therefore, their sense of belonging wither to Chile or Canada. Nonetheless, the natural feeling to seek

a return to their native “home” in Chile is still a theme of this Latina/o Canadian play. It is within this theme of home and belonging that the life experiences of subsequent generations of Latina/o migrants in Canada, who find themselves dwelling within or inhabiting the Canadian borderlands, would continue to be a key characteristic of Latina/o Canadian literature.

General Conclusions

Influencing the Canadian Canon: Exploring the Impact of Female Chilean Canadian Writers

This dissertation has undertaken a comprehensive analysis of English-language Chilean Canadian literature, with a specific focus on works authored by female writers within the framework of migrant and exile narratives, which form part of a Chilean Canadian diasporic discourse as published in one of Canada's official languages. Building upon Grossman's concept of diaspora, this study has examined a transnational Chilean Canadian community whose individuals or their predecessors have been geographically displaced from their native homeland yet maintain an enduring link and sense of identity with it. Moreover, categorizing Chilean Canadian literary texts as part of a diasporic literature in Canada allowed me to take a cue from Siemerling's conclusion in "Canadian Literatures and the Postcolonial," to observe how Latina/o Canadian literary production contributes to the understanding of Canada as a "postcolonial space" (210). From a postcolonial lens and adopting a multi-theoretical approach encompassing cultural memory, border studies, and representational intersectionality, this investigation offers a comprehensive understanding of the prominence of Chilean Canadian literature as a medium for Latina/o representation within Canadian letters.

The central aspects of analysis throughout this study have been the exploration of themes relating to home and belonging. In addition, a particular focus has been on the role of English-language literary works in shaping a Chilean Canadian literary archive of memory that reveals a trajectory and documents the transformation of notions of home and belonging across generations. This archival record traces the experiences of those who first arrived in Canada as political exiles during the post-1973 Chilean era while depicting the journey of the 1st and 1.5 generations through the present. In this regard, a transgenerational perspective has also been integrated into the analysis by reading diasporic Chilean Canadian narratives in order to comprehend their nuanced dimensions and how they communicate a sense of belonging. This perspective has involved an examination of the viewpoints of authors, and their

protagonists, which collectively contribute to a deeper comprehension of the intricate dynamics of identity and cultural consolidation. This inquiry extends its reach to incorporate Chilean Canadians as an example of a minority Latina/o group in Canada, encircling the perspectives of exiled individuals, but also emphasizing the need for authors to include other racialized groups such as Indigenous communities from both Chile and Canada, thus broadening the scope and relevance of the discussion on the continually developing imaginary of Canadian *Latinidad*. In brief, this dissertation has navigated the complexities of English-language Chilean Canadian literature within a diasporic and postcolonial context. The different chapters conclude with a presentation of overarching conclusions, synthesizing insights derived from various angles of analysis. These cumulative findings unveil the broader implications of Chilean Canadian literature as a vital component within the larger diasporic narrative of Latinas/os in Canada. In drawing my analysis to a close within this dissertation, I emphasize the imperative for an all-encompassing Canadian literary canon. As constituents of the multifaceted minority communities in Canada, Chilean Canadian writers, with their English-language diasporic literature, must rightfully take their place in the realm of Canadian literature. This inclusion should be recognized, beyond a passing reference, within future anthologies like the *Oxford Handbook of Canadian Literature* (2016) or *The Cambridge Companion to Canadian Literature* (2017).

In summary, the three female authors featured in this study, Carmen Rodríguez, Carmen Aguirre, and Lina de Guevara, permit a questioning of the contribution of this literature as a type of transgenerational Latina/o representation in Canada. In addition, the Chilean Canadian literary sources analyzed in this dissertation are all from female Chilean authors who came to Canada due to political reasons during the post-1973 Chilean era, who continue to live in Canada, and, particularly, write directly in one of Canada's official languages, English. Moreover, as we have seen, while English-language Chilean Canadian literary texts evidently depart from Latina/o Canadian traditions of writing in Spanish and publishing in translation, my corpus of study is a renewed literature for two other reasons: it is mainly represented by female writers (and voices), and it has modified the meaning of "home" for Latin

American migrants and exiles, who from an adopted home in Canada can now be described, or would describe themselves as, hybridized individuals living in a sense of in-betweenness, i.e., at the Canadian borderlands. Finally, it is crucial to reiterate that the composition of my corpus of study is shaped by a combination of factors. Firstly, Chilean Canadian literature, whether in Spanish or English, has consistently held a foundational and preeminent position within the realm of Latina/o Canadian literature. Secondly, when considering English-language texts, female Chilean Canadian authors emerge as the most distinctive and productive writers. To wit, it is noteworthy that, as of my dissertation's inception, it seems that no male Chilean Canadian authors have yet published prose or plays directly in the English language. This confluence of factors underscores the organic composition of my study, reflecting the unique landscape of Chilean Canadian literature within the broader Canadian literary mosaic. In addition, it underscores the necessity for a more comprehensive exploration of the contributions made by female Chilean Canadian authors to diasporic literature. While notable male Latina/o Canadian authors like Guillermo Verdecchia from Argentina and Alejandro Saravia from Bolivia, who write in English, exist, it is important to highlight that there are no other authors from either Argentina or Bolivia who can encapsulate a Latina/o diasporic experience within the Canadian context. Once again, this accentuates the significance of female Chilean Canadian authors in filling a space within the diasporic Canadian literary landscape and providing a distinct voice within broader Latina/o Canadian letters.

In the first chapter of my dissertation, I introduced a theoretical framework and conducted an analysis to situate Chilean Canadian literary texts within the broader context of Canadian and Latina/o Canadian literatures. Furthermore, within the introductory chapter, I outlined the specific theoretical approaches that I employed to analyze English-language Chilean Canadian literary texts in subsequent chapters within the framework of constructing an archive of memories. From this framework, and within the central theme of home and belonging, I developed three case studies. These case studies communicate how the authors tap into memories originating from their native "home" in Chile, serving as a source that propels them towards creating a

body of politically motivated literature in the English language. This work leads to the construction of an archival of memories, where the historical occurrence of September 11th, 1973, assumes a pivotal role within this repository of remembrances; but also, notably, the introduction of The Return Plan contributes as a fresh inclusion and new emblematic memory framework (chapter two). Furthermore, the concept of “home,” previously associated with recollections of Chile and illustrated through the sociopolitical memories of the protagonists in chapter two, begins to transition towards a sense of belonging to an “adopted home” in Canada. This transition arises precisely through an exploration of the significance attributed to a “home” in exile thereby symbolizing the hybrid identities and cultures of the borderlands (chapter three). And finally, female Chilean Canadian authors have started to incorporate other voices to make of this literature not only a more inclusive one but now also a decolonial effort, whereby these authors have incorporated racialized minorities of Indigenous communities from Chile and Canada, to help decolonize the Canadian theater and, consequently, the Latina/o Canadian arts and cultures (chapter four). In what follows, I present my general conclusions by chapter, followed by offering topics that can be further explored after this dissertation.

In the realm of Chilean Canadian literature and cultural memory studies, chapter two delved into the role of authors—and of one mother-daughter pairing in particular—in the continued construction of a historical recollection of memories, mainly in relation to the socio-political catalysts that led to the influx of Chilean exiles to Canada in the aftermath of the 1973 Chilean coup. By examining Carmen Rodríguez’s short stories in *And a Body to Remember with* (1997), her novel *Retribution* (2011), and Carmen Aguirre’s *Memoirs of a Revolutionary Daughter* (2011), and her dramatic play *The Refugee Hotel* (2012), this analysis culminates in key conclusions, revealing the enduring socio-political motivation of English-language Chilean literature, while highlighting the distinct contributions of female Chilean Canadian authors. The first overarching conclusion in chapter two highlights the perpetuation of the politically motivated nature of Chilean Canadian literature. The corpus of English-language Chilean Canadian literary works arising from a minority

community in Canada continues to hold a strong connection to the historical context that initiated their migration. By delving into themes from the socio-political upheavals of the post-1973 Chilean era and incorporating portrayals of the initial migration of Latin Americans to Canada, these literary works not only serve as an archival platform to recount memories but also intricately re-imagine and subsequently re-shape the experiences of exile. In doing so, they forge a new medium of representation that captures not only individual stories but also contributes to the collective narrative of the Chilean diaspora in Canada. Furthermore, as indicated in the analysis, these authors have embarked on the creation of an archive of memories that adds to the existing body of Spanish-language Chilean Canadian narratives. This unique angle of contribution enriches the historical tapestry, offering nuanced perspectives and experiences that expand the depth of the collective memory. The bilingual aspect of the archive amplifies the accessibility of these memories, ensuring a wider reader/audience engagement with the socio-political history of Chilean Canadians in Canada. By revitalizing its expression in the English language, Chilean Canadian literature has not solely participated in the establishment of a repository of memories but has also solidified its unique position within the broader expanse of the Canadian literary canon. The second specific conclusion accentuates the pivotal role that female Chilean Canadian authors play in imbuing intertextual meaning into renewed emblematic memory frameworks, for instance, with the focus on the significant date of September 11th, 1973. By investing their literary creations with the task of contextualizing and personalizing these historical markers, these authors regenerate the resonance of these events within the collective memory. English-language Chilean Canadian literary narratives persist in revitalizing the past, yet they now enable audiences to forge emotional and intellectual connections with fresh socio-political viewpoints that had previously remained concealed—narratives that have given rise to *The Return Plan* as a newborn emblematic memory framework. From this site of remembrances, authors communicate the significance of an organized and covert resistance movement against Pinochet's regime. This underscores the profound impact of literature in the preservation and transmission of memory, shaping the understanding of significant historical moments for generations to come. Chapter two,

in this way, underscores the enduring socio-political motivation underpinning English-language Chilean Canadian literature. It emphasizes the vital role of female Chilean Canadian authors in contributing to this narrative through the creation of an archive of memories and the infusion of significance into pivotal frameworks of remembrance. Through their collective efforts, these authors not only weave an intricate tapestry of individual experiences but also contribute to the broader historical recollection of the Chilean diaspora, fostering a deeper comprehension of the socio-political forces that have shaped their journey.

Moving forward, exploring the avenues of English-language Chilean Canadian literary texts and their engagement with cultural memory, an intriguing line of inquiry lies in examining the various “sites” of memory mentioned throughout these narratives. Notably, as mentioned in my analysis, physical places such as the Stadium in Santiago and the Refugee Hotel in Vancouver emerge as significant sites of remembrance across different instances and for various writers. There are, nonetheless, new “sites” of memory that can also contribute to the exploration of Chilean cultural memory from the perspective of conserving or re-evaluating historical context. This is, for example, analyzing Carmen Rodríguez’s novel, *Atacama* (2021).³⁴ Analyzing these physical sites as spaces of remembrance and commemoration could offer another layer to the understanding of Chilean collective and historical memories, both at home and in exile. *Atacama*, for example, suggests Hugh Hazelton, can lead readers “deep into Chilean history to reveal the courage and endurance of its people, whose rights have been repeatedly crushed by the military and the oligarchs that control it, but whose voices have never been silenced and that speak to us here” (*Atacama*, Preface). This

³⁴ *Atacama* delves into the intertwined lives of Manuel Garay and Lucía Céspedes, who, amidst the historical backdrop of the 1925 Chilean massacres, form a bond shaped by their families’ opposing roles in the events. Set against the stark landscape of the northern Chilean desert, the novel’s title reflects the arid terrain where the characters’ lives intersect. Despite their sporadic encounters, their connection deepens as they navigate shared trauma and a commitment to social justice. The narrative explores their individual development against the backdrop of historical upheaval while addressing themes of class, gender, and the interplay between personal and political convictions.

quote exemplifies how recent Chilean Canadian literary publications align with the representation of the voice of Chileans amidst sociopolitical struggles. These works concurrently inform readers about the historical turmoil that distinguishes such a diasporic community in exile. Such a forthcoming investigation, therefore, could shed light on the dynamics of diasporic literature and the Chilean diasporic community in exile in Canada, contributing to a deeper comprehension of their experiences and narratives within broader socio-political transgenerational, and transnational contexts.

Moreover, the exploration of English-language Chilean Canadian literary texts within the context of cultural memory studies could expand to encompass a broader spectrum of memory frameworks that go beyond the specific narratives of Chilean exiles. The realm of Latin American historical memory holds a multitude of significant events that resonate with diverse communities. An intriguing avenue for further investigation, therefore, lies in scrutinizing how Chilean Canadian authors portray and interpret these broader Latin American memory frameworks within the socio-political context of their narratives. In addition, by analyzing how authors in Chile, but also from other Latin American backgrounds, engage with shared historical markers such as dictatorships, civil unrest, and liberation movements, researchers could gain insights into the collective resonance of these events among Latin American communities. This comparative approach has the potential to reveal overarching themes, patterns, and nuances that contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of how literature functions as an archive of historical memories and as a conduit for the perpetuation and reinterpretation of memories across diverse cultural contexts. Such an exploration would not only enrich the field of cultural memory studies and literature, but also offer insights into the complex intersections of identity, culture, and history, within the broader Latin American diasporas in Canada. To illustrate, Carmen Rodríguez's and Carmen Aguirre's accounts communicate social and cultural memories, and therefore, their literary narratives could be explored intersected with the case of Chileans at home. González Hernández notes in *La Nueva Narrativa Histórico Chilena* that Chilean writers are driven to "relaborar contenidos históricos señalando que existen enigmas y secretos desconocidos que se han mantenido marginalizados" (214). These

enigmatic and “secret” events are also described by Chileans in exile. Carmen Rodríguez, for example, describes the meaning of having doctors present during torture sessions so that prisoners would not die in the torture chambers: “they say that the military torture people ... I never imagined that there would be doctors there” (“The Mirror,” *And a Body* 39). The literary text does not emphasize whether such doctors were affiliated with the U.S. government or if they were Chilean doctors trained by supporters of the dictatorship. These quotations, nevertheless, presuppose the writers’ intent to denounce sociopolitical actions and the direct intervention of the U.S. government. In Aguirre’s opinion, there were people who participated as part of Operation Condor, such as Francisco Morales Bermúdez “which had been set up [as a general] by Pinochet and the surrounding dictatorships to catch revolutionaries operating anywhere in South America” (*Something Fierce* 22). Therefore, exploring the intertextuality in these narratives could illustrate certain connections. These are transgenerational memories that aim to transmit more than individual life experiences, they also aim to rewrite Chilean Canadian historical memories. Authors actively engage in communicating a profound political awareness of the key historical events in Chilean and Latin American history. The stories within these literary works serve, consequently, as a powerful medium for raising political consciousness and fostering a critical understanding of the socio-political imaginaries surrounding the post-1973 Chilean era, and beyond.

Chapter 3 embarked on a comprehensive exploration of English-language Chilean Canadian literature as a borderland literature, delving into the role of female Chilean Canadian authors in shaping the notion of Canadian *Latinidad* from a hemispheric perspective. The first key conclusion underscores the role of female Chilean Canadian authors in the ongoing process of shaping Canadian *Latinidad*, which involves the reshaping of Latina/o cultures and identities within the framework of the border/migrant consciousness of in-betweenness. This process of reshaping Canadian *Latinidad* draws parallels with the endeavors of other authors such as Guillermo Verdecchia and his influential work *Fronteras Americanas (American Borders)* (1997/2013); and likewise, by infusing their literary narratives with

transnational perspectives, the Chilean Canadian authors featured in this dissertation also reflect the contemporary nuances of being Latina/o in Canada. Their writings capture the evolving meaning attached to identity within a diverse and interconnected world of migrants. An essential facet of their contribution lies in their portrayal of the shifting landscapes of home and belonging. Through their works, these authors engage with the transformation of these concepts across generations and geographic boundaries, thus capturing the multifaceted dimensions of Latina/o experiences in Canada. The second specific conclusion emphasizes the utilization of the concept of in-betweenness and the application of border studies methodologies, notably the development of a migrant consciousness, within the realm of English-language Chilean Canadian literature. These approaches serve as powerful tools in constructing a hybrid Latina/o cultural identity. As literature emerges from the in-between spaces, authors offer a distinctive perspective that reflects the intersections of cultures, histories, and identities. This interconnectedness mirrors the complex negotiations of identity faced by individuals overlapping multiple Latina/o cultural contexts, both in Canada and in the Americas. As a result, English-language Chilean Canadian literature contributes significantly to the literature of the borderlands, embodying the notion of cultural hybridity and fluidity inherent in the Latina/o experience. In sum, chapter three illuminates the profound contributions of female Chilean Canadian authors within the framework of a hemispheric perspective. Specifically, by examining the dramatic play of Carmen Aguirre, *Anywhere but Here* (2021), we conclude that the author not only actively engages in the construction and portrayal of Canadian *Latinidad*, but she also contributes to its evolving themes of home and belonging, by showing how younger generations might now have adopted Canada as home. Furthermore, Aguirre stages a hybrid Latina/o cultural identity, effectively weaving a literature of the borderlands that captures the intricate realm of identity, migration and exile experiences, and cultural exchanges within the Canadian context.

Moving forward, the exploration of hemispheric approaches and borderland literary texts within the realm of Latina/o Canadian literature offers avenues for further research. An enriching direction for future studies could involve an examination of the

interconnectedness of Latina/o Canadian literature with other artistic and cultural forms. This could entail exploring how literature intersects with visual arts, music, theater, and other mediums, creating a multidimensional narrative that captures the complexities of identity, heritage, belonging, and crossing borders for younger generations of Chileans in Canada. Through such an interdisciplinary approach, researchers may uncover the ways in which diverse forms of artistic expression might contribute to a holistic representation of the Latina/o experience in Canada, further enriching our comprehension of the multifaceted dynamics that shape the contemporary Americas. Nonetheless, delving deeper into the narratives of the female Chilean Canadian authors featured in this analysis, one promising avenue could involve an examination of the multifaceted themes related to crossing borders. This encompasses not only physical borders but also the symbolic, affective, and cultural boundaries that individuals navigate in their journey toward belonging and identity. By examining how Latina/o Canadian authors depict the challenges and opportunities inherent in crossing various borders, critics and researchers could gain insights into the intricacies of migrant and diasporic experiences and the negotiation of trauma or traumatic events once they cross the border onto the Canadian borderlands. In this context, an extension of hemispheric perspectives could entail an exploration of themes that shed light on the broader dynamics of the traumatic events of the Americas, including contemporary migration patterns. Moreover, Latina/o Canadian literature has the potential to offer profound insights into the ongoing migration from Latin American countries to North American destinations. For instance, in *Anywhere but Here*, Carmen Aguirre represents social groups of migrants going North, which embody Latin American communities engaging an identity crisis. This analysis could help us to better understand who and how these migrants are represented in a modern (i.e. economical) relocation realm. An analysis of how these narratives might capture the experiences, aspirations, and challenges of contemporary migrants, consequently, could help researchers deepen our understanding not only of socio-political, but also of renewed economic factors driving migration, the complexities of distress, discrimination, and other overarching themes that unite the diverse Latin American migrant communities in their new migratory path.

Chapter four delved into the landscape of Chilean Canadian literary texts within the English language, uncovering their role in broadening the representation of the Latina/o Canadian diaspora to encompass a truly intersectional spectrum of racialized minorities, including Indigenous communities from both Chile and Canada. The analysis culminates in two critical conclusions, highlighting the transformative impact of these narratives on the construction of Canadian *Latinidad* and on the broader decolonization of the Canadian literary and theatrical landscape. The first conclusion underscores the expansive reach of Chilean Canadian literary works beyond the confines of the Latina/o and Chilean diasporas. Lina de Guevara's play, *Journey to Mapu* (2013), situated within the English language, transcends the boundaries of its origins to encompass the perspectives of other racialized communities, particularly those of Indigenous groups from Chile and Canada. By weaving these diverse voices into its narrative, the dialogues forge connections between seemingly disparate histories, fostering an inclusive and intersectional representation of racialized experiences. This approach amplifies the complexity of identity and belonging, intertwining the threads of multiple histories, cultures, and lived experiences within the tapestry of the Latina/o Canadian diaspora. The second specific conclusion underscores the profound significance of the intra-Indigenous perspective depicted within this English-language Chilean Canadian narrative. This perspective not only enriches the ongoing construction of Canadian *Latinidad* but also serves as a powerful tool for challenging stereotypes and confronting racism ingrained within Canada's postcolonial landscape. These literary texts confront prevailing narratives, inviting audiences to critically engage with and question preconceptions that perpetuate inequality and injustice. Additionally, English-language Chilean Canadian literature plays a transformative role in decolonizing the Canadian theater, and by extension, the broader Canadian literary canon. By foregrounding the voices and perspectives of marginalized communities, these narratives challenge traditional power structures and pave the way for a more inclusive and representative cultural narrative. In conclusion, chapter four illuminates the far-reaching impact of Chilean Canadian literary texts within the English language. By expanding its scope to embrace a multitude of racialized minorities, including Indigenous communities,

Journey to Mapu contributes to the mosaic of Canadian *Latinidad* while confronting stereotypes and racism, and fostering a space for the work of decolonization. As these stories expand, they not only enrich the literary and cultural landscape of Canada but also inspire critical reflections and transformations within the reader/audience, offering a powerful testament to the transformative potential of literature.

Continuing along the trajectory unveiled in this final chapter of this dissertation, further studies in the realm of racialized minorities within the Latina/o Canadian literary context could help us delve into the complexities of representational intersectionality, broadening the scope to encompass the intricate interplay of gender, race, and class. Building on the foundation of this analysis, researchers can embark on an exploration of how the intersectionality between these factors shapes the portrayal of marginalized groups such as women and queer communities within the broader space of Latina/o Canadian literature. By scrutinizing the narratives through this intersectional lens, scholars can unravel the nuanced ways in which these identities overlap and interact, influencing experiences, perspectives, and challenges. The concept of representational intersectionality offers a rich framework through which we can comprehend the multifaceted narratives of women and queer groups within the Latina/o and other diasporas in Canada. Investigating how these narratives reflect the complexities of lived experiences across diverse axes of cultures and identity, researchers can uncover layers of insight into the challenges, resilience, and aspirations of survivors. Moreover, this approach could facilitate a deeper understanding of how gender and class dynamics intertwine with racial identity, influencing the portrayal of exiled and migrant characters, the dynamics of their relationships, and the broader exploration within diasporic literary texts. By embracing intersectionality encompassing gender, race, and class, scholars can further explore the transformative potential of literature to challenge and deconstruct oppressive norms and structures. Analyses that engage with the narratives of women and queer individuals within the Latina/o Canadian diaspora, for example, can shed light on the ways in which authors navigate the complexities of representation, resistance, empowerment, and survival.

To illustrate, second-generation Chilean Canadian author, Rosa Labordé, and her play *Léo*—featured in Natalie Alvarez *Fronteras Vivientes* (2013)—presents a promising avenue for future research within the umbrella of representational intersectionality. *Léo* intricately weaves together themes of gender, sexuality, and class through its trio of protagonists. In doing so, it offers a fresh perspective on the Latina/o experience, marking the presence of two queer male characters and their female companion, against the backdrop of the socio-political framework of pre-1973 Chile. By delving into the intersectionality of the main character, a male queer individual, *Léo* opens renewed avenues for examining the multifaceted dimensions of identity within the Latina/o context. Furthermore, *Léo*'s exploration of socio-political issues resonates beyond the post-1973 Chilean era analyzed in this dissertation, it represents a pre-1973 Chilean period, offering another layer of intersectional socio-political experiences by queer individuals. Therefore, delving deeper into Labordé's work would provide perspectives from a younger generation of authors. These perspectives not only enhance our comprehension of the complexities surrounding identity but also encourage critical reflections on the intersecting forces that shape diverse communities.

In a similar context, Carmen Aguirre's play, *The Trigger* (2009), offers another compelling avenue for exploring representational intersectionality. Through Aguirre's personal narrative, the play delves into themes of exile, identity, and trauma, drawing on her experiences as a Chilean living in Canada and as a survivor of sexual violence. However, the narrative not only reflects Aguirre's individual experience but also speaks to broader issues faced by marginalized communities, particularly women survivors of sexual assault. By intertwining personal and collective experiences, *The Trigger* invites analysis through the lens of representational intersectionality, illuminating the intersecting dynamics of gender, and class within the context of survival, resistance, and trauma. Aguirre writes: "The Trigger is for the 170 victims of the Paper Bag Rapist, their families, the communities affected by the predator, and any human being who has ever been sexually violated and lives with that experience in their core ..." (Preface 16). The commitment of Aguirre's work to represent survivors

continues to gain significance in this play. However, it now extends to encompass another level of commitment to other marginalized groups. Both, Labordé's *Léo*, and Aguirre's *The Trigger*, therefore, offer a comprehensive lens that could serve as a powerful tool for the development of a more inclusive literary canon. Such an approach promotes narratives that reflect the diversity of human experiences.

In the culmination of this study, the profound impact of female Chilean Canadian authors on the construction of Latina/o Canadian imaginaries, or Canadian *Latinidad*, has become evident. Through our address of the first question of their contribution, that is, how female Chilean Canadian authors represent a Latino/a Canadian imaginary, these authors have emerged as pivotal architects of Canadian *Latinidad*; they encompass a wide spectrum of experiences that traverse historical, geographical, cultural, and racial boundaries. Through their narratives, they have woven a rich tapestry that captures the complexities of identity, migration, and belonging, bridging the gaps between diverse histories and cultures. Simultaneously, these literary texts have responded to the profound inquiries of “who am I” or “who are we:” queries that resonate within the realm of diasporic and migrant literary explorations. Through the journeys and perspectives of their protagonists, these authors provide nuanced answers to these questions, enriching our understanding of the intricate dynamics that shape identity in the face of displacement and cultural hybridity. They illuminate the profound personal struggles and triumphs of individuals caught between their past and present, shedding light on the processes of self-discovery and collective identity formation. Reflecting on how the protagonist may or may not “actively incorporate” into Canadian living (Giménez Micó), the authors herein captured the process of embracing or resisting the Canadian way of life while preserving their unique heritage. By adopting English as their medium of expression, furthermore, Chilean Canadian writers amplified the visibility of their literary texts within the diasporic imaginary and beyond, fostering intergenerational and hemispheric dialogues that encapsulate the complexities of in-betweenness and the incorporation of marginalized voices. In sum, emerging from a Latin American context

of migration to Canada, female Chilean Canadian writers have commenced reshaping the Canadian literary canon through their growing body of English-language works.

As avenues for future analysis unfold, postcolonial and decolonial frameworks offer fertile ground for exploration. Further inquiry into how these narratives negotiate the legacy of colonialism, challenge Eurocentric perspectives, and foster a reclamation of agency and cultural heritage within the diasporic experience, can provide insights into the transformative potential of this diasporic literature, a transformation now visited on the Canadian literary canon itself. Investigating how these authors navigate the tension between their cultural origins and their engagement with their new Canadian home sheds light on the evolving dynamics of their diaspora, identity, and cultural hybridity. Additionally, the continued development of the Latina/o Canadian tradition warrants a comprehensive examination that encompasses not only female Chilean Canadian authors; as it expands, it should include (male) authors writing in English, such as Bolivian Canadian Alejandro Saravia, as well as authors publishing in the other official Canadian language, French. Once more, it is noteworthy to restate that when I started writing this dissertation, no male Chilean Canadian authors were writing directly in the English language. For future research in this diasporic literature, however, it would be relevant to study Chilean Canadian authors like Mauricio Segura, who writes and publishes in French. Segura was born in Chile but resides in Montreal, and he is the author of five publications: *Côte-des-Nègres* (1998), *Bouche-à-bouche* (2003), *Eucalyptus* (2010), *Oscar* (2016), and *Viral* (2020). By broadening the scope to incorporate multiple linguistic and gender perspectives, but also subsequent generations of authors and protagonists, researchers can achieve a more holistic understanding of the multifaceted Latina/o Canadian literature landscape.

In this context, a significant avenue for future research involves delving deeper into the perspectives of younger authors such as Rosa Labordé, as mentioned previously, and Marilo Nuñez, another female Chilean Canadian author, and her play *El Retorno/I Return* (2021). This avenue of research has the potential to enrich our understanding of the representation of the diasporic Chilean community in Canada. It also offers insights into how new members of the community continue to permeate

meaning into their lives in exile while navigating the complexities of socio-political contexts. These texts continue to serve as representations of solidarity, commitment, and political turmoil characteristic of such a diasporic literature, which remains politically motivated. Examining additional literary narratives, such as the written testimonies from second and third generations of Chileans in Canada, as presented in *50 años después: Uprooted and Replanted in Exile - Reflections of Being Chilean Canadian*, edited by Patricio Bascuñán, and published by Casa Salvador Allende in Toronto (2023), holds great potential for enriching our comprehension of the identity, culture, and history of the Chilean diaspora in Canada. These testimonies provide invaluable insights into how subsequent generations negotiate their sense of belonging and hybrid cultural heritage within the Canadian context, while also grappling with the legacies of political upheaval and exile experienced by their predecessors. By analyzing these narratives, researchers can uncover the ways in which Chilean Canadians engage with their dual cultural identities, navigate transnational spaces, and contribute to the evolving fabric of Canadian society. Moreover, these testimonies shed light on the enduring impact of historical events such as the 1973 coup and the subsequent exodus to Canada, offering a nuanced understanding of transgenerational memory transmission and the construction of collective narratives within the Chilean Canadian community. As such, delving into these testimonies not only expands our scholarly understanding of diasporic experiences but also underscores the significance of oral histories in documenting and preserving the multifaceted layers of immigrant narratives in Canada.

In summary, the literary texts analyzed throughout this dissertation have underscored the importance of tracing the evolution of Latina/o Canadian narratives over time. They reveal how protagonists' perceptions of belonging and the concept of home have been transformed by the currents of history, migration, generational flow, and cultural exchange. By centering the analysis on the themes of home and belonging, and the construction of an archive of memories, Chilean Canadian literary texts have been shown to document the ways in which the Chilean diaspora has reshaped, reimagined, and reconstructed itself over time in Canada. Ultimately, this study

elucidates the intricate threads that weave the fabric of Latina/o Canadian experiences, offering insights into the universal quest for connections, a sense of place, and identity.

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