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Memorializing forced migration and beyond. Commemorating Salvador Allende in Barcelona as memory-work in the context of civic memory and the politics of belonging

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ABSTRACT

This paper argues that streets and squares performing commemorative events in relation to their assigned names could be seen as sites of memory. It focuses on how in these urban landmarks memories and legacies of exile could be addressed using public places as memory-work in the context of civic memory. To support these conclusions, I will analyse Barcelona's square named after Salvador Allende to argue that the square and its yearly commemorative events operate as memory-work in relation to Chilean exiles (1973–1990), functioning for mourning practices of long-term unresolved traumatic memory of political persecution. The square though operates also as a memory-work for other interrupted political projects, their cultural traumas and political exiles, in this case, of the Spanish Second Republic (1939–1975). This transfer of narratives of commemoration transforms the square into a site of memory with several layers of societal values, and thanks to them both integration processes and a sense of belonging could operate among all communities involved, exiles, migrants and locals. This encounter of layers of political memory transforms the square in a site of memory (a heritage place of exile) for democracy and human rights, and fosters belonging to a polity that transcends local and national boundaries.

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Sites of memory are places where groups of people engage in public activity through which they express 'a collective shared knowledge of the past, on which a group's sense of unity and individuality is based' (Assmann 1995, 132). Some monuments and historical landscapes come into this category when they are the stage of yearly, decennially or centennially commemorative acts. Streets and squares are not considered monuments even some hold names related to historic events or people, their naming articulate public remembrance processes, and have become another example of the politics of memory (see Maoz 1996; Berg and Vuolteenaho 2009; Rose-Redwood, Derek Alderman, and Azaryahu 2018). Odonyms only force lies in the aim of recalling by naming, a symbolic marker far away from the original historical place. However, and following Assmann's definition, streets and squares could be seen as sites of memory if commemorative events directly related to their assigned name are staged there. This is the case of a square in Barcelona called Plaça de Salvador Allende. The square was named at the request of Chilean exiles living in Barcelona since the 1970s and since its inauguration in 1984 every September 11 a commemoration event has been celebrated to recall Allende's political project of socialism in democracy. In this case the place, the recalled memories, and the remembrance act operate in unison, providing a distinctive emotional force of this square as a site of memory for Chileans in exile, even the place has no direct connection

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with Chile, Allende, the events recalled, and the Chileans in exile. Drawing on King's arguments (2008) it could be said that the square develops an *ad-hoc* relationship between the urban area, the original event and the memories of exiles, creating in this process new memories and meanings aiming to be preserved for the future. But not only for this community. As this paper will also explore, Plaça de Salvador Allende's remembering power operates at multiple levels as it equally resonates, even for different reasons, to other locals of Barcelona attending actively Allende commemorations, offering thus different remembrance outcomes, all of them valid to transform an insignificant urban square in a heritage place of exile, the tangible manifestation of a form of collective shared memory (after Viejo-Rose 2015).

The term memory-work applied originally to a social constructionist and feminist research method developed by Haug in the 1980s to bridge the gap between theory and experience. It provides a way of exploring the process whereby individual women become part of society, and the ways in which women themselves participate in that process of socialisation, and whose methodology always involved the collective analysis of individual written memories (Onyx and Small 2001). The notion and its methodology have been applied in a wide range of interdisciplinary fields of memory studies, connoting different meanings but involving work on coming to terms with a contested or painful past, when it is agreed that an individual's experience cannot be truly separated from collective shared experiences, ideologies and societal discourses that have shaped the person, and vice versa (Johnson 2018). This paper will align with the cultural geography's use of the term when it refers to the array of creative socio-political processes that build the capacity of the site to be remembered differently in the public eye, especially by opening up opportunities for lay people to claim to a sense of belonging in and through the place. Till (2012) has used this sense of the term to retheorize postcolonial urban politics by exploring how creative political practices generated by local activists, artists, and planners can provide environments of care in 'wounded' urban spaces and empower those affected by gentrification displacements. For Till, the memory-work in these cities operates as mourning practices where participants confront and take responsibility for the failures of the democratic state and its violence, 'providing the possibilities to imagine more socially just cities through place-based practices of care' (2012, 7). Examples of memory-work responding to the harm caused by traditional memorials can be found in the act of removing racially offensive monuments, leading renaming campaigns for university sites and vindicating intersectional scholarship aiming to expose the historical links between higher education and white male supremacy (e.g., Brasher, Alderman, and Joshua 2017). Alderman and Inwood have been exploring the politics of commemorating the civil rights leader Martin Luther King Jr in US streets. They have explored commemorative street naming as 'memorial arenas', a vehicle for bringing the past into the present, 'helping weave history into the geographic fabric of everyday life' (Alderman 2002, 99), and placed King's street naming as part of a larger movement on the part of black Americans to address the exclusion of their experiences from the national historical consciousness, and where King has become the most identifiable symbol of the civil rights movement and black heritage in general (Alderman 2003; Alderman and Inwood 2013). Drawing on this, I will analyse Barcelona's square named after Salvador Allende to argue that the square and its commemorative events every September 11 operate as memory-work in relation to Chilean exiles, functioning both for mourning practices in relation to a long-term unresolved traumatic memory of political persecution, torture and exile, and as vindication of an interrupted democratic project. I will argue that the square operates also as a memory-work for other interrupted political projects, their cultural traumas and political exiles, in this case, those in relation to the Spanish Second Republic (1931–1939). This transfer of narratives of commemoration transforms the square into a site of memory with several layers of societal values (after Avrami and Mason 2019), and thanks to them both integration processes and a sense of belonging could operate among all participants, migrants and locals. This encounter of several narratives of political memories transforms the square in a site of memory for democracy and human rights, and fosters belonging to a polity that transcends local and national boundaries. Keist (2013) notices that it is in the act of remembering that people evoke a notion of belonging as a bounded social relation.

This memory could be related to cultural common origins, as it is in identity; or it could be related to remembered actions which may emphasise a certain mode of political belonging, as in political memories. According to this author, political memories foster belonging to a democratic polity, whether communal or civic, structure and frame democratic protest, and legitimise democratic and sovereign policies of integration. Democratic politics and their remembrance being relevant to communal life is what, I will argue, acts as shared memory in Barcelona's Plaça de Salvador Allende, both for locals and exiles.

In this paper, I will briefly outline the historic circumstances that justify contemporary memory-work processes in Barcelona, not only to contextualise the case study of the Plaça de Salvador Allende but also to understand Barcelona's mindset when the municipality urges the rule of 'democratic memory' in public spaces. Then I will contextualise the presence of a Chilean community in exile in Barcelona and describe how this community managed to name a local square after a historical personality without (*a priori*) any relationship with Barcelona's local history. It is worth noticing both that streets and squares named after Salvador Allende exist in many cities around the world, and that other Barcelona street names also refer to historical events relevant primarily to new residents. This is the case, for example, of the Plaça Madres de la Plaza de Mayo, a square named after a petition in 1989 by Argentinean political refugees who had arrived in Barcelona just after the Chileans. However, the square is not used to memorialise the traumatic events resulting from the Argentinean dictatorship, as the Plaça de Salvador Allende is yearly. The memorialisation process that followed the street naming and its societal values beyond Allende's death is what actually makes this square in Barcelona an interesting case to analyse how a street can be transformed into a site of memory to overcome the great collective damage caused by exile.¹ The commemorative event held every September 11 attracts first and second-generation Chileans in Barcelona, but not only them. Most of the attendees are locals not directly affected by the events in Chile. I will explore how the event reminds them of similar memories in relation to a lost democratic project and the repression of a dictatorship that also destroyed it. Specifically, the dictatorship in Spain, 1936–1975. To address all these issues, I have employed a qualitative research methodology grounded in open-ended interviews with local actors (see Table 1). All these respondents were recruited because they have a direct relation to the process under exploration both in organising the acts of remembering and in creating a public space for remembering Allende in Barcelona. During the interviews issues concerning (political and social) arguments and emotional reasons behind this memorialisation process were explored, together with their effects on their social, emotional, and cultural integration to Catalan society. Furthermore, I tried unsuccessfully to interview the local council leader of the Department of Democratic Memory, from the left-wing party *Barcelona en Comú*, today governing Barcelona City Council, to hear their opinions on how the Plaça Salvador Allende aligns with Barcelona's current democratic work-memory practices. Alongside these open-ended interviews, I analysed the material archived at the Barcelona Municipal Archives regarding the decision-making processes of street (re)naming in Barcelona on the basis of administrative documentation, internal discussion reports concerning the (re)naming of streets, official municipal resolutions and newspaper cuttings compiled for each case. Finally, I have attended several of the September 11 Allende commemorations in the square over the 2000s to develop participant observations. There and then, I informally interviewed participants (N = 23) of all ages (18+), gender, and origins (local, exile and migrant backgrounds) to understand their reasons and feelings in relation to the meeting. These interviews had the format of conversations rather than of an open questionnaire, as I aimed to have a very informal and observational position that could freely foster affects and emotions among participants.

Barcelona's landscape of democratic memory

In Spain one of the consequences of the Wall Street Crash of 1929 was the downfall of General Primo de Rivera's dictatorship (1923–1930). A coalition of leftist, pro-democracy parties expelled

Table 1. List of interviewees and topics discussed (*see note 12).

NAME	AGE	BACKGROUND	ACTIVITY / REPRESENTING	TOPICS DISCUSSED	DATE INTERVIEW
Eulogio Dávalos	+70	Born in Chile, exile, resident in Barcelona since 1975	President of the <i>Centre Salvador Allende de Barcelona</i> , and Honorary President of the <i>Comitè Ciutadà per l'Homenatge a Salvador Allende*</i>	Exile and memory, the history of the commemorating Allende in Barcelona, and the emotional meaning of Barcelona's 11 September events	May 27, 2020
Verónica Dávalos	Between 30-50	Born in Barcelona, second generation of Chilean exile	Secretary of <i>Centre Salvador Allende de Barcelona</i>	The relation of new generations with Barcelona's commemorative events, historic details of the process of transforming a sporadic event in the 1980s into an institutionalised one from the late 1990s onwards, and the political circumstances surrounding this process, especially since the late 1990s	September 6, 2020
Leandra Brunet	Between 50-70	Born in Chile, exile (as a child), resident in Norway (since 1975)	Writer (personal memories of exile)	Restorative justice, commemoration and monuments, the experience of political exile and cultural trauma	May 15 and 18, 2020
Rosa Alarcón	Between 50-70	Born in Valencia, resident in Barcelona (since 1980s)	City councillor in the Horta-Guinardó district (Socialists' Party of Catalonia)	On the institutionalized angle on the events and how they are integrated into the social life of a neighbourhood	July 25, 2020
Ferran Pedret	Between 30-50	Born in Barcelona, resident in Barcelona	General secretary of the Socialists' Party of Catalonia in Barcelona and deputy in the Parliament of Catalonia	The political memories of the Socialists' Party of Catalonia in relation to Chileans' Popular Unity, the political activism of South American refugees during the early years of Spanish Transition in Catalonia, and how this favoured the creation of the Plaça Salvador Allende	September 29, 2020
Antonio Novalbos	+70	Born in Ciudad Real, resident in Barcelona (since 1960s)	President of <i>Sense Traves</i> , association integrated into the <i>Comitè Ciutadà per l'Homenatge a Salvador Allende a Barcelona*</i>	The significance of Allende's monument and events to the locals today and their sense of identity/ belonging throughout the acts in the square.	September 30, 2020

the military government and sent king Alfonso XIII, who had supported the dictatorial regime, into exile. The new Spanish Second Republic (1931–1939) enacted numerous political laws, including a major land reform in Andalusia, union association and labour rights, and a far-reaching military reform. It also re-addressed the wide-ranging political and economic privileges of the Catholic Church. It guaranteed freedom of speech and of association, gave women the right to vote, legalised divorce and stripped Spanish nobility of their aristocratic privileges (Payne 1993). All these political

efforts failed, however, to meet expectations among the working class, yet still alarmed monarchists, the conservative bourgeoisie and aristocratic landowners, members of the church hierarchy and military hardliners. In July 1936, a fascist military uprising set out to return the country to its Catholic tradition, territorial unity and conservative values, and plunged the country into a civil war (Preston 2018).

The outcome of the Spanish Civil War (1936–1939) was the installation of a fascist dictatorship led by Francisco Franco and a vengeful, violent government which systematically suppressed all political and cultural dissident voices. Dispossession of property and belongings, summary executions, unmarked mass graves and missing people, harsh punishment of prisoners, and forced labour in internment and work camps are still present in the memory of many Spaniards.² To the suppression of Republican dissidence in general, the Francoist sense of ‘one (Spanish) nation, one (Spanish) culture, one (Spanish) language’ added violent repression in the ‘separatist’ regions of Catalonia and the Basque Country (Preston 2016). Once the state of war officially ended in 1948, the country’s landscape changed with the appearance of monuments, memorials, civil architecture, and public symbols in fascist style, some of them still part of the Spanish landscape, including street names.³ Franco’s regime ruled a society that lived with repression, surveillance, and public humiliation, creating a dense cultural trauma that still emerges today in the form of fear and shame about remembering. In fact, in the wake of Franco’s death in 1975 the transition to democracy was made possible by the Pact of Forgetting, which basically meant avoiding dealing with the violent legacy of Francoism and making sure that difficult questions about the recent past were suppressed for fear of endangering national reconciliation. The pact was accompanied by a broad amnesty law that granted immunity for all political crimes committed prior to 1977. Like this Spanish democracy seemed to flourish without the legal tools of transitional justice (Encarnación 2008), until a new generation of Spaniards, not feeling engaged in the disremembering pacts of the Transition, called for historical revision and legal reparations.⁴ In 2007 the Law of Historical Memory finally passed. This was an attempt to help Spain come to terms with its dark past but it only questioned the Pact of Forgetting ambiguously. Due to this shortcoming, its implementation today is not without disagreements, difficulties and obstacles, together with the fact that a large proportion of Spaniards either still have a fairly positive view of Francoism or are still afraid of reopening wounds (Gonzalez-Ruibal 2007, 2017). This long, difficult climax of contradictions between the politics of forgetting and those of regaining memory is the context for the work of Barcelona’s democratic city council in renaming streets, recalling Catalan memories in the city’s topography and restoring democratic urban landmarks since the 1980s. The Spanish 2007 Law on Historical Memory made all public administrations responsible for the removal of all Francoist symbols present in municipally owned buildings, squares, parks, and gardens. Today there is no evidence of any Francoist sculpture or symbol in public spaces in Barcelona. Since 2016 Barcelona municipal government has a Council for Democratic Memory that launches ‘memorial initiatives in the city, boosting citizen participation organised for the purposes of promoting research, dissemination and critical reflection on the past.’⁵ The Council’s mandate is to guide and manage municipal political memory, and its component bodies and facilities, and it ‘takes memories not as an imperative duty but rather as a civil right that guarantees citizens the safeguarding, access and use of this heritage, overseeing the structures for passing on memories and creating new ones, where necessary, for the purpose of freely having elements that allow citizens participation in building up an image of the past.’⁶ As a result, the city has organised open dialogues regarding the colonial past (including the removal of conflictive statues), created exhibitions and memorial events on the Republican exile and Mussolini and Hitler’s air raid in 1938, and public talks on local anti-Franco activism. Part of this activity has been also both to remove street names linked to the Franco’s period, Spanish Inquisition and colonial past, and to signpost Barcelona’s democratic memory with new street names, place plaques, and commemorative events.

The Plaça de Salvador Allende in Barcelona

On 11 September 1973 General Augusto Pinochet launched an armed attack on the democratically elected Chilean government of President Salvador Allende. The new military regime was also characterised by systematic physical suppression (disappearance, murder, and imprisonment) of political dissidents and used various mechanisms to expel opponents from Chile. There is a lack of official figures on the political violence under Pinochet's regime, but it seems that at least 35,000 people were direct victims of human rights violations, and between 260,000 and 400,000 Chileans were driven into exile (Rebolledo 2012).⁷ Most political refugees were welcomed in Peru, Argentina,⁸ Venezuela, Mexico, Cuba, Canada, France, Italy, Sweden, Australia, and the former Soviet bloc of East European countries, whose governments had sympathies with Allende's Popular Unity coalition of leftist parties (Rojas and Santoni 2013, Espinoza 2019). This was not the case in Spain as in the early 1970s the country was still under Franco's regime. Chileans arrived in Barcelona because of language affinity, family networks (grandchildren of Spanish Republicans exiled in Chile) and political connections to local leftist clandestine organisations. Their welcome in the host countries managed to mitigate the turmoil of departure (e.g., the effects of torture and imprisonment on those who were expelled or sentenced to exile), but the exiles soon showed clear signs of the cultural trauma of forced migration (after Alexander 2012). Many human right organisations and academic studies (i.e., Roniger 2011; Rebolledo 2012; Espina-Bocic and Sanhueza-Comte 2014) have reported the psychological and mental health problems that often affect Chilean exiles. To the feeling of defeat and dispossession, which manifested itself in the form of depression and anxiety, are added the feeling of being uprooted, of living in two contexts far apart: that of returning to Chile (as they were expecting the dictatorship would not continue for long), and that of integrating in the host country as life continued while waiting to return. The feeling of transience made it difficult to accept the gradual transformation from being in exile to becoming a permanent migrant subject in a new and unsought place of residence, and therefore many exiles were unwilling to adapt to the new situation. Political activism, both against Pinochet and engaging with local and international politics, gave Chileans a reason for being in exile, making them feel that, despite recent failures, part of their identity was valued (Sznajder and Roniger 2007). Rebolledo (2012) pointed out that the articulation between culture and politics was the way both to preserve the link with Chile, and to give them a sense of continuity with their previous life while living in exile. Sports clubs, radios, newspapers, magazines, music groups, theatre workshops, as well as political parties themselves, were quickly created by Chilean exiles. This cultural-political activism helped both to reinforce an identity in exile, and to denounce what was happening in Chile under the Pinochet dictatorship. This is the case of the *Centro Cultural Salvador Allende de Barcelona*,⁹ founded by the Chilean exile Eulogio Dávalos, an eminent guitarist, musician and core leader of the Centre ever since (Dávalos 2016). Since its founding, the Centre has brought together the Chilean community in Barcelona and has been (and still is) a political, cultural, and social landmark for Chileans in exile, and for those arriving during the 1990s as economic migrants. The square in Barcelona bearing the name of the Chilean President Allende is located in an ordinary neighbourhood populated with middle- and working-class citizens, most of them having their origins in the waves of migration to Barcelona in the 1950s–60s and the 1990s (Figure 1). The area was redeveloped during the 1980s, resulting in the creation a new square at the junction of different streets and topographical levels (Figure 2). Neither the neighbourhood nor the resulting square have any special connection with Chile, Allende or the Chilean exiles of 1970s. It is an ordinary square whose only societal value as a memory place comes about every September 11 due to the Chilean celebrations held there. Since the early 1980s a group of Chilean exiles have met in the area to pay homage to Allende and sing Victor Jara's version of *Venceremos*.¹⁰ In 1983 the Centro Cultural Salvador Allende asked for a square or street to be named after Allende in the neighbourhood to mark the 10th anniversary of the military *coup d'état* and the assassination of Salvador Allende. It immediately received the support of neighbourhood organisations and the leftist parties in



Figure 1. Street name plaque and monument to Salvador Allende at Plaça Salvador Allende (Barcelona) (author's photos, 2016).

Catalonia, at that time leading the Barcelona local government, and with close relations to Allende's Popular Unity party. The street name was approved by the City Council in December 1984, and the square was inaugurated two months after. This marked a turning point in Allende commemorations as they moved from exclusively involving the community of Chileans to extending it to local residents, but also institutionalised the event. Commemorating its 25th anniversary, the square was slightly renovated and a bust of Salvador Allende was added as part of the memorial. The sculpture, commissioned from the Chilean artist Lautaro Díaz Silva, is a realistic dramatic representation of Allende as historically photographed and remembered during the violent events at the government palace of La Moneda. The new image of the memorial square was inaugurated on 11 September 1997 in the presence of President Allende's daughter, Barcelona's mayor, senior Chilean diplomats in Spain and the first secretaries of the Socialists' Party of Catalonia (PSC) and the eco-socialist party Initiative for Catalonia-Greens (ICV). The plaque says:

TO SALVADOR ALLENDE

"History is ours and it is made by the people"

SALVADOR ALLENDE GOSENS 1908-1973

Chilean politician. Founder of the Chilean Socialist Party, minister of health, deputy and senator.

Elected President of the Republic in 1970, his government embarked on a democratic path to socialism, instituting major reforms and nationalizations.

On 11 September 1973 the Popular Unity government headed by Allende was overthrown by a coup d'état. Salvador Allende died heroically during the assault on the presidential palace La Moneda¹¹.

Now that there is a square named after Allende, the landmark has become a site of memory mainly due to the remembrance events held every September 11, which bring together hundreds of



Street name plaque and monument to Salvador Allende at Plaça Salvador Allende (Barcelona) (author's photos, 2016).



Figure 2. Plaça Salvador Allende in Barcelona on a regular day (author's photo, 2016).

people, including Chilean exiles, second-generation exiles, local residents, young activists and authorities (Figure 3). The event has a specific structure that the organisation¹² adheres to in its entirety, alongside other institutional formalities emanating from the Mayor's office: a welcoming speech from Eulogio Dávalos, president of *the Centro Cultural Salvador Allende a Barcelona*;



Plaça Salvador Allende in Barcelona on a regular day (author's photo, 2016).



Figure 3. Memorial events on September 11 at the Plaça Salvador Allende in Barcelona, year 2013 and 2019. The big flag in the left-hand corner is not the current official Spanish flag but the one from the Spanish Second Republic, which is red, yellow and purple (photo author Tono Carbajo, Fotomovimiento.org).



Memorial events on September 11 at the Plaça Salvador Allende in Barcelona, year 2013 and 2019. The big flag in the left-hand corner is not the current official Spanish flag but the one from the Spanish Second Republic, which is red, yellow and purple (photo author Tono Carbajo, Fotomovimiento.org).

a speech by a victim of the Pinochet dictatorship invited to each occasion; a minute of silence in memory of the victims; listening to the radio recording of the last speech by Allende from La Moneda Palace; floral offerings from all participating organisations; the national anthems of Chile and Catalonia; and to conclude, collective singing of *Venceremos*.¹³

Plaça de Salvador Allende as memory-work fostering civic belonging

For the Chilean exiles in Barcelona the square is, in the first instance, a place to recall the events that happened in September 1973, especially for those that were directly affected by them, politically persecuted and exiled because of Pinochet's *coup d'état*. Mr. Dávalos affirms that the memorial to Allende is a memorial also to all the Chileans who lost their life and suffered torture during the dictatorship, 'and this a very close, personal, memory. Many of us suffered directly from the violent acts of Pinochet's military, and this is a painful memory still in us'. Leandra Brunet, a Chilean political exile in Norway invited to participate in Barcelona's commemoration 2017 event, considers that the existence of this memorial monument and its accompanying activities recalling the Chilean victims 'serve to relieve a pain, a pain that cannot otherwise be articulated, could not be said out loud'. She argues that the exile itself, the events that made migration forced, is a pain that has not been relieved because, among many other reasons, discussion of it has not been allowed in public in the host societies, with some people even belittling or denying it. She argues that the existence of Salvador Allende monuments and commemorative events which explicitly recall the violent events and those who suffered them and turned them into forced migrants, put together, alleviate the pain suffered among the victims. The monuments and the commemorative events also help to come to terms with the very particular expatriation process that affected Chilean exiles. Roniger (2018) concludes that exile implied a government's breaking of political obligations towards its expelled citizens, but not on the part of the exiles, who in fact redefined their national loyalties regardless of losing their citizenship, in the form of activism in the diaspora. Over time and in the light of the political process followed by Chile from 1988 until today, the experience of de-territorialisation implied coming to grips with a political project envisioned but not achieved. The Plaça de Salvador Allende acts as a metaphorical mourning place for this political experience.

Collective trauma persist beyond the lives of direct survivors and is remembered by group members or next generations as own and conceptualised as a social and political narrative that helps processes of identity construction and belonging (after Hirschberger 2018). It does result from belonging to a community, here a politically active collective that forms because their exile is due to this political activity. This can help individuals to reinforce a sense of community; in this case, of belonging to the community of Chileans in exile. Political activism was a form of community belonging for the exiles, who reconstructed a dense network replicating their former political organisations on the local, regional, national and international plane (Sznajder and Roniger 2007). Eulogio Dávalos emphasises with pride that both the Centro and the September 11 events gather a diverse but consistent group of Chilean exiles, creating a network that extends beyond Barcelona. The event attracts Chilean exiles established in several Spanish and European regions, and the Centre has always taken care to maintain that network of political refugees, also as a way to sustain Allende's political project in exile, to lobby to condemn the Pinochet regime and to be the reference point for the media in Catalonia when judge Garzón prosecuted Pinochet in 1998. This network of Chilean-ness appeals also to the children and grandchildren growing up in exile. For the second generation, the events recalled in the Plaça de Salvador Allende square belong to their parents' memory but have also become a structural part of the family memory, 'a constant presence that connects me with a distant but familiar past', as reported by one of the participants in the 2008 commemorative event in Barcelona, '... because of Pinochet, I am Catalan, or Spanish, instead ... but also Chilean. Both. My parents remind me of this constantly. I cannot escape it [giggles]. Because of this, I am here, with them.' (anonymous respondent 2008). Leandra Brunet, the guest invited to the 2017 event, thinks that the memorialisation process around Allende's murder is a way

to remember those who disappeared during the dictatorship, but also it provides a memory place for the events of 11 September 1973 and their aftermath for those who were not in Chile then. The emphasis here is on new generations not forgetting the reason for Allende's death, on making an absence present in the form of a commemorative place, a memorial monument, and a defined ritual. It is a message coming from and addressed directly to the Chilean community of exiles and their families. In the context of migration, this remembering act is an act of reaffirming their identity and their link to the social community of exiles in Barcelona. It encourages a continuity of social community practices among exiled and their children, with the political memory forming the link between generations.

The September 11 events in Barcelona bring together the Chilean community but also local residents with no direct relation to Chile, Allende's politics and Pinochet's persecution. There are also those, however, that empathise with the political discourse of Allende and the suffering of families of political activists persecuted and exiled, because the events resemble those suffered by the Spanish Republicans under the Franco regime. Both historical events and groups of victims hold a long-term unresolved, traumatic memory of political persecution, exile, and the destruction of a democratic project in Catalonia. When recounting the starting of the Centro Salvador Allende in Barcelona, Eulogio Dávalos recognises that there has always been a positive response by the neighbourhood and Catalan political forces to the Centre's requests regarding Allende's public memory events, and consequently to the memory of those Chileans in exile. He affirms that part of this reception is because there is a 'parallel memory' between Chile and Catalonia in relation to military dictatorship, dramatic political repression, active forgetting and denial processes, and the recent efforts to recover democratic memory, both of Chilean's Popular Unity government and the Spanish Second Republic as unique democratic projects at their time. Jensen (1998, 2006) explains that the positive memories of Catalans in exile in South America is key to understanding the sympathies encountered now when accommodating these new exiles into the Catalan society. When interviewed, Ferran Pedret and Rosa Alarcón noted the political relations of Catalan leftist activism and political formations with South American democratic projects during the 1970s, which facilitated links of solidarity. Local organisations integrated and learned from the reception of Chilean, Argentinean and Uruguayan forced migrants, who easily integrated into local political and cultural activism. All together they constructed a 'community of ideas, projects, and political fights' (Jensen 2006, 137), still visualised in the acts at the Plaça de Salvador Allende. Sznajder and Roniger (2007) conclude that Chileans in exile projected a constant presence in the public and political spheres of the host countries, to the point of becoming political tools for the left in Europe, especially during the last decade of Franco's regime and early years of democracy in Spain (see also Veiga, Duarte and da Cal 2006, 411–412). This synergy worked not only in the political spheres but also created emotional engagements with intangible cultural flows (e.g. protest folk music), still reflected today in the events held in Barcelona. The Allende events in Barcelona recover the memory of what happened in Chile on the 11 September 1973 and Allende's political project, but it transcends geography and participants' profiles because it engages with these common narratives of political activism in Catalonia in the 1970s and after (Figure 4).

When interviewing local authorities regarding the significance of the Plaça de Salvador Allende and events there, political debates about belonging and citizenship of the exiles were not cited, nor was any relation to the ability of the act to transcend social responsibility towards exiles. But democracy and human rights were clearly recalled as part of the municipal role in supporting and participating every year. The legacy of a broken democracy and the atrocities of Pinochet's dictatorship are issues significant to Catalan society, and there is direct interest in keeping that memory alive, both in the 1980s when the Spanish democracy had just been regained and now that the 2007 Law of Historical Memory is restoring the democratic memory. In fact, Chilean exile experiences are not only recalled due to processes of human intersubjectivity and social empathy, as mentioned before, but because the 1973 Chilean events immediately awaken memories of the Second Republic and the Franco period in Catalonia. They evoke situations that resonate immediately as familiar, and its



Figure 4. Participants in sorrow during the memorial events on September 11 at Plaça Salvador Allende in Barcelona, year 2013 (photo author Tono Carbajo, Fotomovimiento.org).



Participants in sorrow during the memorial events on September 11 at Plaça Salvador Allende in Barcelona, year 2013 (photo author Tono Carbajo, Fotomovimiento.org).

memorialisation consequently brings analogous notions of political trauma to local minds. The Allende event in Barcelona not only recalls Popular Unity's political and cultural project but honours both Allende (i.e., playing his last speech) and Pinochet's other victims (i.e., the minute of silence). Victimhood in political repression plays a central role in this process of transforming a particular group's remembrance process into a wider collective memory place. The sense of grief, pain, and discomfort over genocide is something that everyone shares, both newcomers and locals. It is an emotion that is easily transmitted from the group of exiles to the locals, and vice versa, and therefore facilitates similar heritage discourses of empathy and care, and therefore of community belonging. Human rights discourses related to political atrocities are universal and community-independent, and therefore not socially or culturally bounded. This is a dimension in the Salvador Allende memorial that touches all generations participating in the event. The square and its commemorative day are thus not only used to recall exclusively national Chilean identities in the diaspora, but both to remember past human rights atrocities and struggles for justice in Chile, and 'to foster embracing (here and there) transnational justice, human rights and civic engagement', as the Barcelona mayor pointed out during her speech in the 2018 act. All these layers of memory (after Young 2016) in Barcelona's Allende memory place have in common a political project. Keist (2013) notes that it is in the act of remembering that people evoke a notion of belonging as a bounded social relation, and points to political memories as a way of constructing belonging in

a democratic polity, whether communal or civic. Democratic politics and their remembering as relevant to a communal life are what engage as shared memory, both for locals and migrants. Beyond the memory of the victims, the events in the Plaça de Salvador Allende have a political meaning, as they recall the defeat of democracy in Chile. It is precisely this sense of democracy recalled that transcends local and national boundaries, for both Chileans and Catalans. It operates in terms of civic memories that enable locals and exiles to come together every September 11 in the Plaça de Salvador Allende. The resulting shared democratic memory facilitates communal belonging. Barcelona's Allende memorial is an act of recognition of exile, including the trauma suffered, but it is also a democracy campaign that facilitates 'the imagination of political belonging, the idea of democratic action and how refugees may be included therein' (Keist 2013, 681).

Conclusions

This paper has analysed Plaça de Salvador Allende as an unusual site of memory of exile, an urban landmark of memories and legacies of exile in the context of civic memory. Furthermore, it has connected processes of remembrance with processes of belonging meaningful to forced migrants and locals, while providing insights into how an ordinary urban place becomes every September 11 a common ground for the elaboration of grief and trauma generated by political violence occurred in different geographies, in Chile and in Catalonia, and in different times, 1973–1990 and 1939–1975.

This flow occurs because both a transfer of narratives of commemoration occurs, and it exists a diversity of actors and stakeholders with aligned, even not analogous, experiences. The Plaça de Salvador Allende serves primarily as a means of mourning and as a marker of symbolic emotional reparation for those who directly suffered the political repression of the military dictatorship in Chile. The fact that it was the community of political refugees who actively promoted the creation of a public space to openly commemorate and share their memories in exile shows how important it was (is) for them to remember, and socially acknowledge, the reasons for their exile. For the second generation of Chileans, the square connects them with the memories of exile and repression experienced by their close relatives and friends, and it transfers the suffering and reflection on the events happened in Chile from the inner family circle to the collective memory sphere. The fact that each September 11 the square hosts public events in memory of Allende and those who died, suffered torture and exile during the Pinochet dictatorship reinforces the image of the square as a memorial place for the atrocities of dictatorships in South America. But the square and the events held there go beyond this, because the narrative connects with recent local history, political projects and processes of recovering democratic memory in Catalonia. Its nature as a day of remembrance related to democracy as a political project aligned with human rights issues transits from Allende and Chile to embrace similar political and historical narratives among Catalan society. This process of osmosis of the values of democracy and human rights allows the Plaça de Salvador Allende to bring together a plurality of stakeholders who use this public event to reinforce shared democratic values and highlight collective memories as a form of local belonging.

The site furthermore embraces several layers of societal values. The square as a place of memory operates at different levels, involving its participants in different ways and evolving in different stages of the memory process, resulting in a single place of remembering that could be understood as a site of memory. The square does not have any real connection to the original event recalled, it does not endure authenticity, neither does it pretend to: Allende had never been to Barcelona, the neighbourhood and its habitants do not have any special link to Chile either before or after September 1973, nor was the neighbourhood specifically populated by Chileans in exile. As a site of memory, it does not entail any physical connection with the events that it commemorates. And yet it bears emotional connections both for the Chilean community that started to form in the late 1970s – and still does due to the homage paid there – and for the other locals with memories of repression and democratic projects in Spain. It is storing new layers of memories and meanings,

creating a new cultural heritage place on the confluence between a urban square, the event recalled, and the memories of exile (after King 2008). Avrami and Mason (2019) argue that heritage places with societal values reflect important desires, demands and issues of broad contemporary relevance. They relate to the scale of society, not the discrete site, and connect to stakeholders external to (and often well beyond) the site. And more importantly, they enable flows of non-heritage benefits, like advocating for social justice, building peace, civil rights and so forth. Metaphorically, societal values enable sites to function as platforms on which issues of contemporary relevance can be acknowledged, represented, and debated. The Plaça de Salvador Allende in Barcelona has managed to create a site of memory with societal values attached, directly corresponding to contemporary issues of social and political memory, acknowledging and integrating the political memories of Chilean exiles as part of the city's civic memory landscape. It is a societal value elaborated during the last 40 years of remembrance events, transformed into a yearly event significant to both the Chilean community and the city. Civic memory transits along the different stakeholders, resonating to each particular political memories and projects. Each September 11 events reminds this collective group their communality, reinforcing civic belongings rather than communal/ethnic/national belongings (after Keist 2013). The square and the events commemorated there every September 11 then operate as a memory-work tying a place in the city to a commemorative event that binds together a community sharing civic memories and shared political imagination, and by doing this it fosters civic belongings in the context of (forced) migration (after Till 2012). As King notes (2008), the process of belonging takes place here not merely through integration and assimilation but through acts of remembrance, inserting cues for memories into new environments and so creating a new sense of place out of the old. The case thus exemplifies a heritage-making process among communities sharing histories of repression and human rights violations, in which the square operates as a substitute for memories, objects, and places existing in other geographies and periods, both in Chile and in Catalonia. In the practice of memory-work, the monument and the square dedicated to Salvador Allende facilitate social belonging, personal and collective mourning and political vindication in relation to exile and democratic processes, and it could be taken as an example for heritage-making processes of forced migration.

This paper has explored the relationship between memory, heritage and the construction of individual and collective identity, as referred by Viejo-Rose (2015), in the context of cultural trauma. Memory here under the form of trauma becomes the narratives that binds the practice of memorialisation for identity (re)construction (individual and collective), the practice of creating a site of memory both tangible (a square named after and a sculpture) and intangible (a commemoration ritual), and the (re)creation of a civic project (under the form claiming a sense of belonging to a democracy polity) out of an everyday place. It is thus an example of the mutual feedback between memory and heritage studies.

Notes

1. Nowadays also framed as forced migration, following UN-IOM definition: https://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/iml_34_glossary.pdf.
2. Spanish Civil War scholars estimate that c. 580,000 people were killed during the Spanish Civil War, including 200,000 Republican prisoners who died in the prisons, concentration camps, and forced labour battalions established by the Franco regime between 1939 and 1947 (though some lasted until the late 1960s). It has also been estimated that 500,000–700,000 refugees left Spain between 1936 and 1939, of which only one third returned voluntarily.
3. In December 2015 the newspaper *El Confidencial* reported that 1,200 streets in Spain still bore victorious Francoist generals and fascist martyrs' names. In February 2020, 400 streets in 249 municipalities still have names of this kind (https://www.elconfidencial.com/espana/2020-02-29/calles-franco-jose-despieceantonioley-memoria-historica_2473555/).
4. Gonzalez-Ruibal (2007: 205) argues that the Spanish Transition looked less exemplary and easy to defend after other transition models were successfully implemented in South Africa, East European countries and Latin America during the 1990s which did discuss traumatic pasts, provided restitutive justice and avoided

collective amnesia. Encarnación (2014) adds that the consensus on the Pact of Forgetting was broken when in 1998 the Spanish judge Baltasar Garzón indicted the Chilean dictator Augusto Pinochet on charges of crimes against humanity, because this prompted a de-politicisation of the past and reopened the debate on unresolved memory in Spain.

5. See <https://ajuntament.barcelona.cat/memoriademocratica/en/presentation/> (retrieved May 2020).
6. <https://ajuntament.barcelona.cat/memoriademocratica/en/presentation/>.
7. The exact number of victims is a matter of controversy. Contrary to Spain, Chile did designate three National Commission for Truth and Reconciliation, each of them resulting in three reports detailing the human rights abuses resulting in deaths and disappearances that occurred during Pinochet's dictatorship. They are known as the Rettig Report (1991), Valech Report I (2005) and Valech Report II (2011). The reports were not exempt from criticism due mainly to the definitions of torture, incarceration, perpetrators, victims, and exile used to disclose the crimes against humanity.
8. Yet forced into exile again when the Argentinean military *coup d'état* took place in 1976. Notice also that most exiles did not settle immediately in one country but moved to several (often three) as part of their exile/migration mobility. Some exiles, or their children, tried to return to Chile in the 1990s when democracy was restored. If they failed in re-settling, they moved back to their adopted home countries (see Espina-Bocic and Sanhueza-Comte 2014).
9. See <http://centrosalvadorallende.es/>.
10. *Venceremos* (trans. English 'We Shall Triumph') is a Chilean song, written by Claudio Iturra and composed by Sergio Ortega, and popularised by the Chilean groups Inti-Illimani and Quilapayún. It was composed for the 1970 election campaign of Salvador Allende. This song marks a significant recognition of the political thrust of this movement in its use as a tool of propaganda for the Popular Unity coalition, and it became one of the best known songs of the New Chilean Song Movement (Source: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Venceremos_\(song\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Venceremos_(song))). A second version of text was written by Víctor Jara and Sergio Ortega in 1970. Víctor Jara (1932--1973) was a Chilean teacher, theatre director, poet, singer-songwriter, and political-cultural activist during Allende's government. He also played a pivotal role in the New Chilean Song Movement. Jara was arrested shortly after the Chilean coup of 11 September 1973. He was tortured during interrogations and ultimately shot dead, and his body was thrown out on the street of Santiago. The contrast between the themes of his songs – which focused on love, peace, and social justice – and the brutal way in which he was murdered transformed Jara into a symbol of human rights violations, and his song *Venceremos* a hymn for those killed during the Pinochet regime (Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/V%C3%ADctor_Jara).
11. Original plaque says: 'A SALVADOR ALLENDE "La historia es nuestra y la hacen los pueblos" SALVADOR ALLENDE GOSSENS 1908–1973. Politic xilè. Fundador del Partit Socialista xilè, Ministre de Sanitat, diputat i senador. Elegit President de la República l'any 1970, el seu govern va iniciar el camí vers el socialisme per la via democràtica, realitzant importants reformes i nacionalitzacions. L'11 de setembre de 1973 el Govern de la Unitat Popular, presidit per Allende, va ser enderrocat per un cop d'estat. Salvador Allende morí heroicament durant l'assalt al Palau de la Moneda' (translated by Mike Holt).
12. Prior to 2012 the commemoration events to Allende were organised only by the Centro Cultural Salvador Allende. Today this task is carried by *Comité Ciudadà per l'Homenatge a Salvador Allende a Barcelona*, a civic association made up of cultural organisations, neighbourhood associations, local unions, the Centro Cultural Salvador Allende and individuals volunteering. It aims also to avoid any partisan link to the popular memory of Allende. <https://homenatgeallende.wordpress.com/>.
13. See: https://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=0nBogu0uF4s#t=52.

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