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Hopes and Horror

An ethnographic study of a German community in Chile
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Marcela Douglas
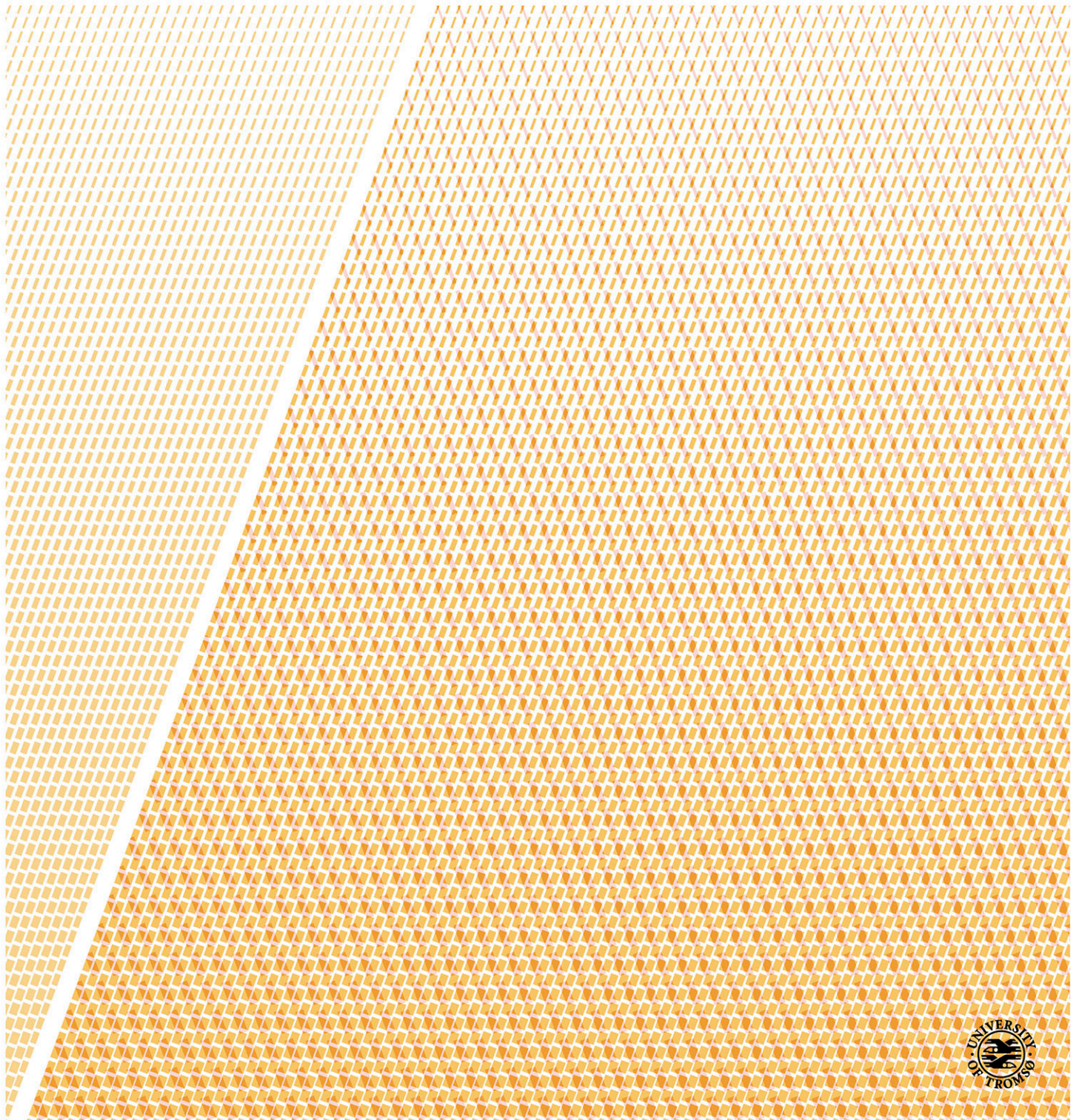*A dissertation for the degree of Philosophiae Doctor – June 2013*

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An ethnographic study of a German community in Chile

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It is very hard to talk about the story about our community, also about Germany. I recently got to know things that I did not know about. Things that are decisive to what happened later but it is difficult to talk about these things and to talk about the story.

Sigmund

To Albert, Maria, Mina, Michael, Holger, Simon, Womas, Davida, Jan, Sigmund and Sebastian

Acknowledgements

The work with this thesis has been a long journey in all respects. At a very personal level, I have returned to my place of birth that I left with my parents as a three-year old in 1974. My return to Chile has been an encounter with my own past and identity and an encounter with Chile's painful and contested history after the military coup in 1973. Coming to Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera I have learned about lived experiences that range from the searching and noble human towards the grotesque aspects of human behaviour. While working with this thesis I have cried and laughed, and experienced frustration. My inner journey has been the longest one. Hopefully some of these experiences will be reflected in this thesis.

My journey has also been shaped by the many people I have met while working on this doctoral project. Through the years I have experienced the support and felt the appreciation of a lot of people. To all you I owe a great debt of gratitude.

Firstly, I want to thank all the people of Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera that I have met during the years. Thank you for opening your hearts and lives for me in spite of your many painful experiences. *Asi es la vida - this is how life is*, a sentence I heard several times during my fieldwork. You have taught me to never forget to appreciate every moment of life. Furthermore, a big thank to Kina who introduced me to central part of Chile. I am very grateful to the Vera family who took me under their wings and offered me friendship and love when everything seemed dark.

My gratitude goes to the Dept. of Archaeology and Social Anthropology, and to the Department of Education, at UiT The Arctic University of Norway, for given me the opportunity to write this dissertation. To Associate Professor Jon Schackt, my supervisor: I appreciate your support, patience and knowledge throughout the writing of this thesis. To Professor Jens Ivar Nergård, my co-supervisor: This thesis would not have been finished without your help. You have encouraged me to keep my visions alive. Working with you has been a learning adventure! To Professor Sarah Pink: Thank you for your valuable feedback. I have learnt a great deal from you. To Associate Professor Rossella Raggazzi: thank you for guiding me in the making of the DVD and generously sharing your knowledge with me. To Dr. Paul Heller: Thank you for sharing your extensive knowledge of Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera. This has been a great help for me. Also I want to thank Professor Peter I. Crawford whose visual anthropological work has been a source of inspiration. Thank to Andreas Bush for technical aid with the DVD.

Map 1: Map of Chile

Source: http://www.worldatlas.com/webimage/countrys/samerica/cl.htm

Map 2: Local surrounding of Villa Baviera

Source: http://www.villabaviera.cl

Map 3: Layout of community settlement

Map. Title block reads "Colonia Dignidad".

Legend:
1. Stage
2. Zippel Hall
3. Old Kitchen
4. Office
5. Video room
6. Dressmaker's workroom
7. Conference room
8. Zippel new building with common kitchen
9. Security Centre
10. Army salon and toilet
11. Dog kitchen
12. Steam plant
13. Maize shed
14. Agricultural storage

Source: Vedder, E.and Lenz, I., 2005: *Weg Vom leben*, Berlin: Ullstein

Timeline

1954
Private Sociale Mission (later Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera) is founded in Germany by Paul Schäfer

1961
Paul Schäfer is investigated by Interpol for child abuse. He and his followers immigrate to Chile. Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera receives status as a charity organisation.

1970
Salvador Allende becomes Chilean president

1973
Military coup in Chile headed by General Augusto Pinochet that started a military dictatorship

1990
The end of the military dictatorship in Chile

1991
Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera loses their status as a charity organisation

1991
The start of The Vigil of Pain (*La Vigilia del Dolor*) in support of the community

1997
Paul Schäfer leaves Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera and hides from the Chilean police

2005
Paul Schäfer is found in Argentina by Chilean authorities and brought to Chile. He is sentenced to total 30 years in prison.

2006
Colonia Dignidad/ Villa Baviera write a public declaration admitting among other things their guilt as community concerning abuses of human rights against Chilean political left-wing activists during the military regime. In this declaration the community asks the Chilean nation for apology for past acts.

A note on the DVD-ROM

This doctoral thesis consists of a written thesis and of a DVD-ROM[1], both with the name *Hopes and Horror - An ethnographic study of a German community in Chile.* The audio-visual material on the DVD-ROM is mainly produced by Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera, and some by me, the researcher. The material made by the community will be marked with the text with "CD/VB", and the material made by me with "MD". The DVD-ROM included contains film sequences and audio. By double-clicking on the links the film sequences and audio will appear. These files are embedded in the different chapters that constitute the thesis and will appear with a corresponding numerical DVD reference, together with one or more of a combination of the subsequent descriptive media types: video and audio. One example: DVD REF 1: VIDEO[2]

The DVD-ROM should be seen as supplementary and integrated component of my written doctoral work, and it is not intended to give meaning by itself. Many academics are today looking into ways of connecting filming and writing anthropology more closely (Postma and Crawford 2006; Grossman and O'Brien 2007). My aim is to integrate the written and audio-visual representations of my work. I am aware that this may be more challenging for the reader because the reader will have to deal with different sources of information. On the other hand, this kind of "reading" textually, visually and audibly may contribute to a more complex and interactively rich experience for the reader. The capacity to link text, sound and images, both film and stills, makes possible a hybrid form of anthropological communication that may enhance ethnographic sensitivity and intimate knowledge (Biella 2007).

I have used the audio-visual material on the DVD-ROM in different ways in the chapters that constitute this thesis. One way is as mere illustrations of places and people; as a way of giving a richer description of my fieldwork setting and some of the people I got to know better during my research. In this manner the DVD-ROM should contribute to give the reader a more "sensuous" experience, to borrow Stoller's (1989) term, and thus help provide another type of insight than the written word alone.

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[1] All audio-visual material made by Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera that is used in the DVD are by courtesy of
[2] There will be an index providing a corresponding list of all DVD references with numbers and titles cited in the relevant chapters. By clicking on a reference in the index section the media content will be opened. This makes it also possible to read the written thesis and view only the DVD references in a computer screen. To navigate between references, click on the references. Technical specifications: Minimum requirements: Windows XP or later; Mac OS X, Ouick Time Player 7 and Adobe Reader 7.

Furthermore, some of the film fragments discussed in my thesis, in particular in chapter 6, has been added to the accompanying DVD-ROM. As stated by Postma and Crawford (2006:1): "To study the visual in culture the film media are needed. Only photos and film can document the visual in culture as a phenomenon *an sich* and as part of social reality, to enable the writing anthropologists to study and analyse its role in social life and culture in general". In this manner I offer the reader a hearing/viewing source of audio-visual material referred and discussed in this thesis. The readers can see with their own eyes what one is analysing and not only read about it. This may contribute to making the analysis more transparent and lead to a deeper understanding of visual communication.

On another level I wish to integrate the audio-visual material that forms part of my research more closely with the analytical discussions presented in my thesis. Through the audio-visual material I wish to emphasise both the making and unmaking of Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera from a utopian project towards a totalitarian one, and people's complex experiences with constructing own community. During its existence this community has used the photo and video camera and filmed aspects of their daily life. Over the years I was given access to some of this material. This opened up the possibility for me to explore in diverse ways the process of transformation of Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera. In particular the utopian dream of the first generation that started the community, and later the time of a felt persecution by the community members after democracy were back in Chile in 1990. The visual element is better able to capture and express process and change (Ruby 1980).

Acknowledging the ethical problems and limitations of representing painful lived experiences I will claim that the image, either through the photo or video camera, is a potential source for exploring and representing painful past experiences. This is due to "…how the physical materiality of the image is often the very basis of its capacity for involvement in bearing witness to past events" (Guerin and Hallas 2007:7). The quality of the image may make it particularly suitable when doing fieldwork among people with painful and violent experiences that may be difficult to communicate through words but are more expressed through silence and body language. As MacDougall (2006) argues, the image and the text are different media with diverse possibilities and limitations and therefore they construct different objects. The image has some qualities that communicate with us in a non-verbal manner.

Visual representations constitute a separate form of anthropological knowledge because the image has other qualities than the written representations (MacDougall 2006:271). Film is particularly well suited to mediate the near and particular experience. It

can allow us to see the postures, facial expressions, tone of voice and gestures and so on (MacDougall 2006:269). In this manner, objectification of culture, through aesthetics, facial expressions and social interaction, is emphasised in visual representations. The ability of visual anthropology to "conjure up bodies and places and personalities" is its strength (MacDougall 2006:273). It makes the unknown known, "…the strangeness of even the most exotic subject was counterbalanced by a sense of familiarity" (MacDougall 1998:245). When we for example see the image of a girl or boy we first see a person and not where this person comes from. "…the content of an image is overwhelmingly physical and psychological before it is cultural." (MacDougall 1998:252). This aspect of the content of the image makes it transcend "culture" (ibid.). It is not about there being no cultural differences but rather that they are not absolute (MacDougall 1998). This might make visual representations a powerful tool for communication with the heart rather than only the mind and contribute to richer understandings for other peoples experiences.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION: FROM DIGNITY TO NIGHTMARE

1.1 A short presentation of Colonia Dignidad / Villa Baviera

In 1954 Paul Schäfer founded the Private Soziale Mission[3] in Germany. The organisation's followers came from a Baptist group and were strong believers. This group of people saw the evils of the big cities, and perceived the big cities as decadent. They followed traditional values emphasising the importance of religion, deference to authority and traditional family values. On arriving in Chile in 1961, the community founded by this group and its descendants would be named first Colonia Dignidad[4] and later Villa Baviera.[5]

In 1961 Schäfer immigrated to Chile in order to avoid charges in Germany concerning sexual abuse of children. Most of his followers were not aware of the charges against their spiritual leader (Gemballa 1990); they were driven by the wish to found their own community in Chile, a community based on hard work and discipline, and wanted to do charity work among poor Chileans. In time Colonia Dignidad/ Villa Baviera constructed a hospital and children school that was free for Chileans from neighbouring localities. Agriculture became the inhabitants' principal activity and over the years the community became self-sufficient. It is estimated that 300 persons of all ages accompanied Schäfer to Chile.[6]

In order to realise the objective of charity work, the immigrant's means and relations of production were communalised on arrival in Chile. All people in the community were mobilised and worked and ate in collectives. In addition, Schäfer's followers slowly had to give up their family ties completely. "Free Christians" were better able to serve God, according to Schäfer. All social life of the community members was sexually segregated, and subsequently organised in gender and age-based groups (Schwember 2009). In 1961 the community was given status as a charity organisation by the contemporary Chilean government, resulting in a range of economic benefits, among others tax exemptions.

The German community gradually became secretive, first in order to keep out what was perceived as the "communist" danger and later to prevent members from leaving.

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[3] Private Social Mission. My translation.
[4] The Dignity Colony. My translation.
[5] The Bavarian Village. My translation.
[6] Mainly between 1961 and 1963 but a few members arrived after 1963.

Barbed-wire fences, searchlights and a watchtower were built; eventually even a sophisticated security system was developed.[7] Increasingly, personal freedom was replaced with a strict totalitarian system where people living in Colonia Dignidad/ Villa Baviera were prevented from moving around freely inside or outside the community's boundaries (Schwember 2009). After the military coup in Chile on 11 September 1973 that resulted in General Augusto Pinochet's military regime, the development towards a totalitarian system within the community became definitive. The community's German leadership collaborated with the Chilean secret police during the military regime, the Dirección de Inteligencia Nacional,[8] which constructed a secret detention and torture camp inside Colonia Dignidad/ Villa Baviera (Schwember 2009). According to human rights organisations and the Chilean truth commissions a number of people belonging to the Chilean left wing were tortured, killed or disappeared in the community after the military coup (Lagos and Violenstein 1988).

Most of the residents of the German enclave were subject to their leaders' absolute control. The leaders achieved this control through the exercise of both physical and psychological violence. People from the community, in particular the younger generation, were beaten, denied food, tortured with electricity and isolated from others for long period of times. Some members were sterilised without their knowledge. Forced medical treatment with strong sedatives such as Valium was much used. Regular working hours were 12 hours a day or more the entire year. Many community children, mainly boys, and young men, were sexually molested and abused by Schäfer (Schwember 2009).

With Chile's return to democracy after 1990, human rights abuses against left-wing Chileans under the military regime were investigated; these investigations grew to include the role of Colonia Dignidad/ Villa Baviera in these abuses. Following a number of unsavoury revelations, the Chilean government abolished the community's charity status in 1991.[9] Paul Schäfer was wanted by the Chilean police for sexual abuse of Chilean children in 1996, and escaped in order to avoid the Chilean authorities. In 2005 Chilean authorities found Schäfer in Argentina, extradited him and sentenced him to total 30 years in Chilean prison for charges of sexual abuse of local Chilean children; involvement in the disappearance of political left-wing activists during the military regime, as well as human rights violations, including abuse

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[7] In 1966 the first known incidents of escapes became generally known in Chile, and stories about abuse against community members spread in Chilean media.

[8] National Intelligence Directorate. My translation. This unit existed until 1977 after which it was renamed (Matus 2011).

[9] The community appealed against this decision and initiated a long judicial dispute that lasted until 1994 when the Chilean Supreme Court finally deprived the community of its charity status.

against members from the community.[10] In January 2006 the Chilean police found in Colonia Dignidad/ Villa Baviera what is believed to have been the graves of political left-wing activists killed after 1973. While no human remains were in fact found, there were traces that earth had been moved; indicating that the human remains of the murdered activists had been moved by the community in collaboration with Chile's military regime. In 1978 the military regime started an operation named "remove television sets" that consisted of exhuming cadavers and remains of opponents killed during the first years of the military regime. It is believed that the human remains found in the community were removed as part of this operation (Corporacion Parque por la Paz Villa Grimaldi 2012).

In April 2006 the community issued a public declaration, admitting among other things their guilt as a community in human rights abuses against Chilean political left-wing activists during the military regime, and apologising to the Chilean nation (Schwember 2009). In April 2010 the community's leader Schäfer died in jail due to health problems. This led to a general meeting in the community where it was decided that Schäfer was not going to be buried in the community's common cemetery. I was told that the community wanted to protect the growing tourist industry that had emerged in recent years; transcend public stigma, and leave behind a painful past.

Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera started out as a utopian project. Its original members immigrated to Chile in order to realise a dream that had come to appear out of date in post-war West Germany. They wanted to live the life of simple cultivators of the soil emphasising the dignities of communal fellowship (in Christian terms), hard work and charity. To realise these ideals they founded an agrarian community in Chile. In this dissertation I shall discuss the case of Colonia Dignidad/ Villa Baviera in terms of what has been written about the differing characteristics of and variable courses of development of utopian communities.

Like many such communities, Colonia Dignidad/ Villa Baviera failed and, by any standard, did so dramatically – probably because the dream the members sought to realise arose, not as much from well-defined and shared ideology, as from a charismatic leader. His followers were originally seduced by him and his ideas, a charismatic leader who, once positioned in the community of his design, did not hesitate to employ methods often associated with totalitarian states – and the followers became obliged to remain so or face the consequences. The communal structures that had been established became a straitjacket of totalitarian social and political control.

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[10] In addition, the former Private Social Mission was sentenced as an illegal association. Some 22 members involved in the community's leadership and working closely together with Schäfer were given prison sentences.

When the new home country of these German immigrants became a right-wing dictatorship in 1973, Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera transformed itself into a totalitarian cyst within the authoritarian body of Pinochet's Chile. When democracy was re-established in Chile (1990) the community became a social anomaly with a criminal record for collaboration with the dethroned right-wing dictator. In desperate attempts to gain sympathy, aestheticised aspects of the original utopian dream were now mobilised for public relations purposes. The results of these efforts were meagre and after the departure of the group's leader, Schäfer, in 1997, the residents of the community found themselves in limbo. The dream was over, both as a social experiment and a public relations stunt. It was time to face reality and come to terms with present as well as with the past.

This is the moment when my personal involvement with Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera started, and I commenced fieldwork in the area. People were disoriented and fearful. Getting to know them was like breaking through layers of protective shells. They feared all outsiders (including, to begin with, myself) and they feared one another. Little by little, however, the once closed and strictly controlled community started to open up and I was there to document the process. People started to talk to the outside world using their own voices, and sharing what they said with me, who happened to be there among them. Slowly my body of data began to grow as a series of testimonials: about the hopes that had motivated their emigration from Germany; about the hard work in Chile and, not least, about the repression and violence that many had suffered at the hands of their fellow residents. I heard stories of accusations, excuses and guilt. I became, I believe, a medium for the members' stocktaking and will try to mediate some of this process: looking through the eyes of some of the residents, we shall see what Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera was to them and how they lived through the dream that so rapidly turned a nightmare.

How could this happen? How could so many remain loyal to a tyrannical leader for so long? My informants do not provide simple answers to these questions, and neither can I. The best I can do is to try and shed some light on these questions by showing how they belong to a field where social theory intersects with philosophy.

1.2 My personal journey: Back to Chile

As a three-year old, I left Chile together with my parents who were exiled in 1974. Like many other Chileans from that time, my parents shared Popular Unity's dream of constructing a socialist Chile - a dream which was crushed in 1973, with the military coup. Although I grew up in Norway, the military coup and its consequences were a strong presence in my childhood, and knowledge of human right abuses informed my daily life. I used to play "prisoner" and "torture" together with other Chilean children; in this game one person "tortured" one of the other children. Another game involved fleeing our country from war, and becoming exiles.

My parents brought me to protest marches in Norway where demonstrators chanted *¡El pueblo unido jamás será vencido! - The people united will never be defeated!*. This song was the anthem for the Popular Unity government of president Allende. After the military coup the song became the hymn of the Chilean resistance against the Pinochet regime, both within Chile and among the community of Chilean exiles abroad. Often photos of missing left-wing Chileans were displayed at these marches. We went to Chilean concerts given by visiting left-wing music groups; listened to political appeals and participated in gatherings aimed at collecting money for the resistance in Chile.

I was seven years old when I visited Chile for the first time after my parents' departure. I travelled alone, under the care of the airline's staff. This was the first trip of many to Chile during my childhood. At the airport in Chile my Chilean grandmother and grandfather awaited me. At the time Chile was living through the first years of Pinochet's oppressive military regime. The Constitution and the Congress were suspended, strict censorship and curfew was imposed, and all parties were banned. During my childhood trips I got a child's perspective of a Chile in siege and fear. From 1973 to 1987 there were national curfews that forbade people to be out on the streets in the evenings. Gatherings of more than two people (not family members) were not permitted.

On one of my visits, my grandmother brought me to an old building close to the cathedral in central Santiago, and told me that this place helped people in Chile. This was *Vicaria de la Solidaridad - The Vicariate of Solidarity*, an agency of the Chilean Catholic church. The Vicariate began operating in 1976 and would offer free legal defence and work for human rights issues. It stood up against the persecution of Chilean citizens and helped the families of *desaparecidos* – people who had been disappeared by the government. I remember glimpses of people, many tearful, waiting in the hall of The Vicariate of Solidarity. And the ringing of telephones and the sounds from the radio channel *Radio Cooperativa* with the

characteristic melody of the news. *Radio Cooperativa* was one of the few public media that denounced the human rights violations that took place in Chile during the military regime.

My first years were spent among a generation of Chileans that had hopes and dreams of a better Chile, and that fought for this to happen through supporting the government of Allende. This generation would suffer severe human right abuses committed by their fellow countrymen, and many were denied the right to live in their home country for decades. The dashed hopes and the pain following from the coup in 1973 have shaped the life of my family, as that of many other exiled Chileans. Despite these manifestations of loss and pain, I have had difficulties comprehending them. Growing up in Norway in the 1970s and 1980s created a distance to my parents' experiences. How to understand such loss and pain? Moreover, how to understand how Chileans could commit inhumane acts against their fellow men only because of different political views? Through writing this doctoral thesis and getting to know people from Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera I have found a way into exploring experiences connected to pain and lost hopes, and of living in a totalitarian system.

In addition, being raised in a milieu of exiles I was intimately acquainted with the Chilean left-wing, including both its political thinking and people's experiences during the military regime. Through writing this text I have had the opportunity to get to know a group of Chileans and members of Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera that, although for different reasons, all supported the military coup and General Pinochet, and that belonged to the right-wing in Chile. Meeting this group has helped humble me and made me realise the complexities underlying the military coup in 1973, and to better understand the motivations of those groups in Chilean society that supported the military coup and regime.

While writing this thesis I have realised my need to understand my own history as a child of Chilean exiles. This interest in Chile's contested past may be the result of the social political context in Chile after 1990. Chile was engaged in investigating human right abuses, the evoking of memories, testimonies and pain. For many it was also a search for justice for past inhumane acts. It is in this setting, I heard about Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera for the first time through the Chilean media. I learned about a German community whose inhabitants had come to Chile to do charity work, and where a particular way of living had been constructed in isolation from established Chilean society. This was a community that according to several human right organisations had participated in the torture, killing and disappearance of left-wing Chileans in the first years after the military coup in Chile 1973. I got curious about this particular community; about how a separate community was

constructed with the vision of doing charity work, and about the transformation of this community towards becoming totalitarian.

1.3 Continuing the journey: Back to Germany

While pregnant with my first child I travelled to Germany in 2006 in order to visit two former members of Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera, a couple which had become my friends during my many stays in the community. After many years in the community, this couple, Mina and Michael, decided to move permanently to Germany, and did so one year before my visit to Germany in 2006. During my visit we spent a lot of time together: watching the FIFA World Cup on television that was hosted in Germany that year, talking about their past experiences in Chile and their new life in Germany. We would talk about little and big things part of daily life, as well as about my doctoral project. Mina and Michael introduced me to people that had been part of the community before going to Chile, and took me to the church where the community had emerged in the 1950s. They shared their thought and experiences with me, and expended considerable effort to help me to gain more knowledge about and better understand Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera.

One day they invited me to see a feature film at the local cinema that they had heard a lot about. It was a German film, *Das Leben der Anderen.*[11] The film depicted life in former East Germany and the total control over East Germans exerted by STASI, the East German secret police. After the film screening we went back home and both Mina and Michael told me that they saw a parallel between the ways STASI controlled people and the way people had been controlled in the community. While talking with Michael, I suddenly heard screams from Mina in the bathroom. She shouted that she could not get out because the door was locked. After some minutes Michael managed to help her out. Mina seemed quite upset after this and it appeared that the film had awakened painful memories from her time in Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera. Mina later told me how the film brought to life her past experiences from the community. The way in which the film's images and sounds had conjured up buried memories is not uncommon. "Traumatic events are encoded into memory by auditory, olfactory and visual cues" (Hinton, Pich, Chhean and Pollard 2006:68). Nightmares from their past were being triggered.

When I arrived to spend more time with them the next day Michael told me while Mina was absent that although it was not my fault, both of them were having *nightmares*

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[11] *The Lives of Others* from 2006 directed by Florian Henckel von Donnersmarcks.

about their past in Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera because they talked so much about this time with me. It was difficult for them to forget their past and the film *Das Leben der Anderen* had made their experiences come alive even more. Their memories from their life in the community had started to appear in frequent nightmares, daytime flashbacks and panic attacks such as that experienced by Mina in the bathroom. In this manner my project initiated a process among Mina and Michael of recalling their past lived experiences that proved painful and difficult for them.

In time, what started as a utopian dream of constructing a community was transformed into a living nightmare, and life for most people in Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera became like a prison camp in which basic rights and freedom were severely curtailed in the name of constructing a separate community. A culture of violence, terror, distrust, and everybody spying on everybody developed in the community. The administration of non-therapeutic drugs in order to keep community members obedient, corporal punishment, hunger, malnutrition, illness and overwork were all part of daily life. Freedom of travel, speech, occupational choice were radically reduced or non-existent; money was abolished among the people in the community and nobody earned their own salary; formal education disappeared; and family bonds were weakened. Individuality was not permitted, and was replaced by a collective identity that was totally subordinated to the community's all-powerful leader.

This work started with an idea that utopian communities would be the most important aspect in this thesis. In the process of writing it became natural to expand the perspectives included in the thesis, and to also include totalitarianism. However, this does not mean that research about utopian communes is irrelevant to my work; to the contrary, much research about utopian communities has been done by social sciencetists, research that has helped me to understand Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera better (Brumann 2000; Hicks 2001; Hine 1966; Holloway 1966; Kanter 1972; Sargent 2010; Zablocki 1980). In order to understand this particular community in all its complexity it was nessesary also to look at its origins. As I have argued in this thesis, the community started as a utopian community, and it is therefore important to explore perspectives about utopian thinking and utopian communities in this work.

1.4 An outline of this study - From utopia to totalitarianism

The group of Germans that settled in southern Chile on the early 1960s emigrated for various reasons, but mostly out of a shared feeling of loss and estrangement in the West Germany that had taken shape since the end of World War II. Some of them had a background as members of the Nazi party (NSDAP) or its associated organisations, while others were ethnic German refugees from the countries behind the Iron Curtain. They shared a strong Christian (Baptist) identity and a dream of making a better future for themselves based on archetypical German values relating to hard work. This group of people saw the modern city as part of a destructive force where human beings could be attracted to self-indulgence and sinful behaviour. Their ideological commitment to these values may have been vague, but they shared a profound dedication to a strong charismatic leader who, while knowing how to inspire his followers, had his own private reasons for fleeing Germany.

In Chile they founded what we may look on as a utopian community, that is a community based on shared commitments and ideals that imply some degree of separation from the larger society surrounding it. Like many such utopian projects it failed and it can be claimed that it failed more severely than most. We saw above that some of its former members consider it *a nightmare,* and we shall see that they do so for good reasons. However, before I go further into the particulars of how Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera developed, it will be necessary to look into some of the challenges facing utopian projects in general. I explore how utopia can take different shapes, and how totalitarianism can be one. This will be the topic of the next chapter (chapter 2). In chapter 3 I present the setting for my fieldwork and my way into Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera. I also introduce the persons from the community I got to know best and who became both my friends and helpers in this project. Finally I give an account of some of the main challenges that I faced during my fieldwork, and the experiences I had using a video camera in a complex field such as Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera. In chapter 4 I look more closely at the origins of and motivations for the initial founding in Germany. I explore how the birth of this community was shaped by historical events such as the Second World War. Moreover I look into the establishment of this particular community in Chile in the years before the military coup, in particular how structural changes were introduced in the community when coming to Chile, and how some established cultural knowledge, central values dear to German life, namely hard work and discipline were made part of an ideology. In chapter 5 after a short presentation of the military coup in Chile in 1973 and of the collaboration between the community and the military

regime I illustrate how the Chilean socioeconomic and political situation prior to the military coup in combination with ideological manipulation conduced to "heat" up the thinking of people and of those in power in Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera in the direction of totalitarianism, and how the military coup helped to activate the path towards totalitarianism. I look at how the structural changes introduced in Chile contributed to the construction of a particular ideology of violence that created terror and fear, and how these mechanisms contributed to breaking down humanity and achive total domination of most people in the community. After a short description of the return to democracy in Chile in 1990 and the many legal charges against Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera in chapter 6, I go on to discuss the community's public responses to this. The community organised an extensive support movement that involved different types of social gatherings, and the making of propaganda films. I examine how the community supplemented their structural practices and ideology through the support movement and propaganda film that became a way of manipulating the consciousness of people in the community and others in order for them to "not se" or "forget" what was going on their community. Through emphasising perfection and beauty Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera sought to shift attention away from the community's troubled history. In chapter 7 I focus on the community after democracy was re-established in Chile with a strong emphasis on the human rights abuses committed during the military regime. I look more closely at how the community dealt with this issue through a public collective apology directed at the Chilean nation. In order to understand the first followers' involvement in the community's totalitarian thinking and acts I also examine in this chapter how ideology is linked to psychological processes. In the last chapter, chapter 8, I reflect over the becoming of this thesis, and reconsider the main theme of this work: how could the dream of constructing a separate community end in a community with characteristics of totalitarianism. I argue how utopia is a double-edged sword that can be a critique of society *but* also lead towards totalitarianism.

CHAPTER TWO

UTOPIAN PITTFALLS

2. 1 Utopia as the double-edged sword

Utopias are often constructed against a background of crisis that the utopia is meant to address. When existing systems begin to break down or unravel, a utopia can serve to consider and to debate a broad range of alternatives (Albritton 2012:141). Utopias may help free the mind from the despair of continued entrapment by the seemingly unalterable reified structures of thought and practice. This is particular relevant in times of crisis when people may need help to deal with new, complex experiences forming part of a radically changing world. In this perspective utopia is seen as positive. Utopia helps people to dream about ways of thinking and acting that are different from established patterns of thought and behaviour. But utopia helps also people to act in new ways according to a utopia. As such utopia can both contribute to create the feeling of future relive, and to create real improvement (Albritton 2012).

Utopia can be said to take two quite different shapes. It can either create a particular place characterised by openness and voluntariness, and by proposing new ways of ordering social life. Alternatively, utopia can become locked, as a result of representing a totality of meaning with a domineering "vision of the world" (Nancy 2012:9). According to Albritton (2012:141), some of the reasons why utopias can become dystopias have been related to the religious devotion that is often released by utopian movements; fanaticism replaces open debate. Furthermore this religious enthusiasm has commonly "been focused on charismatic elite that, despite initial good intentions, ends up crushing democracy" (Albritton 2012:142).

Some of the criticism against utopias is related to their inherent quality of ahistorical abstraction from existing realities. Davis observes that this abstraction makes utopias either hopelessly impractical, or dangerously idealistic, or both (Davis 2012). This dangerous idealism has been noted as an objection to democratic practice by Karl Popper (2002). For Popper, the utopian approach implies that the action is directed towards an ultimate aim or end, and agents acts rationally when their actions accord with such aim or end. As stated by Notturno (2003:80):

> The utopian engineer must first identify his ultimate end. He must next choose the
> means most appropriate for attaining it, bearing in mind that they are merely means to

the end and not the ultimate end itself. And he must then consciously and consistently pursue his ultimate end….the utopian approach says that we must identify our ideal state or society… before we can do anything to reform our institutions or improve our institutions.

In Popper's view the undemocratic practices in totalitarian societies are the outcome of a holistic idea of society and a holistic approach to policy design and implementation. The holist believes that society is more than the sum of the individuals who comprise it. This gives a license to those who wish to curtail the rights and freedom of the individual in the name of society's greater good (Popper 1961:76-93). In Popper's understanding this makes the utopian approach dangerous and can lead ultimately towards totalitarianism and violence (Popper 2002). "The Utopian approach can be saved only by the Platonic belief in one absolute and unchanging ideal, together with two further assumptions, namely (a) that there are rational methods to determine once and for all what this ideal is, and (b) what the best means of its realization are" (Popper 2002:161).

In his book *The Open Society and its Enemies* (2002) Popper argues that totalitarian ideologies such as Communism and Nazism have a common factor: they claim to have the absolute truth. Absolute truth exists outside the existence of human beings, and hence these ideologies must practice suppression in order to force their vision on society. It has been argued that utopia is a quest for impossible perfection that raises the presence of totalitarianism (Davis 2012). What Popper (2002) and other like-minded philosophers were concerned with was the gap between ends and means in utopia. If is possible to achieve an ultimate solution to all human ills, what price may be paid for such a goal? The critics claimed that "those convinced they had discovered the only real path to final rescue would also believe they had a licence to do away with the liberty of choice of others provided they did so in the name of utopia" (Davis 2012:128). The killing of millions in revolutions or wars, and "gas chambers, gulag, genocide, all the monstrosities for which our century will be remembered – are the price men must pay for the felicity of future generations" (Berlin 1991:16). All this has been justified in the name of utopia.

Thinkers such as Karl Mannheim that were in opposition to Popper and like-minded argued that utopianism id an essential element of all society and used utopianism to explain social change. Mannheim (1936) discusses utopia and ideology as systems of ideas. He argues that ideologies are mental fictions whose function is to veil the true nature of a given society. An ideology is a set of ideas that "conceals the present by attempting to comprehend it in terms of the past," while a utopia is a set of ideas that "transcends the present and is oriented towards the future" (Mannheim 1936:194). In Mannheim's view the belief in utopia characterises people in subordinate social positions and reflects the desire to escape from reality. To understand which ideas are ideological and which are utopian, one needs an objective point of view, or what Mannheim called "adequate ideas" (Mannheim 1936). For Mannheim utopias are dreams containing wishful thinking that inspire the collective action of groups in opposition which aim at the transformation of an entire society. A utopia can emerge from a single individual; however this individual's ideas must be translated into action by a collectivity to bring about social change (ibid.). Ideologies and utopias in particular, have been important in modern society in order to avoid a "static state of affairs" (Mannheim 1936: 262.).

Mannheim and others that shared the understanding of utopia as important for engendering change in society put emphasis on the critical function of utopianism (Levitas 1990). The core of the utopian in this context is the liberating impulse which breaks through current limitations of human existence and looks to a better future (Plattel 1972). Rather than specifying the detailed workings of some imaginary society, these utopian writings emphasise the articulation of alternatives that challenge the status quo. Their focus is on utopia's function, as opposed to its form, and its transformative, anticipatory nature.

These different and contradictory understandings of utopianism show how utopianism can have both a crucial critical function in enabling us to engage with and question reality, and threaten to become a tool for totalitarianism. Although these approaches to utopia are radically different, they do to a certain degree share an understanding of utopia in that they assume it to imply a vision of an ideal society created by deliberate human work with a vision of an ideal existence for a collective.

In this thesis I will show how Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera commenced as a search for an ideal community among a group of people. Although there was no stated wish to change the established society but rather a desire to offer an alternative to existing society, the emergence of this community was a reaction to the established order which was perceived as chaotic and morally corrupted. As such we might say that the utopia behind the start of

Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera had a critical function. This community started among the first followers in post-war Germany as a quest for an ideal society. This group dreamt of a simple life as modest farmers emphasising the dignities of communal fellowship, traditional values, hard work and charity. In order to realise these ideals they followed their charismatic leader and founded an agrarian community in Chile. In Chile the community would live in isolation from the surrounding society and work hard. To construct their "Eden" in Chile, new communal structures were developed that implied among others a separation of family members and genders. In time, the communal structures that had been established became part of a system of social and political control. The leader, once situated in the community, did not hesitate to employ terror and violence, methods often associated with totalitarian states. Aided by his closest collaborators, the community's leader claimed to have the absolute truth. This truth had to be inculcated into the members using all possible means, including the use of force, in order to construct the "right" community. Most of the community members would in time become part of a predictable group that would not act on their own but followed an ideology, and in Hannah Arendt's perspective became dehumanised (Arendt 1973). Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera took its final steps towards a totalitarian system after the coup in 1973 ushered in the right-wing military dictatorship of Pinochet.

This doctoral work deals with the journey of the members of Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera: how the community commenced as a search for an ideal community among the first generation, and how this search became transformed into a search for a "perfect" community where the end became more important than the means.

2.2 Utopian communities and their characteristics

The understanding of utopia is rooted in Thomas More (1969) and his book *Utopia,* in which he designed an imaginary society based on a shared life. More's understanding of utopia included a kind of social, economic and political organisation. The term has been used to describe both communal experiments that try to create new ways of living jointly, and imaginary societies represented in diverse cultural forms such as literature and film (Davis 2012:139). There are several terms to describe what might be seen as non-conventional ways of living, such as experimental communities, intentional communities, alternative communities, and communitarian utopias, to mention some. These terms are often used interchangeably. Thus "utopianism refers to the dreams and nightmares that concern the ways in which groups of people arrange their lives and which the dreamers live" (Sargent 2010:5).

Utopian communities are based on groups that live together voluntarily, and share all their property (Brumann 2000). Such a community can be defined as follows: "an intentional community is a group of five or more adults and their children, if any, who come from more than one nuclear family and who have chosen to live together to enhance their shared values or for some other mutually agreed upon purpose" (Sargent 2010:6). Once, utopian practices were restricted to communities as described in the definition of Sargent (2010). The concept utopia is now used more broadly, to describe different types of political and social activity with the aim of bringing about a better society (ibid.). Intentional communities and utopianism are complex phenomena existing in many diverse settings. They will vary radically from place to place and time to time (ibid.). Furthermore, as stated by Sargent (2010:8) "communities [are] perceived differently by those observing them from the outside and those living in them, and such perceptions change as the communities are often seen as wonderful places to be a child and terrible places to be a teenager".

Many of the previous studies of utopian communities tend to give a comprehensive description of an ideal life including the minutiae of day-to-day living. These were in-depth studies of different kinds of utopian communities, often carried out over the course of many years. More recent studies of utopian communes have analysed such communities and the historical ties of contemporary communities with those of former times (Hicks 2001). What is often missing in the studies of utopian communities is an exploration of the interrelationship between such experiments and the circumstances that form the setting for such new ways of living, or to put it in Hicks' words: "to provide the context, utopian and conventional, in which communities appear and within which they change" (Hicks 2001:3). "It requires some attention to its context, both historically, in an attempt to explain changes in the community, and spatially, to try to assess the significance of its relations with sympathetic allies and potential enemies" (Hicks 2001:6). Following Hicks (2001) I will consider Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera with close attention to the community`s relationships with outsiders and show how utopian communes in spite of searching for seclusion from the established order are always linked to and shaped by the outside world.

The concept utopian has been used to describe communities where people intentionally try to create an ideal society (Hine 1966:5). In this process of creating an ideal society: "Utopia is the imaginary society in which humankind's deepest yearning, noblest dreams, and highest aspirations come to fulfilment, where all physical, social, and spiritual forces work together, in harmony, to permit the attainment of everything people find necessary and desirable" (Kanter 1972:1). The idea of "utopian" implies on the one hand

"unreality and impracticality" and on the other "an ideal to which men aspire" (Hine 1966:4-5). The ideal that people search for is something other than the existing order.

Most utopian societies arise out of a strong sense of discontent with existing society. This search for something other than the established society is characteristic for people who form part of such communities. Utopian communities imply a rejection of the existing society and most utopians perceive society to be in a crisis and in strong contradiction to the utopian values. At the same time, utopian thinking implies to go beyond the present. This understanding of utopianism resembles Mannheim's definition of the utopian mentality, as one that "transcends reality and which at the same time breaks the bonds of the existing order" (Mannheim 1936: 173). According to Kanter: "The idea of utopia suggests a refuge from the troubles of this world as well as a hope for a better one. Utopian plans are partly an escape, as critics maintain, and partly a new creation, partly a flight *from* and partly a seeking *for*; they criticize, challenge, and reject the established order, then depart from it to seek the perfect human existence" (Kanter 1972: 1-2).

Estrangement from the existent social order is often a reason behind for joining religious or social-political movements of radical or millenarian types (Hine 1966). Utopian communes are often characterised by norms or rules that relate to values also present in the surrounding society, but which contrast with the practices of this society as interpreted by commune leaders. A utopian commune may in this connection look on itself as an example to be followed or, alternatively, as a reclusive haven for the few. But whatever its rationale and degree of closure, such closure cannot imply a rupture of communication with the outside world.

According to Kanter (1972), historically there are three kinds of critiques of society that have provided the initial impulse for the utopian search: religious, politico-economic and psychosocial. These implied a desire to follow spiritual and religious ideals, an inclination to reform society from inhumanity and injustice and evil, and promotion of the psychosocial growth of the individual within community. The first communitarian trend where religious themes were prevalent began in the early years of the United States and lasted until around 1845 (ibid.). The second wave that stressed political and economic issues began in 1820 and lasted until 1930. The third wave, the psychosocial period, appeared following WWII and ended in the late 1960s (ibid.).

Utopian movements have often involved the formation of communities where small groups of people try to create perfect societies, usually separate from the ordinary society-at-large in which most of us live. Hine (1966:5) has described these projects as"utopian

colonies" consisting of: "a group of people who are attempting to establish a new social pattern based upon a vision of the ideal society and who have withdrawn themselves from the community at large to embody that vision in experimental form". Such experiments have been initiated by people who have perceived a gap between the nature of social life as it appeared to them, and the nature of social life as they felt it ought to be, i.e. between ideal *norms* and corrupted *practices*. Most people who share a utopian vision believe that society is the reason for human problems (Kanter 1972:33). This thinking has led to the formation of utopian communities that are isolated from the outer world and where the social environment can be controlled. By regulating social life in the community these believers in their utopian vision believe that they will be able to construct the perfect community and the perfect human being.

These people search for meaning through a utopian project in conjunction with other humans. The idea of utopia has generally implied a way of life shared with other like-minded people and organised in such a manner that everybody benefit. Behind the beliefs of utopian communities lies an understanding that humans are better humans when part of a greater entity than themselves. It is in the shared social life that humans find real happiness (Kanter 1972), or in the words of Cooley, "In so far as one identifies himself with a whole, loyalty to that whole is loyalty to that whole is loyalty to himself; it is self-realisation…One is never more human, and as a rule never happier, than when he is sacrificing his narrow and merely private interest to the higher call of the congenial group" (quoted in Kanter 1972:33). Utopia implies an idealisation of social life.

The creative and active side of being human is exemplified through humans creating their own utopian community. To be human is to be able to do something new and unpredictable (Arendt 1998). Human beings do not merely respond passively to a world readily at hand, but participate actively in the constitution of a common human habitat (ibid.). Central to the human condition is the "new beginning" inherent in birth (ibid.). Arendt calls this *natality*, defined as the fact that each human life begins with birth. Natality is the place of beginning, where action begins, and for Arendt action rescues the meaningful in human life. Hence, natality offers the grand gift of introducing the course history will take; it offers action to the world. "To act, in its most general sense, means to take an initiative, to begin… to set something in motion…" (Arendt 1998:177).

Accordingly, regardless of the contextual conditions that may exist in any society at any given time, each new life represents the opportunity for change. Natality might be the "central category of political thought" (Arendt 1998:9). "Because they are *initium*, newcomers and beginners by virtue of birth, men take initiative, are prompted into action" (ibid.). Since

the role of human practice is so significant in the constitution of a common, meaningful world, the structure of the world is dynamic, changing and fragile. Following Arendt (1998) humans' capacity for novelty is a unique expression of power. This power may be present when humans create their own utopian communities.

The existence of utopian communities is a worldwide phenomenon but it was first when people began to travel from Europe to North America that utopian communities began to form in greater numbers. Mark Holloway (1966) writes about these communities in *Heavens on Earth. Utopian Communities in America*, *1680-1880.* In the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries there were more than one hundred utopian communities in America. These varied from complete communism to private ownership with some social control. Many of their leaders appear to have been more or less distrustful of the outside world. Several of the people that started communities were strongly religious and had suffered for their beliefs in Europe. These experiences were one of the reasons they settled in America, searching for a place to practice their faith freely. Many of these first attempts at utopian communities, the followers believed that all people were equal and put tremendous emphasis on commonality and sharing. In order to create "heaven," these communities thought that they needed to live in seclusion from conventional society. They did not want to be influenced by the outside world. Their wish to live in isolation explains most utopian communities desire to be self-sufficient. Many produced their own food and clothes, built their own homes and wanted to be independent from established society in as far as possible.

The practice of constructing such ideal communities in Germany stretches back to nineteenth century, although some attempts predate this. Already in 1804 there was a mass emigration of German communities to America since the establishment of the first German colonies in Pennsylvania (Holloway 1966:88).[12] After economic growth and modernisation led by by industry in the nineteenth century in Germany, the idea of the physical and psychological deterioration arising from rapid urbanisation and industrialisation started to gain force (Weindling 1989:61). Industrialisation was widely criticised in Germany for divorcing humanity from nature as well the harsh living conditions it created for many. The elements of cultural and political discontent in 1870s Germany gave rise to utopian settlements in the 1880s and 1890s, leading to the dissemination of German culture (Weindling 1989:63). Bismarck set up colonies in West Africa and the Pacific (ibid.). The idea was that colonies would strengthen the German nation or *Volk* as an ethnic unity defined

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[12] Among those who were to form communities were Rappites and Zoarites (Holloway 1966).

by culture and language. The idea of *Lebensraum* was developed in order to express the concept of Germany as an organic and territorial unity (ibid.). As the example of the German utopian settlements and the settlements described by Mark Holloway (1966) show, some Western utopias grew alongside colonialism. In this understanding, colonised countries were portrayed as "empty places where experimentation of a new social order was possible…" (Dayan-Herzbrun 2012:95).

2.3 Leadership, power and the word of God

Utopian communities imply that humans create an ideal society with a particular vision of how to organise social life in separation from the established world. In this context leadership and decision-making is important for the development of utopian communities. Most of the time community members spend together is involved with decision-making (Zablocki 1980). Leadership must have the power of creating, capturing and helping a collective vision.

Many utopian communities have a powerful leader that will gather the members or organise themselves around a religious principle. Often the members of a community are gathered through a combination of a strong leader and the use of God's words. A strong leader would bring the community together in spite of dissidence, and often this leader's death is a major factor in the dissolution of the community. Strong leaders are often charismatic and appoint themselves to power, believing it to be their destiny, and attract exuberant and enthusiastic cadres of willing followers (Weber 1971). Such charismatic leaders tend to arise in times of social crisis when their associations with newness and anti-establishment values evoke devotional, obedient and often passionate psychological responses in followers.

Charisma wields an authority derived from belief only, and it is as radical as it is personal. This is in accordance with Max Weber's discussion of authority. Authority rests on what Weber has called the "inner justification" of dominion (Seligman 2000). This inner, subjective experience is at the heart of the phenomenon of authority. Weber distinguishes three ideal main types of authority: traditional, charismatic and rational-legal. These types of authority are realized by legitimacy. Its legitimacy is judged in four different ways: on the basis of tradition, affectionate and emotional belief, rational belief, and belief in legality (Weber 1971). Weber distinguished among them the Charismatic. He argued that Charismatic authority rests on the appeal of leaders who claim allegiance because of the force of their extraordinary personalities (ibid.).

Many of the leaders will claim a direct connection to God, some claiming to be the Messiah. These leaders will use the word of God in different ways in order to obtain power and dominance over people. The religious umbrella can be said to cover two types of groups, the apocalyptic ones preparing for the millennium and the pious ones who felt that segregation was the only way to live a truly perfect existence.

Exotic and unusual religious groups are often called sects or cults (Stark and Bainbridge 1980). The concept of sect or cult often has a negative connotation, understood as a minor religious group that is dangerous and that can cause harm (Skoglund 2011). Some psychologists group sects into two kinds (Singer 2003:4). One of these exposes their followers and members to organized psychological strategy in order to create changes and establish control. Such sects manipulate their members. The other category of sects comprises self-development groups and psychology-oriented groups that sell courses to their members. Neither groups of sects have good intentions; both are masters of manipulation (Singer 2003). These kinds of sects have different mechanisms in order to influence and manipulate others to follow their orders. Researchers on brainwashing have taken the understanding of psychological manipulation one step further. They claim that there are specific types of social groups where the leaders have a particular, hypnotic power, over the followers so they no will of their own left (Langone 1993). According to this view, the sect members lose their their individuality and autonomy and are socialized into the "right" thinking as decided by the sect leader. In this view, the members do not choose to enter or stay in such sects themselves but are seduced and deceived into them. The brainwash model for explaining how members are recruited to religious groups or sects, and continue as members of these groups, has been criticised for being unscientific and not in accordance with empirical findings (Storhaug 2011).

Many people enter sects or religious groups out of a real religious curiosity and not merely because they are tricked into doing so. In the same way some people leave religious groups by themselves if allowed. The religious historian Wessinger (2000) prefers to use the word religious groups rather than sects. In her view the concept sect dehumanises the followers of a religious group, because it implies that they are part of these religious groups without their own volition. They are perceived as mad, brain-washed and tricked by their leaders (ibid.). In Wessinger's view, the fact that people do leave religious groups by themselves indicates that the brain-wash model is not the right explanation for why people enter or stay in specific religious groups.

Originally the concept sect was developed as a way to separate among different Christian movements and their structure (Skoglund 2011). Sects are movements of religious protest. Their members separate themselves from other men in respect of their religious beliefs, practices and institutions, and often in many other departments of their lives. They reject the authority of orthodox religious leaders, and often, also, of the secular government. Allegiance to a sect is voluntary, but individuals are admitted only on proof of conviction, or by some other test of merit: continuing affiliation rests on sustained evidence of commitment to sect beliefs and practices. Sectarians put their faith first: they order their lives in accordance with it (Wilson 1970:7). According to Wilson (1959) there are different sub-types of sects in terms of the various ways in which they are indifferent to secular society or reject social values. He identifies pietistic sects (for example Quakers), the conversionist ones (as the Salvation Army), the gnostic sects (such as Christian Science) and the Adventist or revolutionary sects (for example Jehovah's Witnesses).

Other religious groups differ from the above-mentioned ones. Some have an all-powerful leader who is in charge and is perceived by the followers as super human and closer to God. Such communities often live in isolation from the outer world and the individuals tend to follow their leader blindly. The leader projects the idea that he is the only person with the characteristics needed to direct the group (Levine 2003). These kinds of communities or groups can be called destructive because they have or will cause harm to their own members or others (ibid.). Some of these groups are known for committing collective suicide, such as the People's Temple where Jim Jones became an absolute leader (ibid.). In 1978, 918 members of all ages committed collective suicide in Jonestown, Guyana, following their leader.[13]

Another well-known example is Heaven's Gate; in 1997 39 members committed collective suicide (Skoglund 2011). Other groups do not commit collective suicide but are ready to kill and fight to the end rather than surrender to the enemy (ibid.). An example of such a group are the Branch Davidians; in 1993 the group was beleaguered in their community house in Texas, and after confrontations with the FBI 80 members died (ibid.). Other destructive religious groups focus on religious power through abuse; in particular those that commit sexual assault against children in the group. One of the most well-known religious groups accused of sexual abuse are The Children of God (later changed name to The Family of Love and today known as the Family International). Under the leadership of David

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[13] Although there is no question that freedom of choice was severely limited during the final hours of Jonestown.

Berg this group experimented with sex and permitted the sharing of sexual partners and group sex. The idea was to strengthen collective love and the love to Jesus through sharing sexuality with others (Skoglund 2011). Sexuality was understood as a beautiful and natural gift from God that was fundamental to every human being (ibid.). The group used sex as a way of recruiting new members and for members earning money through prostitution. The idea of sexuality in the group was taken further; and a culture of sexual assault was introduced. By removing the prohibition against incest and the sexual age limit, the leader Berg paved the way for the sexual abuse of children in the group.

Religious groups that are seen as destructive differ in their characteristics but do share some features: an authoritarian power structure, charismatic leader, isolation from society and mind control and manipulation (West and Langone 1986). Most religious groups create their own rules that control much of the members' lives. Often these rules are in opposition to the established order; for example how to control relationships and sexual life.

Why do people in such religious groups submit themselves to such control, and follow such rigid rules? One explanation that has been given is the human need for a sense of belonging. Chancellor (2000) interviewed several members of the Family International (formerly the Children of God) that stated that they did not feel that they had a home before entering the group. In this particular religious group, the members found an extended family with common aims (ibid.). Some of the members would leave the group if they did not agree with the changes that were introduced, such as when sexual experimentation became permitted. Others would stay out of love of the cause, in spite of being critical of these changes. Most members of religious groups have in common that they follow not only a leader but also an idea, a vision.

Besides leaders that use the words of God in different ways in order to gain power and dominance over people, but also as a way of organising a community, a strong and shared commitment to community ideology is important for the growth and stability of utopian communes. In order to be prosperous, utopian communities need to have some form of transcendence as a commitment tool. Transcendence, the ability for an individual to attach herself /himself to a higher power, is an important commitment mechanism. It appears most often in the form of an ideology or meaning that comprises the community as a whole and distinguishes the community from the rest of society at large (Kanter 1972). This form of transcendence is known as a phenomenon called "Institutionalized Awe through Ideology" (Kanter 1972:114). Awe-inspiring ideologies in utopian communities are characteristically fruitful for initial recruitment by creating amazement that has the ability to inspire people

from the outside world. "Institutionalized awe through ideology" is vital to all utopian communities and their sustainability as a unified group. "Institutionalized" basically means that the ideology of a group becomes embedded in the community as normal and customary. In this definition the word "awe" implies a certain power that exists behind the ideology, triggering worship and inspiration (Kanter 1972). Leadership often plays a vital role in the ideology of a community. Those in power have the skill to persuade others to adopt a certain ideology, decide the ideology, and build a community of followers (ibid.). Often those who control the ideology have institutionalised awe in the way people perceive them.

With all of the internal and external pressures on utopian communities, institutionalized awe through ideology cannot be sustained unless it has the capacity to adapt to new issues that arise, and in some way undergo revitalisation (Brittingham 2009). Many successful utopian communities share in their practices the use of awe and firm boundaries with the external world. Utopian communities need a unifying idea, a power that gives the community its identity and distinguishes it from the outside world. If the community loses this power and cannot reproduce it, the community dies or deviates from its original intent (ibid.). "Institutionalized awe through ideology" is pervasive in utopian communities, especially successful ones.

According to Kanter a successful utopian community is defined as: "lasting 33 years or more" (Kanter 1972:64). For many reasons, the measurement of longevity is not a good way to determine "the success" of a community. For most members of a community, other aspects are more revealing as regards the community's "success". For many utopian communities, the challenge is to succeed in enduring. Utopian communities too often damage themselves through bad leadership and the normal human shortcomings of their members (Kanter 1972).

Leadership is key in the development of utopian communities and their existence, and is essential for controlling the ideology and its ability to sustain the utopia or transform it. While a strong leader is of great significance for the development of utopian communes, Brumann (2000) stresses that a leader that is too strong may lead to the dissolution of the community upon the leader's death. Utopian groups will reduce their chances of achieving longevity if their charismatic leader is too dominant and is seen to have a divine relationship with God and absolute power over members (ibid.). Living in a community with a strong and dominant leader over a long time means that the members gain little experience in decision-making. More importantly, it is the leader that unites the members rather than the community

itself. When the leader is gone the power or glue that gathered people in the community will be missing.

2.4 The psychology of totalitarianism

It has been argued that utopia is a quest for impossible perfection that raises the possibility of totalitarianism (Davis 2012). Where "those convinced they had discovered the only real path to final rescue would also believe they had a licence to do away with the liberty of choice of others provided they did so in the name of utopia" (Davis 2012:128). A common feature of totalitarian ideas and movements is that they seem to have the idea of *the* perfect society that is in contradiction with the established one. This new society must be constructed by all means (ibid.). This idea of *the* perfect society is what in one way or another attracts and is shared by its followers.

Traditionally, totalitarian regimes have been connected to fascism, National Socialism and communism exemplified by Mussolini's Italy, Hitler's Germany and Lenin's and Stalin's Soviet Union (ibid.). Since, totalitarianism has been associated with the political ideology of Islamism exemplified by Khomeini's revolution in Iran (ibid.). With the development of aggressive Islamism, the academic understanding of totalitarianism has shifted from the study of regimes and societies towards including totalitarian movements and ideologies. Furthermore, the relationship between political ideology and religion has become more central in the study of totalitarian ideology and movements (ibid.).

Totalitarian regimes have some features in common with utopian communities; these regimes want to construct something new, a perfect society. They demand active support for a common and all-embracing goal. In this context terrors is seen as a means to achieving a goal – that of constructing their own particular society (Sørensen 2011). In this way totalitarian regime differs from authoritarian ones. Authoritarian regimes are political dictatorship of different kinds. They can use violence and be brutal against the opponents of the regime. If the inhabitants are loyal and behave as wanted by the dictatorships the regimes will be pleased (ibid.).

The intention of totalitarian regimes is to go through with some fundamental ideas which necessarily form part of an ideology. It is therefore important to do research on totalitarian ideas and not only regimes (ibid.). It is possible to differentiate between totalitarian regime and totalitarian society (ibid.). A totalitarian regime can be understood as

totalitarian if it is a totalitarian movement that has the power in the state (ibid.). This is in contradiction to a totalitarian society that must have structural characteristics to be called totalitarian (ibid.). This means that for a society to be named totalitarian, the leaders in charge must have a strong grip on life in society, and in order to realise their totalitarian ideal society (Sørensen 2011).

Common features of totalitarian societies are that they seek to construct an ideal, perfect society. The aim is in such societies more important than the methods used in order to realise the ideal society (ibid.). In this understanding any means are acceptable in order to construct the right society. And any person can be named an "enemy" of the society, the totalitarian movement have the right to define who the enemy is (ibid.). In this context terror is a primordial characteristic of totalitarianism thinking; nobody can feel secure (ibid.).

Totalitarian thinkers want to change the world (ibid.). They are in opposition to established ideas and traditions and want to discard the existing order of being; they want to break with the established in order to create the perfect society (ibid.). In this sense such society's revolutionary experiments are where they decide what is right/good and wrong/evil. One could say that they seek to replace God (ibid.). In the transition between traditional and modern society, traditional religion has lost much of its significance (ibid.). Modern societies have become secularised, and this has created a spiritual vacuum among many people, a vacuum that is likely to be more noticeably during times of crisis (ibid.). Totalitarian political ideas can replace much of the vacuum created by the loss of religion. These totalitarian ideas can help people achieve a meaning with their lives, as well as hope and faith (ibid.). They can promise a better world and tell us what is wrong with the world people experience. They can thus provoke and direct a longing, *the totalitarian longing*, for something better than the life experienced right here (Hagtvet 2011).

One of the most influential thinkers on totalitarianism is the German philosopher Hannah Arendt. In *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (2004) she describes and analyses the two major totalitarian movements of the twentieth century, Nazism and Stalinism. Arendt (2004) argued that Nazi and State communist regimes were new forms of government and that they were totalitarian. In such totalitarian states ideology was imperative. For the Nazi regime ideology was about a struggle of the races, while the communist state was concerned with class struggle. These forms of government justified their actions through their respective ideologies. Both states had the idea of the perfect society; the Nazi regime had the idea of *the* perfect society, and aimed to create a Nazi utopia through removing Jews and other groups that were seen as unwanted by the third Reich. State communism on the other hand was about

abolishing all classes except the working class. This new society had to be constructed at any cost.

For Arendt the development of totalitarian movements was not only connected to Germany, but also to modernity. Arendt sees the mentality that develops in modernity as associated with an absence of thinking and discernment. In *The Human Condition*, Arendt (1998) describes how the modern breakdown of the public and private realms, the uniformity of men and lack of plurality, have all led to a society indulged in consumption. The critique of modernity that is present in Arendt's thinking is also found in the work of Bauman. In *Modernity and the Holocaust* Bauman argues that modernity provided the "necessary conditions" for the Holocaust's undertaking (Bauman 1989:13). He suggests that the values of rationality and efficiency which describe the modern era may have had, in the case of the Holocaust, unintended consequences: "at no point of its long and tortuous execution did the Holocaust come into conflict with the principles of rationality. The 'Final Solution' did not clash at any stage with the rational pursuit of efficient, optimal goal-implementation" (Bauman 1989:17). For Bauman, modernity failed to prevent the Holocaust. According to Arendt (2003), who was of Jewish descent, Holocaust marked a rupture in modern social and political thoughts. It represented something *novum* in the exercise of evil (Arendt 1973). "Not only are all our political concepts and definitions insufficient for an understanding of totalitarian phenomena but also all our categories of thought and standards of judgment seem to explode in our hands the instant we try to apply them" (Arendt 1994:302).

Arendt does not claim that it is impossible to understand the Holocaust. For her, the issue is *the difficulty* of understanding itself. The true understanding of totalitarian domination is complicated. It is not only difficult to make sense of what happened for those humans that had no first-hand experiences of the death camps, but also for those who survived the camps (Arendt 1973). Survivors struggle to find meaningful ways of conveying their experiences in order to make sense of them to themselves and to others. "There are numerous reports by survivors. The more authentic they are, the less they attempt to communicate things that evade human understanding and human experience – sufferings, that is, that transform men into 'uncomplaining animals'" (Arendt 1973:439). The human sufferings from real, lived but unreal horrors from life in the death camps make it hard for survivors to deal with their own traumatic experiences and to communicate these lived experiences to others. In Arendt's perspective, the actions in the camps can only make sense for us as part of an unreal irrational world of insanity.

The faculty of understanding is an essential part of being human (Arendt 1998). Through the act of understanding, human beings try to be "at home in the world" and to deal with reality. Through the act of understanding we make what is unknown known. According to Arendt, it is the human ability to think that can save humans from evil and thus from totalitarianism. Through the faculty of thinking, humans can retreat from the world in order to reflect over it (ibid.). Influenced by Heidegger, Arendt claims that the human who lives in an evil world can take a step back and reflect. Most humans are immersed in the world of being human. But to understand this world we also need to retreat from it. To understand we need distance, and distance is obtained by thinking (ibid.). The act of understanding is an activity which totalitarian forces seek to suppress (Arendt 1973).

In *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (1973) Arendt reaches an understanding of totalitarian ideology as the engine in the totalitarian movement. The mechanism of terror that is operated by ideology is the main characteristic that separates a totalitarian regime from others. Totalitarian regimes need support from the masses, which are seduced to total unselfish submission through propaganda and innovative organisational methods. When the totalitarian regime is in power, propaganda is complemented with indoctrination and terror, and the ideological doctrine and lies are enforced. Terror becomes *the* way of rule supported by an extensive apparatus of suppression and persecution.

Furthermore, Arendt (ibid.) reaches an understanding of evil: that totalitarianism is trying to eliminate a common human world, and to make humans, as unique and spontaneous creatures, unnecessary. In her view, totalitarianism creates a new kind of human being that will act as they are told and are expected to, but never individually. Through this system the unique expression of power held by every human by virtue of their birth and which gives them the capacity for novelty is eliminated. Totalitarianism aims to achieve total domination. This implies that freedom and unpredictability are taken away. This happens according to Arendt when people do not have the possibility to become visible as unique individuals in a common human world.

The public sphere is a place where you express your freedom and enthusiasm; this is what each unique individual carries with them (Arendt 1998). It is the place where we as human beings can be both the same and different: the same because we are all humans, and different because we look at the world from different perspectives (ibid.). Through expressing and doing in accordance with one's wishes, and not the way one should, human beings manifest and reveal themselves as persons. One can express individuality, and at the same time permit others to express themselves as unique individuals. This public sphere where each

human being can express their freedom, must, according to Arendt (1998), be protected because it will not protect itself. No ideology that seeks predictability can accept a public arena where humans can express themselves freely and as such produce something new and unpredictable.

Totalitarian ideologies seek total predictability and control. This implies that in a totalitarian system all human characteristics must be subordinated to an ideology. Humans are reduced to raw material to be shaped into a particular thinking, making them a predictable mass of humans. This group of people will react but they are not able to act on their own. All kinds of individuality and personal drive are made superfluous. This removal of the essence of human beings, individuality and initiative, is what Arendt names a *radical evilness.*

In Arendt's view, the totalitarian project is to change in a systematic way the nature of the human being (1973). It seeks to abolish the individuality and freedom that characterises the human condition. In this project the aim is to create a foreseeable group of people that will react in an expected way. For Arendt, the concentration camps of WWII were an example of a laboratory where the work of constructing a new human (although ultimately killed) was systematised (ibid.). According to Arendt, the process towards dehumanisation and total domination consists of three parts (2004). This happens through killing the juridical person in man, then the moral and finally eliminating the human's individuality for totalitarianism to reach its aim (ibid.).

First the human being is placed outside the protection of the law (Arendt 2004:577). The example Arendt uses is the concentration camps. The camps were not used as punishment; the Jews had not done anything in order to be internalised in the camp. It was not a question of a jail where the individual was sent for breaking the law. Rather, this was a system that was expressed through an ideology or an all-powerful leader that made all decisions about life. The human being is no longer seen as a responsible individual but rather as someone who is subordinated to an ideology or all-powerful leader. According to Arendt, the next step (2004:582) is to destroy the human as a moral person. To be a moral person is to differentiate between what is right or wrong. In some settings such as a concentration camp, this will be difficult. This is because moral issues such as what is right or wrong are already removed from a concentration camp. The choices are all wrong. Questions such as should you or your child die, or should you help to select those who should die instead of being sent to death, are all meaningless. In such a place there is no room for morals but only for survival. To be alive becomes the central issue and more important than moral judgement. In concentration camps a slice of bread or warm shoes would be items that the prisoners could

kill for in order to survive themselves. The human being was reduced to an animal that would react to the needs to survive and not to moral impulses (ibid.). The last part is connected to removing human individuality (Arendt 2004:584). In the concentration camp this was achieved through shaving the heads of the prisoners, not giving enough food so they would all resemble skeletons, and the prisoners would get the same clothing so they would look uniformed. Men and women would seem the same; prisoners from different countries would melt into a group of creatures that were only similar to human beings. The use of numbers on each prisoner and not their names was a further way of removing individuality. The transportation of the Jews through trains where animals had been transported, without the possibility of washing themselves or going to the toilet, are all examples of how these people were transformed from humans into something else. After such a treatment what was left was not individual persons but creatures that resembled human beings (ibid.).

The totalitarian terror that existed in Nazi Germany was about producing a new kind of human that was in accordance to a particular ideology (Arendt 1973). Humans were regarded as raw material, as a piece of wood that had been carved and shaped in a specific manner according to an ideology and leader (ibid.). According to Arendt, a characteristic of modernity is the thinking that it is possible to "improve", "change" the human being through delivering it from its natural conditions. In Arendt's view this aspect of the modern world is dangerous, and threatens to finally undermine human individuality and in the worst cases lead to a totalitarian ideology.

Another "evil" manifestation of Nazi domination was its use of modern management techniques in its labour, concentration, and extermination camps (ibid.). Arendt writes, "The concentration and extermination camps of totalitarian regimes serve as the laboratories in which the fundamental belief of totalitarianism that everything is possible is being verified" (Arendt 1973:437). The goal of the camps was to eradicate the individuality of those captive, transforming them into commodities. "The problem is to fabricate something that does not exist, namely, a kind of human species resembling other animal species whose only freedom would consist in preserving the species" (1973.:438). Arendt views the camps as testing grounds to prove this management premise of modern totalitarianism:

Totalitarian domination attempts to achieve this goal both through ideological indoctrination of the elite formations and though absolute terror in the camps; and the atrocities for which the elite formations are ruthlessly used become, as it were, the practical application of the ideological indoctrination- the testing ground in which the

latter must prove itself- while the appalling spectacle of the camps themselves is supposed to furnish the 'theoretical' verification of the ideology (Arendt 1973.:438).

The Nazi regime formulated policies aimed at complete and total humiliation and debasement of Jews. The slander that Jews omit a terrible odour, becomes verified in the concentration camps, where inadequate, or lack of, washing facilities creates an environment of filth, disease, and stench. This context together with horrific experiences of the death of other inmates, their own torture and that or others and slave labour contributed to reducing the human beings. The reduction of human beings to a complete loss of will and consciousness, detached from human emotion, transformed humans into objects. These prisoners correspond to what Primo Levi defined as *die Muselmänner*, "the living dead" that could not express anything other than the bare mechanics of a dying body (Levi 2000). This frozen and mechanical anonymous mass was reduced to the sphere of total domination.

In her indictment of Nazi practices as radical evil, Arendt adds to her focus on its terror and use of modern management techniques a third aspect, the premise that some human beings are superfluous, a further dimension of the radical evil of the concentration camps. She writes:

> The real horror of the concentration and extermination camps lies in the fact that inmates, even if they happen to keep alive, are more effectively cut off from the world of the living than if they had died, because terror enforces oblivion. Here, murder is as impersonal as the squashing of a gnat. Someone may die as the result of systematic torture or starvation, or because the camp is overcrowded and superfluous human material must be liquidated (Arendt 1973:443).

For Arendt (1973), this new form of radical evil goes beyond the limits of previous forms of murder as an evil. It moves into the dimension of a radical evil that "modern management techniques and bureaucratic administration" make possible under the evil will to dominate totally, so that "human material is liquidated" under the demands of the efficiency of production of corpses in gas chambers. Through the concentration camps the construction of a "new man" was systematised. By making "this new human being" the uniqueness that each human being is born with was erased. The totalitarian system would create human beings that would look similar, act similarly and feel similarly. They would carry out orders but not act on their own. None retained their unique personality, they had been moulded in a particular ideology. The totalitarian movements' radical evil is to produce new humans as creatures

without spontaneity and individuality. The human being in such a system will not think on his own but will follow the rules, what she or he is told to do. Totalitarianism creates human beings that will react in a specific way and as expected. The value of the human being is only that the human will act and as such be replaced by another human being. In this thinking the human is not able to know what is right or wrong. The human is only told what is expected of him/her. Arendt (1973) perceived domination from within in the totalitarian system. Totalitarianism has discovered a means of dominating and terrorising human beings from within. Totalitarian violence "is expressed much more frighteningly in the organisation of its followers than in the physical liquidation of its opponents" (Arendt 1973:364).

A characteristic feature of totalitarian government is terror:

Only after the extermination of real enemies has been completed and the hunt for 'objective enemies' begun does terror become the actual content of totalitarian regimes. Under the pretext of building socialism in one country, or using a given territory as a laboratory for a revolutionary experiment, or realizing the *Volksgemeinschaft*, the second claim of totalitarianism, the claim to total domination is carried out (Arendt 1973:422).

This aim is achieved by the secret police that are used by totalitarian governments for total surveillance of all citizens. To prove their utility, the secret police terrorise the innocent. They are in charge of managing torture on all whom they find suspicious. Those who can think for themselves pose a threat to the totalitarian government, which demands blind obedience to the state in the service of duty. "Simply because of their capacity to think human beings are suspects by definition" (Arendt 1973:430). The secret police are the only operating ruling class in totalitarian countries, "their standards and scale of values permeates the entire texture of totalitarian society" (ibid.).

For Arendt the main means of totalitarian domination is "organisation". The success of totalitarian movements resides in their capacity to organise individuals who had been atomized and isolated. Arendt claims that totalitarianism in power holds the people together because of its ability to organise society. The true goal of totalitarianism is not through persuasion, but by organisation, the accumulation of power (Arendt 1973). Arendt's insistence on organisation is justified: totalitarian rule gives credence to the idea that all things can be organised in society. Nonetheless, organisation does not account for the process of identification that men and women make with the leader, or for the feelings they have of

being included in a community, be it the community of the Party or the community of "the people as One" (ibid.).

The formidable effectiveness of the violence of the totalitarian lie is at least twofold: the totalitarian lie is no longer there to hide a reality that remains intact behind it, it is a kind of "factual lie" that "rests precisely on the elimination of that reality which either unmasks the liar or forces him to live up to his pretence" (Arendt 1973:384). Propaganda and organisation force people into acting according to the rules of a fictitious world, and thereby actively denying themselves, by denying their spontaneous opening to the world (ibid.). Through totalitarian organisation the natural bonds of solidarity and communication are broken; they are replaced by distrust and informing.

According to Arendt's understanding totalitarian ideologies are characterised by three main characteristics (Backes 2011); the first is that they possess *a total* explanation of the world. Totalitarianism has an exclusive claim to the right to explain and predict what is going to happen. The second characteristic is connected to this claim of possessing a total explanation. It creates a separation between the reality that is actually experienced, and the ideological education structure (that propaganda is trying to create a bridge to). Reality is changed according to the ideological statements, and propaganda helps create a fictitious world.

Propaganda will support the parts of reality that fit the ideological statements at the same time as it leaves out many aspects from the empirically reality. The last characteristic is the tyranny of the logic *logicality,* this imply that that the ideological thinking is separated from the historical experience. The ideological thinking is not influenced by experiences but is set by an own decided logic (Backes 2011). While ideology certainly plays a role in the indoctrination of followers, "…the necessities of propaganda are always dictated by the outside world…" (Arendt 1973:344) and pragmatic considerations rather than ideology prevail in response to "pressure" on a regime from the outside.

> The relationship between propaganda and indoctrination usually depends upon the size of the movement on one hand, and upon outside pressure on the other. The smaller the movement, the more energy it will expend in mere propaganda; the greater the pressure on totalitarian regimes from the outside world…the more actively will the totalitarian dictators engage in propaganda (Arendt 1973:343-344).

Propaganda was essentially addressed to foreign audiences (Arendt 1973). Indoctrination addressed to the elite was more efficacious. Arendt discusses the role of propaganda and how it underpins the subjugation of people and delivers the individuals to the masses, which results in the distortion of freedom under totalitarian regimes. The effectiveness of propaganda is indicative of one of the main characteristics of the modern masses (ibid.). In Arendt's understanding, the masses do not believe in the reality of their own experiences. "What convinces masses are not facts, and not even invented facts, but only the consistency of the system of which they are presumably part" (Arendt 1973:351).

Propaganda, here, can be considered as one of the major characteristics of a totalitarian regime, for it is through propaganda that such a state imposes its ideology and terror on its people. Totalitarianism experiments with the permanent domination of every individual in each and every sphere of life (Arendt 1973), and makes people active agents in their own oppression (Swift 2009). Arendt argues that the preparation has succeeded when people have lost contact with their fellow men as well as the reality around them; for together with these contacts, men lose the capacity of both experience and thought. "The ideal subject of totalitarian rule is not the convinced Nazi or the convinced Communist, but people for whom the distinction between fact and fiction (i.e., the reality of experience) and the distinction between true and false (i.e., the standards of thoughts) no longer exist" (Arendt 1973:474).

Totalitarian regimes spread feelings of terror and fear through isolated societies, cutting them off from reality in order to effectively eliminate any possibility of contemplating possible/probable alternatives to the rules of the state. As well as loneliness, for Arendt, terror is the inescapable experience of life in a totalitarian state. This fear is spread via propaganda, which portrays the world outside the boundaries of the totalitarian state as a hostile threat. This is a form of sinister manipulation aimed at encouraging the individual to commit to the movement. The totalitarian organisation prevents its followers from ever being directly confronted with the external world by allowing them access only to distorted representations of the non-totalitarian world (Arendt 1973).

The most conspicuous external characteristic of such a regime is its demand for the total and unconditional loyalty of its members. Such total adherence to the will of the state, according to Arendt, occurs when loyalty is emptied of all concrete content, from which spontaneity might naturally arise. As a result of all these phenomena, the masses are marked by two prominent characteristics: (i) they do not express any coherent notion of self-interest, (ii) because of their apathetic disinterestedness; the masses are susceptible to the persuasion of

ideological propaganda and the powers of terror.

How does a totalitarian regime manage to guard its terrified and fragmented society from collapse? The answer lies in the co-option of fantasy by the state apparatus. All totalitarian regimes pretend to usher in a utopia, a "paradise on earth" that is envisioned through fantasy. They provide people with false hope for power and safety. Arendt asserts that totalitarian regimes and their imaginary world of propaganda enable them to keep the masses off from the real world (ibid.). To be cut off from the real world and to change notions of reality is what characterises totalitarianism.

The ideological propaganda of totalitarianism creates a notion of normality concerning crimes. By creating pretence of legality, Nazi rulers meant to dull the consciousness of elite forces so that they would not realise the extent to which the "normal" world would judge their acts as crimes (ibid.). When talking in public about "The final solution" the Nazis were subject to rigid "language rules" where words as "killing" or "extermination" where rarely used (Arendt 2006:85). This is a way of systemic lying through renaming. Arendt noticed that the Nazis realised that by changing the words used to signify a certain reality, the truth could be masked or evaded (Arendt 2006). For example, they referred to gassing as "granting a mercy death"; they named the plan for exterminating the Jews, "The Final Solution".

Even the memos crossing the desks of leaders ordering them to change the words used to refer to a particular act were called "language rules" — which is an example in itself, for Arendt points out that "…"language rule" was a code name; it meant what in ordinary language would be called a lie" (Arendt 2006:85). By these subtle controls of language, the reality of what was transpiring was kept beyond the reach of consciousness. Arendt claims that lies were so widespread throughout Germany that they became part of the national character. The Nazis were able to keep up the morale of the people and prepare them for war by use of speech. Arendt makes distinctions among different kinds and "sizes" of lies. In systemic lying, our whole view of reality is coloured, so that one lie cannot be distinguished from the background for easy detection. Our sense of reality depends significantly on the people around us. If the lying were limited, say, to only the enemy, one would minimally have a peer group that knew the truth and which could give a person his bearings. But if all of society is deceived, soon one cannot help but believe one's own lies (Arendt 1993:227-264).

Arendt's perspectives help us to better understand the mechanisms behind and character of totalitarianism, and how a community such as Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera that started as a quest for a better way of living among a group of people could be transformed into a community with characteristics familiar from totalitarianism. As Arendt's work (1973;

2004) shows the totalitarian project seeks to create a new kind of human being devoid of the individuality and freedom that characterise being human. This *radical evilness* that characterises totalitarianism creates a group of people that will react in an expected way. *Dehumanisation* and a *total domination* are achieved when people have lost contact with their fellow men as well as the reality around them; at this permanent domination has succeeded, and totalitarianism has reached its aim.

Arendt sees a connection between totalitarian ideology and the devotion of those humans that have been utilised by the totalitarian power rulers. Humans in modernity are led to totalitarian movements through a growing isolation and are made receptive for totalitarian rule. This happens when people are left by friends and family members, when everything that has connected people to each other is destroyed during a crisis, and nobody can be trusted by anybody. This group of people will be open for the totalitarian logic of "any means is accepted in order to construct the right ideal society". Arendt's work on totalitarianism is based on a structural characteristic of totalitarian ideology as the engine in the totalitarian movement, and that explain the dynamics of the totalitarian control, and the function of terror. Her thinking can help us to explore and understand the mechanisms behind totalitarianism, and to explore what totalitarianism does with human beings.

CHAPTER THREE

THE SETTING AND FIELDWORK

In this chapter I emphasise many aspects that are not directly issues of methodology but concern Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera. Here, I have chosen to provide plentiful information about this community in order to make it easier for the reader to understand the challenges I faced as an ethnographer, and the challenges associated with the process of getting to know the community and the people living there. Furthermore, I introduce in this chapter a political landscape that will be deepened in a later chapter but in a different way than here.

The data in this thesis is based on material gathered from my many fieldwork trips. The complexity of my fieldwork setting made it necessary to make several fieldtrips to the community over several years. My longest fieldwork period was from July 2003 until July 2004. In addition, I made several shorter fieldtrips of two to three weeks' duration: in December 2004, December 2005, January 2006, and April to June 2007. In 2005 and 2006 I also visited people that used to be members of the community but have for various reasons moved and are now living in Germany and Chile. Some of them keep in close touch with their relatives and friends in the community while others have no contact at all. Further, in Chile and Germany I had conversations with representatives of different human rights organisations, the former Chilean government's delegate and the psychologist appointed by the Chilean government to work with the community inhabitants.

The complex social setting of Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera made my fieldwork process difficult. For a long period of time I was not allowed to enter the community. I got to know the community in the beginning through the local Chilean neighbours that worked for, supported and were friends with the community. Thanks to the local Chileans I was introduced to the than community leaders. They would present me to what Goffman (1971) named "front stage", to a fixed presentation of social life and that was part of impression management. I saw a finished production and the acting of actors in order to have a specific impression of the community. The official face of the community during the beginning of my fieldwork was characterised by emphasising a German heritage and being a charity organisation that helped poor local Chileans and that was "persecuted" by the newly democratic Chilean government because of Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera's political affiliation with the regime of General Pinochet.

Later, when living inside the premises of the community I would still "hang around" but participate more in common spaces shared by the inhabitants. This opened up for informal

and spontaneous conversations with some people. During my fieldwork I was very conscious about not being too pushy in my approach. Rather, I wanted people to approach me. In this way more people opened up during the years. It might be that some people understood that I had a deeper interest in them than they had experienced before with outsiders, in particular journalists. In my meetings with human rights organisations, the Chilean government's delegate and other professionals working with the community and its members I used semi-structured interviews. This implied that I would start with some specific questions and then leave the rest of the interview open.

Eventually I began to use a video camera as a way of exploring past and complex experiences. Some of the people I got to know would approach me in order to tell me their life stories and experiences of living in Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera when filming. A life story can be understood as the narrator's account of her/his life. It is a means by which the narrator tells others her/his sense of self, explicating who she/he is and how she/he got that way. As Linde (1993) proposes, a life story is not just a simple collection of incidents or facts. Life story addresses the question of the form "what events have made me what I am," or more precisely, "what you must know about me to know me" (Linde 1993:20). The stories included in the life story constantly undergo revision, considering our current understanding of what our lives mean (Linde 1993:25). In this context the video camera became a catalyst that helped people communicate painful experiences. Through the camera people's narratives were transformed from being their personal stories into testimonies of violence. This made me aware of the role of the camera in research fields where people have traumatic experiences.

Throughout the years my relationship with the community and some of its members changed. A common Spanish language we could communicate through and a growing interest by the members in the world outside and more familiar with the Chilean culture were all issues that helped me to develop a closer relationship in particular with the younger generation. This was also connected to the issue that I had become a familiar face for many and developed friendship with people in Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera as well as with their Chilean friends living in the localities around the community. I had for some become a person of trust that came back year after year. Furthermore I also represented knowledge about the modern Chilean and European society that could be useful for the community and inhabitants. Of course this did not imply that my relationship changed with everybody. It was still difficult to build relationships of trust with the older generation who had arrived as adults in Chile. For this group of individuals, it was difficult to trust people not from the community and also to

talk in Spanish. [14] Many of them still believed firmly in their former leader Paul Schäefer and his words.

Through the years that I have been working with this thesis the Chilean government has investigated what has happened in Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera, something that slowly has led to changes among some of the inhabitants when it comes to speaking out about their own experiences. At the same time the community has publicly admitted their complex past. [15] These aspects in combination with me having fieldwork through several years allowed me to know about the other side of this community, and what Goffman (1971) named "backstage". This word describes the part of social life where people leave the role they play in front stage and where their own voice and experiences were expressed. I was with time allowed to live inside the community. This made it possible for me to participate in some of the common places for social gathering such as the dining room and TV-room, to mention some. Through spending time inside the community I got to know people and to hear their own accounts and life experiences. Many of the accounts of the people who came in childhood or were born in Chile during the 60s and early 70s were characterised by painful experiences from living a whole life in the community. At the same time were many accounts, in particular among many of the members that came as adults, also about a search in post-war Germany of belonging to a community, and a hard working communal life. Through people's accounts, I sensed not only experiences of violence but also a feeling of belonging and of moments of beautiful experiences through the unifying activities of a community. Therefore, to only pay attention to the painful experiences of people would have been to reduce the complexity of social life as experienced by the community members.

Through this change of position, from "front stage"; a fixed official representation towards "backstage"; individuals' lived experiences and accounts I came to a) learn about personal life stories and of traumatic memories that were in strong contradiction to the official face presented by the leaders to me during the beginning of my fieldwork, b) I came to perceive that Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera consists of different individuals who have different subject positions (Moore 1994) and experiences from their lives in this community.

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[14] Although I went to German language courses before leaving for fieldwork, and understand some German due to its similarities with Norwegian language, I spoke primarily Spanish with the people I got to know.
[15] In April 2006 Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera wrote a public declaration admitting their guilt as community concerning abuses of human rights against political left-wing activists during the military regime.

Some of the people that I got to know during my fieldwork had been in power positions while others had been exposed to terrible violence. This led me to the understanding of the concept positions, "…every view is a view from somewhere and every act of speaking a speaking from somewhere" (Abu-Lughod 1991:141). But at the same time, they showed a shared identity by being from Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera and by facing the contested past of the community in the public eyes. In this way the community members showed a common identity and difference (Moore 1994:1). To portray them only as one group would have reduced their subjectivity and individual lived experiences.

The complexity of my field of study has made it necessary for me to reflect about my way into this particular field setting a great deal, and what characterised the social encounters that I was part of and that took place during my fieldwork. After many years in the field it is difficult to draw a line between when one is doing "fieldwork" and when visiting friends. My experiences are that these practices are intertwined with each other. Doing fieldwork across several years and in a social field that has undergoing change has made my writing a more complex task. Years of fieldwork have made me humble. Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera is complex, a place of horror and of joy; of nightmares and of dreams and hopes. Likewise it is a place of tears and laughter; of pain and love; of evil and beauty. The complexity and contradictions have made it difficult to represent all these experiences in a single thesis. I have tried to acknowledge these experiences by focusing throughout on their ambivalence. Writing about years of events, conversations, polemics, and emotions that I have both experienced and observed has led me to admit that to represent Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera and people's experiences with constructing their own community is complex.

If I expose everything I was told during my fieldwork some of the people I got to know might have difficulties with others living in the community as well as the Chilean authorities. This issue has made it difficult for me to handle everything that I received information about. Acknowledging this I have chosen to write about those issues that I have interpreted as important for the people I got to know.

In this work I will not focus on the many trials the community is involved in. These are important tasks, but they are in the domain of the judicial system. On a moral level I feel obligations to the many people I met during my work with this thesis, in particular with those that shared their painful experiences with me. I feel a need and obligation to "tell" their stories, as I interpreted them, to the world.

3.1 The land of landowners and workers

Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera is located in central Chile, a traditional agrarian region. The central and southern parts of Chile have traditionally been more politically conservative and right-wing oriented than the North of Chile. The conservative mentality that is strong in this part of Chile might be connected to the land problem in Chile. Landowners' retained control over the peasants who laboured on vast estates, bound to landowners by tradition. The peasant community in Chile developed a culture that was assimilated with the landowners' culture where their lives were an extension of the owners' (Cardemil 2000). Landowners would often have the same people working for them for several decades. The nature of the relationships between the workers and the landowner was often characterised by debts of gratitude from the workers who would live in a house owned by the landowner, have their children in a school financed by the landowner and maybe even get medical attention by courtesy of the same person. Landowners expected the workers to be loyal and support them whenever needed. The relationship between the local Chileans, working for the community, falls in the traditional model of landowners and peasants, and of the German community as an authoritarian entity with loyal workers, often for generations. A well working free school and hospital run and offered by Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera made most of the local Chileans positive and grateful towards the community.

Although I was born in Chile, the region where the community is located was largely unknown to me and very different from the capital Santiago. The community lies approximately 35 km southeast of the city and municipality of Parral[16], on the north bank of the Perquilauquén River, and forms part of Linares Province of what constitutes the seventh region of Chile, called Maule.[17] Through relatives I got to know Kina, a headmaster in her late 50s that had lived and worked for years in and around the area of Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera. She "introduced" me to the mentality of this part of Chile, of proud and poor farmers and of powerful landowners. Kina became my first of several door openers, a term used by anthropologists to name people who open up possibilities for relationships and information. She introduced me to many people that had knowledge about *los alemanes* or *the Germans*, as locals call the people from the community.

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[16]According to a census from 2010 the municipality of Parral has a population of more than 41.000 that lives in the urban and surrounding rural areas.
[17] The 7th region Maule is one of 13 regions that the Chilean territory is divided in and the region Maule is further divided into four provinces.

The majority of the people I met through Kina were poor local farmers and their families that had received medical and other kinds of help from the German community and were grateful for this. Many of them had been active in supporting the community against the many allegations.

Sergio was a good friend of Kina's and was one of the people I got to know who were more powerful and influential than other local Chileans. He was a former mayor[18] to one neighbouring locality of Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera. Sergio and his family had been friends with the German community for decades. During a lunch appointment with Sergio at the local gentleman's Club he said that he would help me with my doctoral work.[19] I was told that he wanted to help me because Kina was a very good friend of his and besides, as he said: *You don't have the face of an extremist.*[20] During many of our gatherings he would tell me: *Nobody harmed left-wing Chileans in this area in 1973. Maybe some would receive a smack by the police but nothing more.* According to Sergio many young men had come from nearby cities and villages to San Fabian de Alico just days after the military coup in 1973. Most of the young men were fleeing the military regime and heading towards Argentina through the Andes Mountains.[21] In his position as appointed mayor Sergio had stopped all these young men and returned them to the local police and furthermore told them that nothing bad would happen to them.[22] In spite of the many reports from human rights organisations he still thought that this was the case. According to these reports, Parral is the Chilean city with the highest number of people that disappeared or were killed the days after the military coup. It is said that the agriculturalists of Parral, in particular from the area close to the community, are known to have been the most militant and anti-Allende and Unity Popular in the years before the military coup (Schwember 2009:94).

One Chilean family from the neighbour localities that worked for the community was the large Vera family that I was introduced to by Kina. Most of the members of the Vera family were still loyal to *the Germans* after all allegations in post-Pinochet Chile. The political views of the Veras' were typical of the peasants from this zone. The family was conservative and they were great admirers of General Pinochet.

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[18] He was appointed twice as mayor in the village San Fabian de Alico by the military regime of general Pinochet.

[19] He wrote a recommendation letter to Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera stating that I was a good person and asking them to invite me for a courtesy visit. Sergio had good friends in in the community that turned out to belong to the leadership.

[20] Sergio is here referring to left-wing activists.

[21] San Fabian de Alico is located close to the Andes Mountains and to Argentina.

[22] The local police collaborated with the military regime and would pass these young men on to the military.

The members of the Vera family lived in and close by Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera.[23]The extended Vera family consisted of Elma and Lito, a couple in their 70s and their four adult children with their respective partners and children: Gerardo married Juana, Walterio married Nilda, Silvia married Juan and Laly married Hugo. The Vera family had an extended and long-lived relationship with the German community. One evening while drinking tea with Elma and Lito, they told me how they had got acquainted with *the Germans* in the beginning of the 60s. Elma was the first Chilean woman to give birth on the community grounds. After this, their remaining children were all born there as many others of the local Chilean children, and a life-long relationship started with the community that was passed on to their children, who would also give birth to most of their own children in the community hospital. The Vera family had known the community and the people living there for three generations and family members had experiences from being patients in the community hospital, active participants in the support movement and workers of Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera, as well as parents with schoolchildren in the community school and through friendship with people from the German community.

Elma worked a few days a month in the community. Her task was to take care of the chickens. In addition, she also sold old clothes, shoes and other items that she was given by *the Germans* for petty cash.[24] Her husband Lito had a minimal pension and had also income due to seasonal work cultivating[25] in their garden for sale. The children of Elma and Lito and their partners worked all during this time for the community. Both Laly, and Silvia with her husband, worked in the café Alborada owned by the community that was in San Carlos.[26] Walterio worked with agriculture and Nilda with the community children in Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera.

In the house of the Vera family I saw for the first time some of the videos made by the community. The Veras' thought that the videos could give me more knowledge about *the Germans*. Nearly all the videos were about what the community and the local Chileans then perceived as *political persecution* by the Chilean democratic government. After many years of friendship I was permitted to make copies of the video, but only in the house of Lito and Elma. When watching the videos many of the family members of the Veras would be in the house. Watching themselves in these videos caused much laughter and tears. Following all the

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[23] One family group lived inside Colonia Dignidad/ Villa Baviera and another just by the main entrance.
[24] These were original donations from Germany during the 60s, 70s and 80s to support the charity work of the community among poor Chileans.
[25] Fruit and cucumbers.
[26] San Carlos is a town located about 365 km south of Santiago and 131 km from the community.

revelations of the last few years, Walterio was very disappointed with *the Germans*, while his parents were still of the opinion that the community had done nothing bad. Laly was the member of the Vera family who was closest to Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera and the former leadership, and who would defend the community. My experiences from watching these videos together with members of the Vera family gave me insight into how videos might be one way of evoking memories and making people confront and remember past experiences. The videos worked as a catalyst for the Vera family members to remember good times as well as painful experiences such as Walterio's recollections.

DVD REF 1: VIDEO (BY MD)

Due to their various and long-lasting relationships with *the Germans,* eventually the Vera family became my door opener. During my longest fieldwork period I was invited to live with Walterio and his wife Nilda and their two daughters, Daniela and Carolina. They lived in the premises of Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera located close to the main entrance. One of the first things that came into sight when approaching the community land was a large stone engraved with the name Villa Baviera. Close by lay a little church and a school for the local Chilean children, both owned by the German settlement. Grassland with deer appeared further along the road. The Germans had named the close by mountains named *Dreitorspitze* or *Las Tres picas* (*The three peaks*) as the local Chileans called them. When the sun set in the evening, around 7 p.m., everything was pitch black except the stars and the moon on clear nights. It was easy to get lost on the poor roads in the area that filled with water during wintertime and became impossible to use. During this time all of the community land area was fenced, including the house of Walterio and his family. Sometimes the fences were open because work was being done and now and then I entered in wrong places by mistake. After these experiences I would be afraid that the leaders of the community would see this as "spy" activity.

While living with Walterio and Nilda I soon realised that I carried out fieldwork in a quite remote place where not many people lived except the community members and a few Chileans working for the community. One would not see many people on the roads that lead to the community: In the morning and evening I would see Chilean workers (mostly men) on their bikes heading towards or from work, some herdsmen with their animals. Sometimes

some of the community members would pass by in cars. They were easy to recognise since many of them drove Mercedes Benz. During the rabbit-hunting season I could hear the sound of gunshots and from time to time see trucks with men standing in the back of the trucks, their weapons ready to shoot. During this time my cell phone would not work in and around Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera and only in some places, with luck, further around, and there were no public telephones in the area. There was no form of transport to the community; the closest point one could get transport to was to Puente Cato close to Las Termas de Catillo, located approximately 12 kilometres away from the community. There were no gas stations around; the closest was in Parral.[27]

Nilda and Walterio were in their 40s, easy-going and hardworking. Nilda worked in the community kindergarden and was asked to take the job. She was told that it was an honour to be offered work with the community children. Walterio worked in agriculture for one of the companies owned by the community. Nilda was a big smoker and started every day by going to the toilet to smoke a cigarette there. According to Nilda *the Germans* did not like people who smoked and even less if they were women. So Nilda smoking was a big secret. If we were sitting outside the house and a car appeared she would hide the cigarette behind her back, afraid that somebody from the community would see it. Walterio, on the other hand, liked to go out and drink from time to time and did not feel like doing this while living inside the community. Both Nilda and Walterio expressed that they did not want to live closer to the community since they felt that they would not be able to live as they wanted. In spite of Nilda and Walterio not wanting to live closer they had good German friends from the community. One couple in particular, Mina and Michael, would often be invited to their home to eat traditional Chilean food, share some wine and enjoy their company. Nilda knew which Chilean dishes her friends liked and would make great efforts to prepare time-consuming Chilean delicacies such as *humitas.*[28] She told me that since most of *the Germans* did not have their kitchens in their own homes but shared a kitchen with others they were not used to inviting individually.[29] She did not mind this since this was how they lived.

Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera has some plots which the community members cultivate close to Nilda's and Walterio's home. For years Nilda had seen a German man, Michael, working outside their house. According to Nilda he had always seemed lonely and she felt pity for him. One day this had made her invite Michael to their home for some

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[27] There was a private petrol station inside the community.
[28] A traditional dish among the indigenous people made of corn from Northern Chile.
[29] With time more of the families living in Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera would make their own simple kitchens as best as possible.

Chilean food. The first time Michael was somewhat reluctant but the second time she asked he had accepted the invitation. After this he became a customary visitor. This was the start of their friendship.

Parallel to this, Nilda and Walterio would meet Mina every day. Mina worked at the security gate they passed when going to work. According to Nilda, Mina was more open to Chileans than the other ladies working at the gate. Nilda and her family had been thinking that it would be nice for Mina to have a partner. They had mentioned Michael to Mina but she did not seem very interested. The family had then decided to invite both Mina and Michael together to their home in order for them to get to know each other better. They knew that Michael had access to a car because of his work, something Mina did not have. They suggested then that Mina could get a ride to their home with Michael. After this Michael and Mina would come together to all the meals and would in the future get married.

Walterio, Dani, Mina, Nilda and Belen[30]   Members of the Vera family, Mina and Michael, and me (both by V)

Nilda and Walterio with their family were rather dependent on *the Germans*. There were no other permanent work opportunities in the area around the community except seasonal work. They lived in a house that was owned by the community. The house was provided with furniture and items belonging to Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera. When something was out of order, for example when the water tap dripped, they called somebody from the community and one of the members would come and fix it. Walterio and his family did not have to pay rent for the house since they both worked for the community and only paid for the water,

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[30] Photos used in this thesis made by me will be marked "MD", photos made by the community will be marked "CD/VB", photos made by the Vera family will be marked "V", and photos provided by Mina and Michael will be marked "M&M".

electricity and gas. Like many other families in this area, the family has a vegetable plot where they cultivate fruit and vegetables. This was for their own consumption. If the harvest was large, they would give some to Walterio's parents or siblings. The land belonged to the community and they paid a small amount each year as rent. The family had bought plants from the community and not seeds because this would speed up the cultivation. When necessary they would rent an irrigation pump from the community.

Walterio told me many times that he was unhappy with his German bosses. He said that they thought he was dumb but that he knew that he had rights as a worker. According to Walterio he did not get the appropriate protective equipment such as masks when working with toxic solvents; no gloves, glasses or special clothing. When he tried to discuss this with his boss he was just told to wait. Apart from the lack of adequate equipment there was a bigger problem. Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera had opened several companies and during the years some of them had closed down and other new ones had opened. The problem was that when the workers were transferred from one company to another one they did not transfer their length of service. So a worker who had 10 years of service would start from scratch in the new company and as a consequence get a lower salary. Walterio also complained that the workers did not get paid overtime. One day he decided to write a letter of complaint about these issues to the community. His daughter Daniela helped him to write the letter carefully expressing his worries. The idea was to make all his fellow workers sign the letter, but when the day arrived nobody signed. According to Walterio they were all afraid of losing their jobs.

It turned out that there were many things from lamps, kitchen utensils, to clothes in the home of Nilda and the family that were bought in the community store El Molcito located inside the community. Nilda would often explain that she bought things in order to support *the Germans*. The first time we went to the river Perquilauquen to swim I saw both Daniela's and Carolina's swim suits, both with half arms and covering much of their back and chest. Daniela told me that *the Germans* did not use to swim in bikinis and that the swim suits should not show much of the back. At the same time, Daniela was fashion-conscious and in particular the retro fashion from the 60s and 70s that was popular at that time in Chile. She had come across many garments such as Puma training shoes, jackets etc. as well as dresses from the 60s that were quite fashionable again.

In addition to the personal clothing and items for the house, most of the groceries of the family were also bought in the store in Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera. In addition to wanting to support the community, buying there was convenient because the workers could buy for a certain amount of money each month without paying cash. The amount would be

deducted from their salary at the end of the month. This system was attractive for the workers. At the same time there were no other stores close to their home, so without access to a car it was rather difficult to shop anywhere else.[31]

Another aspect of the relationship between the Vera family and *the Germans* that was widespread among other local Chileans was linked to a sense of moral obligation after receiving all sorts of help for decades, such as free medical treatment in the hospital, free school and leisure activities though the support movement for their children. In connection with these activities food, clothing, and so on were paid for by *the Germans*. Walterio and Nilda would often tell me about their experiences with the German community as a charity organisation that would give them and their children free medical care and free education for their daughters. When their youngest daughter Belen got sick as a little child she was treated in the community hospital for free and recovered. Walterio and Nilde said that they would never forget this.

Nilda told me how Daniela and Belen had sometimes spent Christmas and New Year's Eve as well as the Christmas holidays in Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera together with other Chilean youths when they participated in the youth movement part of the support movement of the community.[32] Nilda told me how lonely they felt celebrating Christmas and New Year's Eve without their girls. When I asked Nilda why they sent their girls to the community at such a special family moment she told me that it was because they thought the girls were better off in the community. Many local Chileans such as Walterio and Nilda were not only grateful for all the help they received from the community but also looked at *the Germans* as better educators than themselves.

3.2 Admiration for *the Germans*

The community owned a café located in San Carlos named *La Alborada* that sold their products.[33] It was managed by Walterio's sisters: Laly, and Silvia with her husband Hugo. I discovered early on while sitting in the café that Chilean customers were in general positive to the products made by the community although the prices were higher than other, comparable products. This positive attitude was linked to the facts that the products were perceived by the

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[31] During part of my fieldwork Walterio and Nilda had a car. They did not use it much because of the high cost of petrol.

[32] The community internally did not celebrate Christmas. They organised events for Chilean youth part of the support movement during Christmas.

[33] The café sold sandwiches of cheese and ham, pastry products, different kinds of meat products such as salami, sausages and ham, fruit-juice and bread. In addition they sold cheese, honey, marmalades and chocolate.

Chilean consumers as truly "German". Many Chilean customers would comment on the"exceptionally" good quality of the community products both in terms of taste and presentation. Furthermore, the decor of the café, the toilet facilities and the general cleanliness of the café, were also commented on by many of the customers as something special and unique and as typically German.

To break the ice and start a conversation with the workers in the cafe I would often ask questions about the food I ordered, such as how it was made, if it was a German recipe and so on. I was told that most of the products were made exclusively with imported ingredients from Germany.[34] With few exceptions, all the products were based on German or Austrian recipes, and many products had German names such as *Frankfurt Ring, Apfelstrudel* and *Streuselkuchen.* All the products came with text on their wrapping saying: *"*Made in Villa Baviera. Natural products. German quality". Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera branded and wrapped their products in order to sell them as "German". As I discovered subsequently, people from the community were very proud of the food they produced.

The products of the community had a particular visual look. The emphasis was strongly on a German heritage. This was expressed through the use of specific images and text in the product, posters, and other types of commercials of the goods. The "encounter" with the community through food, in particular in the café Alborada*,*[35] made me aware of how the products became symbols for Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera through how the goods are "wrapped" in order to sell. Food is both something that we as humans need to live and "it is an intrinsically multi layered and multidimensional subject – with social, psychological, physiological, symbolic dimension... and with culturally constructed meanings..." (Holtzman 2006:362).

The branding made the products easily recognisable. A woman's figure that evoked the character taken from the novel Heidi, complete with mountains in the background, gave associations to the Alps and the name Villa Baviera printed on the product helped us as customers to associate the products with German traditions. The community's emphasis on its German heritage made many Chileans positive to their products and thus indirectly also towards the community itself. One might say that the Chilean consumers are seduced by the German heritage. Like any symbol, food acquires meaning within the context of a given metaphorical symbolic system. Through the production of food "wrapped" as German quality food one might say that the community made friends.

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[34] As I discovered with time the ingredients were bought in Chile.
[35] And later at the cafe El Molcito that was located inside the community.

The branding of Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera products (both by CD/VB)

One important source of income for Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera is the sale of their products and the community uses their German heritage as a sales gimmick. The way the community products are received by the established Chilean society must also be seen in light of how the Germanic is perceived in Chile. The way Germans in general are seen in Chile is different to how Germans are often looked at in Europe where the Second World War continues to create many negative associations. During the Second World War Chile was not as directly affected by the war and its consequences as the European countries were. Even though Chileans got information through the media and a number of refugees arrived in Chile, the majority of the Chilean population did not have any personal experiences of a German occupation of their nation or the horrors of the Holocaust. This contributed to making the Chilean nation more receptive to Germans and German culture after 1945 than most European countries and other allied powers.

The positive image or admiration of "the Germans" among many Chileans is connected to several aspects in Chilean society and is a social construction that can be understood among other things by looking more closely at European and in particular German immigration to Chile. The German migration to Chile started around 1850 and continued until the next century. This group of Germans had been invited by the Chilean state to "modernise"and "civilise" southern Chile "through improving the Chilean race" (Minte 1997). This also implied fighting and oppressing the indigenous population living in southern Chile. After independence from Spain in 1818, the Chilean government had little control over the southern part of the country and was afraid of losing the area to other powers (ibid.). As a

strategy the government of that time decided to encourage European settlement. The encouragement of settlement from Europe was not only a political strategy but also part of a racial discourse in Latin-America of that time. It was thought that it was a necessary to develop the mestizo race by mixing it with foreign blood (ibid.) and those immigrants from northern Europe would, through their work ethic, constitute an inspiration for the local Chilean population and thus bring progress to Chile. The colonist policy was pervaded by a Chilean sense of European superiority.

The German settlers got cheap land from the Chilean authorities and settled down in southern Chile, in the rainy provinces south of the Biobío River: the southern provinces of Valdivia, Llanquihue, and Osorno. Until the mid-nineteenth century, this region was largely controlled by the indigenous Araucanians, and the settlers soon came into conflict with them. The German settlers introduced small-scale industries and farming and established resorts in the Lake District. The descendants of this first German immigrant group in the Lake District became wealthy landowners in time. During the land reforms in the 60s and 70s and the political polarisation of that time, the majority of this group of landowners supported right-wing groups in Chile and later the military coup (Schwember 2009).

It is difficult to determine exactly how many Germans immigrated because Chile only kept partial immigration statistics (Young 1974:3). Although one may estimate that 10,000 Germans came to Chile in the nineteenth century and until 1913, the number is likely somewhat greater. German immigration and colonisation in southern Chile had a great impact on the modernisation and economic development of this part of the country and the German settlers are said to have "built" southern Chile (Young 1974). They established several schools and social institutions during the years that came. This group of Germans and their descendants preserved their German language, culture and ethos for a long time. Even today one may see traces of this in the many German schools and kindergartens, as well as the German culture centres, restaurants, and products elaborated in Chile based on German traditions etc. In the southern parts of the country, the October beer festival is celebrated; German libraries and social clubs and found with members who have German ancestors. The German presence is also possible evident in the architecture, street names and museums in some cities of southern Chile.

Ever since German immigration, the Germans in Chile have had a very good reputation as being hardworking and honest. Chileans who have German ancestry are very proud of their heritage and keep their German roots alive as much as possible. Chileans of German descent constitute a consumer group that are likely to buy German food such as the

Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera products because of their own heritage and because many of them can afford it. Consuming German food may make them feel closer to a distant past and roots although in most cases the relationship with Germany is distant.

Another feature of Chilean society is a general fascination for overseas products, in particular for European items. Imported goods are sold as more expensive than national products. German products are European goods that have a good reputation in Chile and just by being German carry the stamp of "quality". Many of the Chileans I met during fieldwork would comment on the superiority of the German products produced by the community. People would also comment on the merchandise made by the community as something completely different from the Chilean products. According to the Chilean sociologist Larraín (2001), the admiration for overseas products is a sign of the Chileans' on-going necessity to show that Chile, in spite of the distance from the outer world, is civilised.

3.3 Approaching the community and people

For a long time during my fieldwork I sat outside the main gate of Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera, where the security gate is. With time I started to get to know the three ladies who worked there: Mina whom I eventually got to know better through the Vera family, Hilde and Eline. In the evenings they were often together with their husbands: Michael, Odo and Kurt respectively. The work of these ladies was to control everything that passed the security gate either in or out. I would often get something to drink and eat from the lady who was on duty, mostly community products. The food was served and presented with pride. The person in charge would generally talk a little with me and then leave me.

Mina was the one I felt more open with and who would often talk with me. Later she told me how she liked to work in the security gate because that was the place where new people would show up. For her it was like a little window towards the outside world. Her openness towards me was also linked to her friendship with the Vera family, in particular Laly, Nilda and Walterio. Mina had come from Germany to the community in 1973 as a trained nurse in order to work in the community hospital. Her mother and twin brother had already been in Chile for years, while her father had died in Germany. Mina worked several years in the community hospital and afterwards at the security gate. Through Mina I got to know her husband Michael. When I did my fieldwork he was in his late 40s and had come to Chile as a little boy with his parents and siblings in 1961. After arriving in Chile he had lived

his whole life in the community and worked in agriculture. He was a gentle and calm man. Mina and Michael got married in the year 2000 and after a visit to Germany in 2005 they decided to settle there permanently. Today they live in Germany, in Mina's hometown. They have subsequently visited family members and friends back in Chile. Mina, Michael and I gradually became friends. We were to have many conversations about the community and my project and life in general.

One day while visiting Mina and Michael in Germany, Mina wanted to show me a photo album with photos of her, from her childhood until the present. While showing me her photos she told me her life story. One of the images she showed me was a black and white photo of two children smiling and sitting in the grass. She told me that this was she and her twin brother Rudolf at the age of 12 taken a few days before he left for Chile and the community. Even though we had already had several conversations in Chile, Mina had never told me before about her twin brother. They had been very close to each other during their childhood in Germany, but after he had gone to Chile things changed. He did not write much and all the letters to Mina and the family back in Germany were impersonal. Mina told me how the preachers had visited her parents in Germany and persuaded them to let her twin brother, then nine years old, travel by airplane to Chile together with several other children together with several craftsmen and members of the community. Her parents had signed a permission letter that stated that her brother would be in Chile for only two years. He did not return to Germany until 2005 as a grown man.

While looking at the photos Mina told me how life in the community when coming to Chile had developed very differently from what she had expected. She had not been allowed to see her twin brother much during the first 30 years in Chile. She would either not see her sister again before Mina moved back to Germany with her husband Michael. The sisters had to get to know each other again in Germany as adults. Through this way of "talking with photographs" (Pink 2001), I would learn about Mina's relationship with her twin brother and sister, and her experiences from living in Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera. Mina's choice of communicating to me through photographs shows how the image becomes a vehicle for talking about her past. My experiences from how people I met during fieldwork wanted to communicate about their lives through the use of photographs are similar to other researchers' experiences. Okely (referred to in Pink 2001:72), when doing research about "the changing conditions and experiences of the aged in rural France," described how her informants' photographs became important for her research. Through this approach Okely found a route to her informants' past through images (Pink 2001:72). Banks (2001) emphasises how the use of

photographs in the course of interviews with people can contribute to evoking memories. The photographs can give focus and sharpness and clear up vague details. The image became a tool for Mina to talk with me and that somehow helped her to remember, and for me as a researcher a way into people's past and to knowing people's biographies and histories.

One day Mina and Michael wanted to show me a DVD that somebody in Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera had made from New Year's Eve 2002 celebration in the community. The owners of the DVD were a family that had moved from the community to Germany and had loaned the DVD to someone that had passed it on to Mina and Michael. We could also see Mina and Michael in the DVD and when everybody in the DVD sang the hymn of the community Mina started to sing too and became bright in her eyes. The DVD with familiar images and sounds touched Mina in her inner core, and made it easier for them to recall and share their past with me. Later Michael showed me some of the many photographs he had on his computer of the landscape and surroundings of Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera. His brother Albert that still lived in the community and that I with time got to know had sent him the images. Michael told me that seeing the photographs made him feel that he was back in the community. This was a landscape that he knew like the back of his hand. In the community, Michael worked for decades in agriculture. The experience of watching the photos and the statement of Michael's, as well as Mina's response to seeing the DVD, reflects some of the qualities of the image that might reaches our inner sense (MacDougall 2006).

Mina and me in Germany 2006   Mina and her twin brother in Germany 1961 (by M&M)

The road leading towards Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera. Mina at the main gate in former years (both by M&M)

Eline and me at the main gate.   The main gate today (both by MD)

When visiting Mina and Michael in Germany she told me that she had wanted to help me in my doctoral project. Mina had discussed letting me enter Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera with the other ladies working at the security gate, specifically to the store El Molcito and community hospital. They had not been very happy about it but Mina had convinced them and promised that she would take responsibility for any potential problems. Thanks to Mina, after several months at the security gate I was allowed to enter the community although only to the store and hospital.

I was told to drive straight ahead, approximately 4 kilometres, where a house named Freihaus was located and a person named Ricardo would be waiting for me. I was not completely sure where to drive and was afraid of driving the wrong way and doing something that would upset the community leaders of the time. Freihaus was a rather big building, with a big, metal figure hanging on the outside wall. This turned out to be the Blue Lady, one of the main symbols of the community at the time. This consisted of an abstract figure of a nurse with a child in each hand.
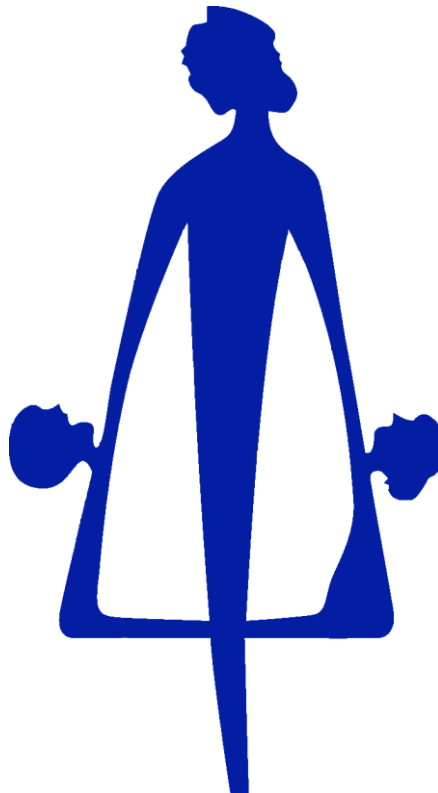
The Blue Lady (by CD/VB)

Outside Freihaus Ricardo was waiting for me. He was in his late 40s, a short, dark-haired man who spoke Spanish with a slight German accent. He walked with some difficulty, and told me he had been adopted by the community as a little boy in the 70s in order to be given medical help and a better future. He had not seen his Chilean family until quite recently. Ricardo tried to live close to his Chilean family outside the community for a while but felt it too difficult both to adapt culturally and survive economically. He wife Eva was a small, quiet woman in her 40s. Eva also had problems walking and was dressed as most of the women in the community during this time, with a floral-patterned skirt and her hair tidily put together. Eva and Ricardo had a sweet little baby boy named Oscar. Ricardo articulated with the aid of his hands and spoke fast, while Eva was quite the opposite, reserved and stiff. He spoke Spanish to his son while she spoke German. Ricardo told me they had been secret sweethearts for more than 12 years before they got married. When they married they arranged two parties, one for his Chilean family and another one for her German family. After the party they had been very aware of the differences between their families, and that there was a Chilean and a German culture. His wife Eva had only recently learned that the she was also Chilean-born and adopted by the community. This had been a shock for her and she was still coping with it. During much of my fieldwork Ricardo was the public spokesman of Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera and in charge of security.

Ricardo guided me around Freihaus and presented to me "the story" of the house. The Chilean President Frei[36] wanted to visit the community in the 60s and due to this a guesthouse was built. They had done everything themselves, even making the floor tiles and furniture. Ricardo was a bit upset because the police had recently wanted to tear up the floor searching for bunkers.[37] According to him there were no bunkers there. I did not say much to this but just listened to him. On the walls of the entrance to Freihaus there were several photos, among them a big group photo of the first community members that arrived in the 60s. There were also flowers and gifts from supporters and friends of the community. Everything in Freihaus looked old but well taken care of. I later learned that the former leader Paul Schäefer had lived in Freihaus in a wing of the house.

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[36] Eduardo Frei Montalva was president in Chile from 1964-1970.
[37] This was in 2003 after the many police raids on Colonia Dignidad /Villa Baviera grounds. The police would later find underground bunkers in the community.

Freihaus in Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera (by CD/VB)

After the tour in Freihaus Ricardo invited me to eat something, as earlier mostly community products, and asked me to tell him more about my project and myself. He listened carefully and asked a few questions about who would read my work after I was finished and so on. After this Ricardo asked me if I wanted to watch some videos *they* (the community) had made. He told me that they had made many videos but because of time limitations I would only see two. The first video was about the beginning of the community in Chile until the problems the community had faced after the 90s, and the other video showed the many police raids in 1998.

DVD REF 2: VIDEO (BY CD/VB)

While I was watching the videos Ricardo would come and go, probably arranging my guided tour, which was to follow. Although I was watching the videos I could hear him speak German on the phone and understood some of the words. He was explaining that he was coming soon with *Besuch, eine Dame* (a visit, a lady) who studied cultures. When he finished he turned back to me and said with a smile: *there you see, it doesn't take more than this*. At this moment my expectations were to have a round trip guided by Ricardo, much like a tourist since this was my first time inside the community. I saw this as a "breakthrough" in my relationship with the community thanks to the Vera family and my contact with Mina. I was not aware that for the community leaders of this time this was the moment in which they would examine my project and my person. It was a serious matter for them. I realised much later that I during this guided trip to Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera I had by "coincidence" met three of the leaders of that time, one after the other, and was asked to explain my project and present myself to them.

The guided tour continued after Freihaus to the hospital. At the time there were several black-and-white images of Chilean children with their names and year of birth on the hospital walls. These were children who had been born in the hospital. There was also a colour photograph of Franz Joseph Strauss, a deceased Bavarian politician on the political right.[38] There was also a hand-painted map of places close by showing where the Chilean patients lived and diagrams of how many were treated in the community.[39]

Out of the blue a fair-haired man in a doctor's lab coat appeared. He smiled at me and presented himself as Dr. Hartmut Hopp Miottel, the doctor of the community*,* and after a firm handshake he gave me a kiss on each cheek, as is the custom in Chile. When talking with me, some of the Vera family members had talked very warmly about Dr. Hopp. On the other hand I had read a number of things about him in different human rights reports and in the newspapers, such as him being the right hand of Paul Schäfer, as well as one of the privileged few who could go abroad to study medicine and maintain contact with the outer world. More importantly it was claimed that he had participated in the torture of community members, the disappearing of Pinochet's opponents, and abetting the sexual molestation of children by the former community leader (Schwember 2009; Gemballa 1990).

I was not expecting to meet a man who turned out to emit great civility and expressed vast knowledge of classical music, literature and, overall, a highly intellectual approach. He

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[38] Franz Josef Strauss was a Bavarian Christian Democratic politician who was a supporter of the community (Gemballa 1990).
[39] All the images and the map were removed at a later stage of my fieldwork.

turned out to be a gentleman who held open the door for me while going from one place to the other and who explained the story of the hospital to me in great detail. Dr. Hopp told me that the Chilean government had notified all the nurses at the community hospital that they had to re-submit their nursing certificates for approval by the Chilean authorities. This implied that all nurses from the community had to start studying again. While looking at me seriously, Dr. Hopp asked how this could be possible; these were people who had worked as nurses for 40 years and it would be very hard for them to start studying again.

Dr. Hopp and I spoke in Spanish and he admitted that he still had problems expressing himself in Spanish. When I asked him if he missed Germany he looked at me with some surprise and said that no, because it was so many years ago since he had lived in Germany. When I asked if he, as a German doctor, had experienced any cultural conflicts with the local Chileans he smiled and said that for him it was a privilege to work with people who were so *simple*, in the sense that they were positive and good people. He also said that when he arrived in Chile as a young man he had not really seen much of it. There had been a lot of hard work. At one moment, without any introduction, Dr. Hopp stopped at a window and asked me to tell him a little about my project. The situation of being for the first time inside Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera and with Dr. Hopp made me feel insecure but I somehow managed to say that my research was related to memories. Then Dr. Hopp asked me why I called it memories and suggested that I rather use the term *recuerdos*, remembrance. I recall that while having this conversation with him I hoped that I had not made a fool of myself, and more importantly that he would understand that my intentions were well-meant. I added that to have a deeper understanding of their society, it was necessary for me as a researcher to be there over a longer period of time. He then smiled and said carefully: *...and then you have to live here with us?* to which I replied yes. He subsequently said: *the problem is if your work is representative of our community*. At that moment I did not understand what he was saying, but as we talked more I gradually began to understand his question. The general aim and ideal of anthropologists is to "grasp the native's point of view" so we can make representative ethnographically a description of others. This is a challenge because we are all situated. Still, we try, and this is what I told him. Dr. Hopp asked me if I had not considered studying other people than the community, to which I replied firmly "no". After this he wrapped up the conversation, kissed me on each cheek and said that we could maybe continue our conversation on another occasion.

My guided trip with Ricardo then continued to several places in the community, such as the bakery, the common community kitchen and eating hall, the laundry, the kindergarten,

the garage and petrol station, the housing provided for the elderly, the former school building for the German children[40], the aviary and other places. Most of those I met working were Germans. After some words from Ricardo some people were eager to tell me about their work, in a mixture of Spanish and German, and to show me their place of work. Ricardo would also tell me what was characteristic during this time of each work place, for example that no women entered the garage. When they needed help from the people working there, most commonly bicycle repairs, they would just leave the bicycle to be repaired outside the place and find it there later, fixed. The community members would deliver all the clothes and linen such as bedclothes that they used to the communal laundry. All items were labelled with names. Everything would be returned clean and ironed at the same place. If clothes or linen needed mending they would also be sent to the dressmaker's workroom. If one needed something else, for example soap or more sugar, this could be collected at a common stockroom, but items that were withdrawn had to be registered and paid for later. 60 per cent of the salary that most community members got was subtracted for the community. Because of this most members did not have much money. According to Ricardo, Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera had opened up for a modernisation process where people could create their own companies or engage in other activities in order to make money.

One of the places we visited was the residence for the elderly. When we entered the house I smelled a strong smell of ammoniac. A muscular man in the beginning of his 60s in blue overalls was painting a wall together with two young men. The adult man turned around to me and said with a smile: *how are you?* I recognised him then as the friend of the former mayor Sergio. I had also previously read about Hans in the newspapers and human right reports about his participation in the disappearing of left-wing activists during the regime of General Pinochet. Hans was pointed out as one of the men in the community who had been the bodyguard of Paul Schäfer, and worked closely with the military regime (Schwember 2009; Gemballa 1990). Knowing about this made me even more nervous about talking with him. He started to walk and while walking he said: *tell me about your project because I still can't understand it.* The three of us came to a room where many types of furniture were placed and sat down on a sofa, Hans, Ricardo and me. Hans said *tell.* I told him that I was interested in the relationship between Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera and the local Chileans. Hans asked me if my work was going to be published and, if so, where. I said that I was going to present it to the University of Tromsø in Norway and that it would be published there. I

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[40] The school had not been in use for a long time.

further mentioned the same things I had said to Dr. Hopp, about the necessity of doing participant observation, of living on the premises themselves. I also stressed that I was not interested in politics. This resulted in a lot of laughter from Hans who did not say anything to this. The conversation with Hans came to an end just as quickly as it had started.

When walking towards what was presented as the school building, Ricardo told me that there were very few Germans of school age. During this time there were only two boys between 10 and 12 years in the community, and they were tutored by a Chilean teacher. When we entered the school building two blonde boys were eating lunch with their Chilean teacher. The boys mostly spoke German but understood Spanish. While we were there, a blonde, cheerful-looking man in his 60s entered the room. He had evidently heard about me, because he said slightly surprised: *oh yes, so you are the Norwegian girl.* [41] He presented himself as Womas and claimed to have been to Norway three times before he came to Chile: he had visited Stavanger, Bergen and northern Norway. He told me that it was very beautiful in Norway, in particular Norwegian nature. The fact that he had been in Norway, made the conversation flow.

In time Womas and his wife Davida became my friends. Womas had come to the community when he was in his twenties in 1975. His mother and siblings were already in Chile while his father, who was divorced from his mother, remained in Germany. Davida had come to Chile in the 60s together with her family. She had been a 16-year-old girl. After being secret sweethearts for seven years they got married and now had three children. Womas had worked in close collaboration with the former leadership several years, and with making films for the community. Davida worked in the office of one of the companies owned by the community for a number of years. During my fieldwork he worked as manager of one of the Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera companies while his wife took care of their children.

After Schäefer escaped from the Chilean Police in the late 90s, Womas, Hans, Dr. Hopp and Ricardo were in charge of the community (Schwember 2009). They were all sentenced to five years in Chilean jail in 2011 for assisting sexual molestation of children committed by the former community leader. Dr. Hopp escaped from Chile in 2011 before being due to commence his jail sentence and left to Germany. He lives today in Germany together with his wife. In 2013 an international arrest warrant was issued by Interpol on the request of Chilean authorities (*The Local - Germany`s News in English* 9th of April 2013).

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[41] That is not surprising, as due to my Chilean background I do not look like most Norwegians.

One of the many roads in Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera   Farming

Chicken hen   Communitarian kitchen

The community hospital   Walterio in the hospital with a nurse (all by CD/VB)

3.4 Sharing dining and TV-room

During fieldwork with some community members (by MD)

For a long time I was only allowed to enter Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera as part of "guided tours" with accompany from the comunity leadership, and later to go to El Molcito the community store when it was open. With time this would gradually change and I would be invited to live inside the community and share common spaces for social gatherings such as dining room and television room. I was also allowed to film inside the community but asked to not be pushy and respect people`s private life. This change happened much thanks to relationships of trust that was developed through the years with some of the younger generations that were more influential than others.

While being in Norway I received one day an e-mail from a young man from the community who had heard about me from Mina and Michael. This was Jan. He wanted to know me and this was the start of our friendship. Jan was born in 1971 as one of seven children. At the time he was studying pedagogy and visual graphics at the university. Jan was very interested in photography and making films and had been involved in creating the community web pages.

His parents had known each other from the beginning of the community in Germany. They had got engaged then but only married after years in Chile. Jan's father had belonged to the community's former leadership and together with other members he had been accused by Chilean court of participating as a founder of an illicit association. Jan`s mother worked together with Mina at the security gate. Jan and I had many things in common, such as age and academic studies, and an interest in visual representations. The fact that Jan spoke good English in addition to fluent Spanish and had considerable knowledge about the Chilean society and the modern world in general paved the way for good communication between the two of us.

The next time I returned for fieldwork to the community almost six months had passed since my last visit and I came with my partner Erling, his two children, and my sister-in-law with family. Jan helped us to rent a house owned by the community located just by the main entrance. Living in one of the community's houses where almost everything inside, from the radio to the furniture, was from the 50s and 60s was like going back in time. I felt we were put in another era. During our stay we were invited to visit the community and walk around together with Jan. The presence of my Norwegian looking partner with children and my sister-in-law with children probably contributed somehow to break the ice with some of the inhabitants.

The subsequent time I came for fieldwork in Chile together with my partner Erling a year had elapsed. In the meantime I had kept in touch through letters, e-mail or telephone with Jan, Mina and Michael, as well as my Chilean friends from the Vera family. On this and future occasions, Jan organised the rental of a house located inside the community. Thanks to Jan we were invited to eat all our meals in the communal dining room together with the other residents. Jan told me that he thought I would like to be closer to the people living inside the community grounds.

Jan introduced me to the daily rhythm and routine of the community. The meals were breakfast in the morning, lunch at midday and supper after work hours, around seven p.m. The oldest people living in the residences for the elderly could get their food brought to their place, as could others who were too sick, I was told. The meals routine regulated much of the social life inside the community. I also learned the way things worked in the dining room. Everybody was supposed to find their own glasses, dishes and cutlery as well as serve themselves. When the meal was concluded, everybody had to clean their own table.

With few exceptions all the food was based on products from Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera. Meat was not a regular part of the menu but rather something special. The meals consisted of what the community harvested according to the different seasons of the year.

In the beginning there was silence when we entered the dining room. Most of the residents would sit at a distance from us and just looked at us sideways. Gradually this situation changed. Some of the residents started to smile and greet us and in time some of them began to talk to us. People would help us find glasses, cutlery and where to leave the dirty dishes when we were done. This, in turn, often became the beginning of small conversations. I or my partner was asked if my partner came from Germany, and often people would tell us about their own or other inhabitants' sufferings during WWII and very often about their dreams of coming back to Germany. Most of those who approached us were in their 50s and younger. The older ones would keep their distance.

Living inside the community implied that I ate all my meals in the common dining room, watched television in the common TV-room and shared the common spaces in the community grounds with the other inhabitants. I was permitted to walk around alone. This made it possible for me to explore the community in a different manner than when I was taken on a guided tour where somebody else decided what to see and whom to speak to. More importantly, through sharing some of the same spaces inside the community I and people living there had the possibility of getting to know each other.

One day when I was trying to watch television in the common room without any luck I got to know Holger who wanted to help me fix the TV. This started our relationship as friends. Holger would show me around and tell me about his upbringing in this particular place. At this time he was in his late 40s and would often wear old blue trousers and jackets that were used by all men during the first years in Chile. Holger had come to Chile as a little baby with his siblings and parents. In Chile he had been, like all the other children, brought up in the children's house. Holger had no family of his own and one of his biggest dreams was to marry someone and have children. He lived in the part of Zippelhaus where the young, unmarried men used to live in former times. Now he had his room to himself. Previously, four other young men shared the same room. Holger was not close to his parents who had recently moved to live close by the community restaurants, El Casino Familiar, located approximated 122 km south of the community, or to his other sibling. All of them lived in the community at this time except one of his brothers who had moved to Argentina some time ago.[42]

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[42] He was wanted by Chilean authorities.

Through Holger I became acquainted with his friend Simon. When the television in the common TV-room was down due to the weather, Holger asked his friend if I could watch television at his place. Simon was in his late 40s, round and short, with dark hair. He had been in the community for 36 years after his Chilean mother had left him there when he was 12 years old and the community had therefore adopted him. Simon had some problems with his hips and legs and walked with difficulty. He lived on the third floor of Zippelhaus without a lift. He therefore spent much of the day in his room and he was probably therefore happy to have company. Another aspect was that he was interested in the television and technical equipment. He therefore thought being filmed by and talking about technical equipment was quite exciting. For much of the day he would sit and watch television or listen to music. He told me that he could burn CD with German music if I wanted, but then I would have to buy him a CD in return that was sold in the community store El Molcito. He made copies of television programmes or music and burned them on DVD or CD. These he exchanged or sold to others in the community. In this way he was earning some money. Like Holger, Simon was forthcoming and open and welcomed me. Simon could talk for hours about his life and upbringing.

One day I was eating in the communal dining hall, in Zippelhaus, Ricardo that I had meet on my first guided trip in Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera, and that was one of the Chilean spokespersons for the community at the time entered together with two men. One of them was carrying a large camera on his shoulder. He presented them as two journalists from the American television channel CNN that would film a bit in the communal dining hall. Ricardo pointed at me and said that I was not from the community but a journalist. I hurried to correct this by saying that I was an anthropologist, something that resulted in a lot of laughter from the CNN journalists who commented that there was not much of a difference between us. Until then I had being filming in many places in the community but never in the dining hall since I regarded the place as a more private sphere and I wanted people to know that I would not film them there. A man sitting at the neighbouring table with his family approached me and said: *Just film them*! He wanted me to film the CNN reporters while they filmed the residents eating. I followed his advice and filmed them. After this we started to talk. This was how I got to know Albert and his family.

With time Albert and I became friends and he would help me in my work. It turned out that Albert was the brother of Minas husband Michael. We had many conversations about the community, Chile and life in general.

Albert was an open person who wanted to get to know outsiders. He spoke good Spanish and had a good sense of humour and a quirky take on life. Albert had come to Chile as a five-month-old baby with his parents and five other siblings in 1961. Through his work in agriculture, today as manager, he was able to travel outside the community in the preceding years. He had married Maria after 2000 and had two children at the time. Maria was born in the community in Chile and had several siblings. She was a mild and friendly person that had studied at the community school and used to work in the community restaurant. During my fieldwork she took care of their children.

During conversations with people many would refer to a former schoolteacher in the community named Sigmund that had several years ago started without finishing writing the history of the community. At the time his office was in Zippelhaus. One day I therefore went to Sigmund's office to ask him if he could tell me more about the beginning of the community in Germany. Sigmund was an old man in his 70s. In the beginning it was very hard to have a conversation with Sigmund. He did not want to talk about the community with me. He told me: *One's own experience is quite limited and once I was asked to write the story of our community. I started and then the computer took away a dozen of pages and I could not rescue it or write it again. It is always such a partial thing, so partial that it does not give the reality*. He continued: *I don't feel that I am able to say it now there are so many things that one should say but in the moment I don't feel able to do it*. Sigmund would need a long time to say a few words. With time Sigmund opened up more but it continued to be difficult for him to talk about the community and the past. Sigmund had been part of the community since its inception in Germany. He turned out to be one of the few inhabitants with higher education, a doctoral degree in language. I think his academic background helped make our conversations somewhat easier. We could both relate to an academic world. During his years in Chile Sigmund had worked as a teacher for the community children, and had helped control what information the members got from the world outside and what was sent out. He had been one of the few to be allowed to marry and have children during the time of Paul Schäfer.

3.5 The researcher as positioned and challenges in field

Some of the tales I heard during my fieldwork were related to my own background as a child of exiled Chileans. This is when some of the people told me tales about how they, in different ways, witnessed or had knowledge of how left-wing Chileans were tortured after the military coup in Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera. In this manner my project also became an opportunity for me to re-encounter my native Chile's own problematic and unresolved past and helped me to reconstruct my own narrative as a Chilean. As researchers we do fieldwork with our whole person – both as anthropologists and as social beings. Being a child of exiled Chileans and knowing so many people who had lost some of their loved ones during the military coup, it has been hard for me to hear these stories, in particular when I realised that most of the people I met did not, for different reasons, want to share their knowledge with representatives of the government or human rights organisations. My role as the researcher in this context has placed me in a difficult position (Ruby 1980).

Due to the complexity of the experiences of the people I got to know and my own complex feelings towards their experiences, my ethnographic research has been strongly marked by an emotional commitment. To use the words of Jaggar (1989): "Emotions are neither more basic than observation, reason, or action in building theory, nor are they secondary to them. Each of these human faculties reflects an aspect of human knowing inseparable from the other aspects". By including my emotions and search for a reflexive and self-critical approach to my own work, I aim for anthropology that is not "shamans of objectivity" (Ruby 1980).

In the beginning of my fieldwork the former leadership, through Paul Schäfers closest collaborators, was still operating to a certain extent in the community.[43] At that time those in power did not understand what I wanted and felt I was "snooping around". During my fieldwork I was told by some of the people I got to know that the community leaders had discussed my application for working and living in the community as part of my doctoral work. Some of them had shouted that they did not need any nosy anthropologists snooping around. Those in power were quite upset with me being in and around the community. They were afraid that somebody would tell me about how they had been oppressed as well as information about collaboration with the military regime.

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[43] Paul Schäfer had been on the run from the Chilean police since 1997 but kept a firm hand on Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera through his closest collaborators until he was finally found in Argentina and arrested in 2005.

The complex history of the community made it difficult to conduct traditional fieldwork and made my research experience what Hastrup and Hervik (1994:5) name a "total social experience" with fear, anger, pain, tears, happiness and uncertainty. The beginning of my fieldwork was characterised by not being allowed to enter the community in order to participate and observe the daily life of the inhabitants. To do fieldwork where it is particularly difficult to gain access as a researcher or enter potentially hasardous research settings often requires long and sensitive anthropological fieldwork. Entering such fields might also require other methods than doing participant observation. This is the case for Allen Feldman's (1991) work about violence through representations of the body in Northern Ireland. He based his analyses primarily on narration through interviews. Feldman avoided living with his informants because, as he states, "In a culture of political surveillance, participant observation is at best an absurdity and at the least a form of complicity with those outsiders who surveil" (1991:12). For him it was better to find neutral spaces for talking, since long-term observation of any social milieu was not welcomed among his informants. Other researchers, such as the sociologist Katrine Fangen (2001) who studied the radical right wing underground movement in Norway, combined several approaches such as interviews, observations and participations. Fangen accounts for how her informants expected her to participate in their social gatherings through drinking and chatting (2001: Appendix 1: 5). Sitting in a corner at a party and remain sober was considered to be unacceptable by her informants.

When I first started my fieldwork the leadership of the community did not approve of me and in their eyes I was not trustworthy. It is important to get approval for the research from group leadership in order for other group members to collaborate (Richardson in Shaffir and Stebbins 1991). While this is true, it can also work the other way, in particular when there is a change in leadership such as happened in Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera. My experience is that *because* the former leaders did not approve of me, some of the people I got know later *wanted* to trust me with their experiences. When I told inhabitants from the community such as Michael and Mina that I was an anthropologist who wanted to understand the community and peoples experiences from Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera, I really do not think that they understood either what I wanted or who I was, but they trusted me. Wax (1952) argues that it is of paramount importance to gain access so that the research subjects understand what we wish to do. I agree but would add that trust is important.

Besides being afraid of what people would tell me about their experiences of living in the community, the then leaders did not trust me either. Being a child of what was presumed to be exile Chileans marked me in the eyes of the people part of the community as politically suspect. I have been told by some of the people I got to know that the leaders thought that my family were communists since they had left Chile in the 70s. It is no secret that the community leaders did not like communists or others whom they perceived as being left-wing. During the 1973 military coup in Chile, Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera collaborated with General Pinochet's military regime and with the secret Chilean police (Dirección de Inteligencia Nacional). General Pinochet and his family and several of his closest collaborators visited the German settlement frequently during the military regime. The close relationship that existed between the community and the military regime of Pinochet interfered with my fieldwork. My person and the understanding of it shaped my fieldwork and the relationships I developed in the field. Social and identity categories based on age, gender, political affiliation and cultural differences influence the relationships and access one has as a fieldworker. Although I did not talk much about my parents' background as exiles, this was something that was obvious for many due to my age[44] and the fact that I was living in a Scandinavian country. It is well known in Chile that the Scandinavian countries received many exile Chileans after the coup. I would get indirect comments from local Chileans such as: *So you are 33 years old and live in Norway…there are many exiled Chileans there, aren't there?* Or direct questions such as: *Are you with or against General Augusto Pinochet?* Another example of how I was considered part of the left-wing was Walterio's question whether I was a spy for one of the human rights organisations. He asked me this at the beginning of my fieldwork. This shows how the Chilean locals and then leadership in the community interpreted my person and how they would try to detect my political ideology. My Scottish ancestry, status as an anthropologist, and having my Chilean family in the upper part of Santiago, became important "corrections" for how my person was perceived and my project was interpreted.

Talking about the 11th of September 1973, the day of the military coup, and which nuances to use, proved challenging. During my talks with the people I met during my fieldwork I had to adapt my vocabulary. For example, most human rights organisations and others against the military regime of General Pinochet use the term *military coup* (*el golpe military*) to describe what happened on 11 September 1973. This term suggest images of

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[44]I was 33 years old at the time of my fieldwork.

violence and active military participation. Using the term *military coup* in conversation with most local Chileans and members of the community would therefore immediately brand me as a sympathizer with the Chilean left-wing Chile and consequently become a problem for my work. I therefore used the term commonly used in Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera, calling the event a *military insurrection* (*pronunciamiento*). This term refers to the Chilean military that responded to the Chilean people and took responsibility for the nation and liberated it from chaos. There were many other terms such as *forced disappearance* (*detenidos desaparecidos*), people who were *executed for political reasons* (*ejecutados politicos*), *concentration camp* (*campo de concentración*) etc. that are part of the discourse of human rights groups and the political Left. These are words that do not exist in the vocabulary of those that supported the military coup. Instead, they prefer to use neutral words such as "arrested person" or "detention camp". Robben (1995) met some of the same challenges when doing fieldwork among Argentinean generals and felt obligated to adapt his vocabulary.

The little contact people in the community have had with the external world apart from local Chileans, often from a poor economic background, has been through the Chilean media. During most of the existence of this community, journalists have been interested in "revealing" what this community is all about. Sensationalist headlines have dominated the press. As a result, most members have been rather sceptical to people asking questions or taking pictures of them, as these outsiders are assumed to be journalists. The concept "anthropologist" is not familiar to everybody and most of the members saw me as a kind of journalist. Several times I was presented by some of the leaders as: *Marcela the journalist*. No doubt the fact that I used a video camera during much of my fieldwork encouraged people to perceive me as a journalist.

In most ethnographic research, the researcher develops close ties to the people who are studied and the researcher inevitably constitutes part of the encounter. As such, anthropologists cannot escape involvement (Hastrup and Elsass 1990). It is difficult to carry out successful fieldwork without liking the individuals one is studying. Researchers who do not like the people they have studied risk being seen as ethnocentric and not seeing the natives from their own perspective. When meeting people over time and in different situations they are no longer mere representatives of a category. For me this implied that with time I no longer met people who represented Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera but human beings. People become individuals with their own backgrounds and personalities.

Many of the people I met had radically different experiences from their lives in the community. Some of the people had committed terrible actions of abuses towards other people while others shared the experience of being abused by others. The contradictory experiences of the people I got to know made my own feelings mixed. In the beginning of my work I was fearful of some of the inhabitants and at the same time I was gaining a deeper understanding of why it was difficult for the people I met to trust me. I felt unpleasant about ways of thinking and behaving and a deep sorrow and empathy for those many inhabitants that had lived under inhuman conditions and were now dealing with their past experiences. Furthermore, when dealing with research subjects that have radically differing experiences from each other and me the researcher, when it comes to their lives in this community, how can I as a researcher make representations of Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera? This implies that I as an anthropologist cannot simply be an advocate for an Other. "Speaking for" raises many problems in this context. Exactly *who* am I speaking for?

The people from the community I got to know were positioned differently when it came to their role in the community, their experiences and their ability have influence over their own lives. Some had belonged to the former leadership and worked closely with Paul Schäfer and had more power and influence than others. The few that belonged to this group were also differently positioned with regard to privileges. Most of them were permitted to leave and travel outside of the community; they had better work conditions, and better food, as well as being allowed to marry and have children. To a certain degree also those with power were in a sense also victims of an all-powerful leader who, with seduction, lies, and brutality, managed to make people believe in him. Most of those who belonged to this group that had power in former times have been tried and sentenced by the Chilean courts. Their situation was very different to those of others who had been in a situation of total oppression and had had no influence at all over their own lives. My focus in this work is not to distinguish between the "good guys" and the "bad guys". My research has showed me how "victims" in such a totalitarian system as that of Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera were sometimes also "perpetrators" and many "perpetrators" were also "victims". This shows how difficult it is to draw the line of guilt among people in this community.

My identification process during my fieldwork became complex, since I reached a level where I could understand to a certain degree people on two opposing sides, those who had committed violent actions and those who had suffered at their hands. This does not mean that I liked all the people I got to know but that I developed empathy for them. As my research has taught me, meeting people as human beings is also necessary when studying

people who have committed terrible actions. Meeting some of the former leaders in different situations and over time taught me to get to know them as human beings, with their problems and own personalities.

Many people I met while working with this project were sceptical to Colonia Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera and the people living there. To study phenomena that are not seen as politically correct among the majority, such as racism, might contribute to identifying the field researcher as a sympathiser with the group of study. Fangen has accounted for how she, through her research on radical nationalists, was identified as acting on behalf of her research subjects (2001:appendix 1:21). This was true in my case. On different occasions I have experienced that representatives from Chilean human rights organisations identified me as a defender of the community when I sought to assert the human rights of some of the residents.

Furthermore, it is not unusual for research subjects to have expectations about the anthropologists. This will be particularly relevant when certain groups of people in a specific context deal with a contested past and feel stigmatised, such as most of the people from the community. On several occasions during my research I experienced how some of the people I got to know well expected me as an anthropologist to contribute in one way or another to the development of their community. One of them was Jan. He asked me if I as an anthropologist could help the community by suggesting some guidelines for how to survive as a community. He also said to me: *I appreciate very much your work because it is almost the first work that is not investigating Villa Baviera in a context of media sensationalism, but from a more scientific perspective. Because of that is it more possible to differentiate between the bad and the good that existed, and help to understand the Germans who entered this community.* Jan was interested to see how I as an academic could contribute and help the community to be understood better by the outer world. Later Jan asked me if this was only an academic work or if I also felt a social participation in it. It was important for Jan that I felt a personal commitment to my research.

3.6 Painful experiences and video testimony

Working with this project I met people that have made a tremendous and powerful impact on me with their painful, lived experiences. I listened to accounts of human suffering and tragedy that were told and expressed in different ways and by people that were positioned differently in Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera. This led me to the study of a specific field of human experience, the one of violence and painful and traumatic experiences.

Most of the people today deal with the impact of having lived in a repressive community. Many of the people I got to know had experienced being denied freedom of movement, physical and emotional abuse, and even being given sedatives in order to be controlled. Some had been tortured with electric shocks, or been beaten, denied food and water for periods of time, separated from other human beings for longer period of times, or been held against their will. Some had been made infertile without their knowledge. Most had passively witnessed the maltreatment of others and also the torture of other people as well as being forced to participate in the maltreatment of others. All these experiences are examples of violence. I follow the notion about how violence takes many forms. Violence encompasses actions that inflict, threaten, or cause injury and violent actions might be verbal, corporal or written and the injuries can be social, material, corporal and psychological (Jackman 2001).

The consequences of having been brought up in the community are painful and complex. The experiences of the people I met were expressed in many ways, both verbal and non-verbal. On many occasions I observed that people had trouble remembering what had happened in the past, and pinpointing when events had taken place. These memory problems may be related to the painful nature of the memory itself and having been given strong medication. As a consequence of living in the community there are many residents that have problems to take decisions themselves after a whole life under a dictatorial leadership. In addition, many are today addicted to strong medications, have mental problems, and suffer from physical illnesses. Many residents moved and walked with difficulty, had bad teeth and seemed to have general health problems.

To investigate people's painful past involves making them recall painful experiences. I was opening up old wounds that were not always closed, something that could contribute to sensations and feelings that could be hard to manage for the people I met. One example of this is what happened when I visited Mina and Michael in Germany and nightmares from their past were being triggered as told in the introduction chapter. Jean Rouch and Edgar Morin

experienced something similar in the making of their film *Chronique d'un ée*[45] where one of the characters in the film, Marceline, the survivor of a concentration camp, revived her painful memories while being filmed in a specific setting. The filmmakers "had not realised that in asking her (Marceline) to walk through the district, the very shapes of the buildings would remind her of the station, and set her memories churning" (Loizos 1993:62). The film directors later felt that the filming process had turned into psycho-drama, "The creation of something which went beyond tragedy; an intolerable memory turned into film…" (Loizos 1993:62). The experiences of Rouch and Morin as well as my own experiences from visiting Mina and Michael in Germany show how hard it is to "escape" past experiences, and in particular painful ones. Although Mina and Michael were establishing themselves in Germany their past experiences were strongly present in their hearts, minds and bodies and became prominent when talking with me.

Making people remember painful past experiences is ethically challenging and requires a large amount of sensitivity. Because of these issues it was very important for me to be sensitive about how I conducted my research. My approach has much been to let people approach me if they wanted to instead of me approaching them, and to let people I met in this particular field decide if they wanted to tell me about their experiences, what to tell me, how to tell me, and to do this at their own pace. Only after a relationship of trust, openness and empathy was established would I follow up with questions about their past. This was my ideal of how to do research among people with such disturbing experiences. In practice things would turn out somewhat differently. I experienced how, in spite of years of friendship and conversations about their lives, the past experiences could still be very painful and difficult to talk about for people. This made me feel guilty. On several occasions I thought that I should not ask more questions about people's past. As other anthropologists working in emotionally charged encounters have experienced: "Ethnographers can do nothing to lessen the pain that ensues from reliving their traumas" (Robben 1996:75).

During my fieldwork I have learned of lives with painful and traumatic experiences. This was not only expressed in words but also in body language that told of pain and suffering. Based on my experiences from my fieldwork, I felt empathy with many people I meet, and at the same it is challenging to understand the suffering of other humans. "The fact remains that the suffering of groups or entire populations is an experience that most people, writers included, find extremely difficult to grasp" (Morris 1997:38).

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[45] *Chronicle of a Summer* is a French documentary film from 1961.

It is challenging because I deal with experiences that are far away from what regular people experience. As such it is distant from me, and at the same time I feel empathy for people's experiences. This situation creates a natural ambivalence and contributes to make the fieldwork difficult.

When listening to the terrible personal accounts told to me by people I got to know, I often felt empty and at a loss for words that could express my feelings. I experienced that silence was the best way to show my feelings, or as Jackson expressed it: "For there are certain events and experiences of which we choose not to speak. Not because they hold us in thrall, freezing the tongue. Nor because we fear they might reveal our flaws or frailty. Still less because we feel our words can never do them justice. Silence is sometimes the only way we can honour the ineffability and privacy of certain experiences" (Jackson 2004:56).

Painful encounters were not reserved for those who had experienced these violent acts. During some encounters I as an ethnographer experienced psychological tension when listening to these accounts of traumatising events. I would often be absorbed into the account I was listening to and I would struggle to control my tears. During one conversation with a woman, she told me that she could see in my eyes that: *You feel our pain*. This happened after she told me a horrific story about how she lost her unborn child after forced work and medication. At this time I was myself four months' pregnant with my first child and could only too vividly imagine the situation she described. "Transference is only possible if the ethnographer opens himself or herself to the informant and allows for an empathetic introjection" (Robben 1996:97). The experiences of violence of the many people that I met influenced my research. It was hard not to be involved and touched by the testimonies and encounters I experienced during fieldwork.

We are all familiar with photographs and films taken by Allied photographers and cameramen during the liberation of the Nazi concentration camps in 1945. The films and photographs showed the disturbing physical consequences of the camp system on the bodies of the victims, as human skeletons with no hair and few teeth left. These images have been used as a window into a terrible past. Although we could see the prisoners and the camps, the visual representations could hardly show the lived reality of the prisoner's degradation. What the images could do was to convey involvement. In spite of this potential of the image, most trauma studies have maintained that no representation can communicate the truth of the traumatic experience (Jackson 2002; Das 2002). Researchers have been sceptical when it comes to representing traumatic experiences through visual communication. This notion of the difficulties of representing traumatic events may link to two principal assumptions from

visual studies and trauma research. One is grounded in the poststructuralist critique of representation and looking at the visual representation as historical constructions. In this view the visual representation of traumatic lived experiences could only be a construction of something and hence not real. The other notion is linked to trauma research and its search of the real. "Trauma studies consistently return to an iconoclastic notion of the traumatic event as that which simultaneously demands urgent representation but shatters all potential frames of comprehension and reference" (Guerin and Hallas 2007:3). Words, particularly those of oral testimony, are seen as closer to the communication of painful experiences (Guerin and Hallas 2007:7). This is so because the words are still connected to the body of the one in pain. The one with painful lived experiences is active in the narration of his or her story (ibid.). On the other hand, in representing traumatic experiences through photos there will be a separation from the body in pain. It is not *the one in pain* that communicates his or her story but it is through a representation, an image. Other voice, such as Sontag (1977) has argued that images of atrocities have become something of a commonplace. The recurring opportunities for regarding pain of others have contributed to reducing sympathy among the audience although she rethinks this view in her book *Regarding the pain of others* (Sontag 2004). In spite of images only being signs that cannot present much of the reality they refer to, the images continue to have an important function. Truthfulness can convert a true observer to become a witness (ibid.). This aspect of images makes them potentially useful media for conveying the painful experiences of others.

When I started my fieldwork was my intention to make a documentary film about Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera. I realised quite early after some time in the field that it was rather difficult to film people in the community in order to make a film. How to make a film about people that were still struggling to understand what had happened to themselves and that did not easily trust other people? I experienced that I had to let people decide when to approach me, what to tell me and how to share with me their experiences. By walking around in the community often with a video camera I experienced how some people in the community approached me, and wanting to give me their testimonies' while recording them with a video camera. By using a video camera during my fieldwork I realised how many people, when confronted with the camera, saw it as a way of telling their story and provide a testimony of their experiences. In this situation the video camera becomes a catalyst of memory and helps people give an account of painful, lived experiences. Through the camera personal experiences were transformed into a public testimony. This does not mean that all of the people living in the community wanted to share their experiences through the camera, but

some did. Many of my filmed conversations with people were the result of a spontaneous conversation where I was approached. During many spontaneous filming situations I experienced how people would share with me their painful experiences. Other encounters with the video camera were planned. These arranged meetings with the camera would be introduced with questions that would be open-ended such as, "tell me about your upbringing here".

This kind of video testimony might be named audio-visual video testimony, and is a kind of new genre that has developed over the last two decades (Assmann 2006). A diversity of projects devoted to the use of testimonies' and visual archives in museums and other public spaces have emerged. Some examples are such as the Fortunoff Video Archive for Holocaust Testimonies' at Yale University, the Survivors of the Shoah Visual History Foundation, founded by Steven Spielberg, and among others the digital archive of Museum of Memory and Human Rights in Santiago de Chile, and the audio-visual archive of Villa Grimaldi.[46] Such audiovisual archives are proving to be crucial tools for creating a public space of testimony (Assmann 2006).

The relevance of the video testimony solely lies in the impact of the historical trauma. "It registers events and experiences that are cruelly meaningless and thwart any attempt at meaningful coherence. It presents an incompressible event that defies all patterns of understanding, reflecting the naked terror of an alien agent and its unimpeded drive toward senseless destruction (Assman 2006:264). More so than written records, video recordings, by force of their performative nature, create a kind of happening that permits for communication not just through words, or that which is said, but also through that which manifestly remains unsaid in what is said – that in which the experience of a particular historical happening far exceeds the possibilities of language (Ribeiro 2011). Such video testimonies' provide very personal views from within (Assman 2006). Human gives testimonies not only verbally with their words, but also bodily with the symptoms of their trauma (Assman 2006:269).

The video camera can capture more aspects of human testimonies, and make these available for research and transmission purposes. Video testimonies often have a less elaborated form "that leaves room for open-ended passages, such as pauses, periods of silence, uncompleted sentences, and innuendo (Assman 2006:265). It is characterised by the voice of a

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[46] Villa Grimaldi was a complex of buildings used for the torture, killing and disappearing of political prisioners by the Chilean secret police during the first years of the military regime of Augusto Pinochet.

human that will change in its pitch, pace and tone, and of a face that is concrete and expressive, and that is memorable and individual (ibid.). These characteristics of audio-visual testemonies makes it one of the best ways of grasping oral expressions. An audio-visual approach contribute to capture the bodily language, the face expressions, the tone and loudness of voice, pauses and silence (Corporacion Parque por la Paz Villa Grimaldi 2012).

The people I met during my fieldwork expressed their experiences in different ways. For some, giving their testimony through words and a narrative was primary mode of expression. For others, silence was the only and best way of expressing their past experiences. Others struggled to find words and a narrative, a way to tell. Through their bodily expressions and silence they expressed a painful and complex past. In this context the camera would help to capture and represent the silent body language and what was not expressed with words. In order to explore such experiences and describe such encounters is it necessary to have tools and language that brings us closer to understanding and representing such a dimension. A "language" closer to the multidimensionality of the subject itself – that is, a language operating in visual, aural, verbal, temporal, and even …tactile domains" (MacDougall 2006:116). The properties of visual representations make the image, as a photograph or in film, a suitable tool for capturing and representing sensory experiences. The fact that I was using a camera as a tool might have encouraged some of the people I got to know in the community to give me their testimony and re-enforced the testimonial act. The use of a video camera can make the act of testimony even more visible since a camera records both the subject and his words describing the abuses.

The genre of video testimony presents a mix of history and memory. It gives accounts of the ways in which the historical event has shattered the patterns of an individual life (Assmann 2006). Its specific value lies in forging a transgenerational link between the faces and voices of victims and those who listen to them, thus transcending the frame of family memory. Video testimonies reconnect abstract events with the actual face and voice of an individual. These specific features of video testimony intend "to rescue the suffering from huge numbers, from dreadful anonymity, and to restore the persons given and family name, to give the tortured person back his human form, which was snatched away from him" (Appelfeld 1988:92).

Margalit (2002) introduced the concept "moral witness" to differentiate between the witness who actually suffered oppression from other witnesses who are spectators or professionals. The receiver of the testimony might be perceived as "secondary witness" that will pay attention to the testimony with empathy and help record, store, and transmit it

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(Assmann 2006). The objective of the moral witness or secondary witness is to expose "the truth of an event that the perpetrators are eager to conceal, distort, and disavow" (Assman 2006:269). Through getting to know people from Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera and in particular through their testimonies I somehow felt as a moral or secondary witness that is morally obligated to transmit the experiences of abuse people in the community told me.

Loizos (1993) writes about his experiences when filming a refugee woman and presents some of the possible therapeutic aspects of filming painful experiences and memories. He describes both the depression and how the refugee woman managed to survive it. In spite of the painful memories, Loizos (ibid.) argues that it is good for the filmed subject to reflect over difficult memories. My experiences are that it might be good for some to reflect while been filmed over painful memories but this is a complex and delicate issue that researchers has to be careful with. For some of the people I got to know, telling me about their painful experiences seemed to be necessary and important at the time. As one of them said, he wanted to tell me: *So the world would know and never allow anything similar to happen*. The camera may be seen as a sign of a voice that changes people's histories from narratives to testimonies. This process may be related to the need to give voice to the suffering in order for people to reclaim their stories and inhabit a past of suffering. Through video testimonies are life stories presented through peoples own words. Life stories permit to have access to particular and individual stories that are part of collective histories (Corporacion Parque por la Paz Villa Grimaldi 2012).

My understanding of my research has been shaped by what I have seen and experienced in this scene. Much of my understanding became understandable for me after my fieldwork. Part of doing fieldwork consists of processing experiences from fieldwork, and processing affects the original experiences. Furthermore, when we as ethnographers write about these experiences and apply concepts to describe our experiences, our experiences and understandings are transformed. This will be especially relevant in a field that is as complex as the one I experienced, where I felt both empathy and antipathy for people I became familiar with. What do we do as ethnographers when dealing with this type of ambivalene? A natural choice has been to close our eyes, or not "see" the antipathy among people.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE BIRTH OF AN UTOPIAN COMMUNITY

This chapter deals with the becoming of Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera in postwar Germany. I understand the creation of this community as part of the phenomenon called utopian communities that have also been called intentional communes (Sargent 2010). A common form of putting a specific vision into practice has been to create a small community either to demonstrate to the larger society that their utopia could be put into practice or to withdraw from the larger society to practice the beliefs of its members without interference (ibid.). Such communities put emphasis on living a life based on "shared values" or mutually agreed upon purpose (Sargent 2010:34).

The coming into existence of this community and the motivations of the first followers was related and shaped by Second World War. The need among people for safety and stability in the chaos after the Second World War was found among the first followers in constructing and being part of a community. The first followers were also skeptical to urban modernity and perceived the big cities as decadent. A charismatic and dominant leader such as Paul Schäfer succeeded to captivate the first followers in hearts and minds through the words of God, manipulation and lie.

Despite the contextual circumstances that may exist in any society at any given time, each life represents the possibility for change. "In acting and speaking, men show who they are, reveal actively their unique personal identities and thus make their appearance in the human world…" (Arendt 1998:118). Central to the human condition is the "new beginning" or *natality* inherent in birth, and what is the "central category of political thought" (Arendt 1998:9). *Natality* offers the grand gift of initiating which direction history will take; it extends action to the world. "To act, in its most general sense, means to take an initiative, to begin… to set something in motion…" (Arendt 1998:177). Through creating their own community the first followers in their essence of being human manifested their *natality* and created change. The beginning was characterised by great enthusiasm among people that was totally devoted and worked hard in order to create their ideal community first in Germany and later in Chile.

4.1 The beginning in post-war Germany

The community saw the light of day in the beginning of the 1950s, in the city of Gronau[47] in one of the congregations that belonged to the Union of the free evangelical communities of the Baptist church of Westfalia (Escotorin and Alvarez 1998:70). One of the local preachers Hugo Baar, had participated in an open-air biblical gathering organised by Paul Schäfer (Escotorin and Alvarez 1998:69). Baar invited Schäfer to preach in his congregation in Gronau and together they organised several religious gatherings where many of the members of the congregation participated (Escotorin and Alvarez 1998). Like Baar, other people became enthusiastic about Schäfer's radical preaching. Schäfer demanded a primitive Christianity with total obedience to God (Gemballa 1990). The ideas of Schäfer made resonance with people in this religious group. There was emphasis on conservative and traditional values, and an understanding of an original given order of social life. This understanding implied a reality where "men are men and women are women", and where harmony in society relies on this given balance. This given order was seen in danger in the modern big cities.

Later a pastor named Hermann Schmidt joined the group (ibid.). Baar, Schmidt and Schäfer formally established the movement in 1956 as a charity corporation named Private Soziale Mission (Escotorin and Alvarez 1998:70). Of these three men Schäfer became the leader. There is not much that is known of Schäfer and his life before he started what became Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera. What is known is that he was born in 1921 in Troisdorf close to the city Siegburg, and had a childhood after the First World War that was poor (Schwember 2009). It is said that Schäfer subsisted by telling stories and playing theatre in the streets (ibid.). During the first years of the community in Germany many people would separate themselves from their regular Baptist group and follow the new religious community led by the preacher Paul and his closest collaborators (Gemballa 1990).

Most of the first community members were ethnic Germans from Eastern Europe (ibid.). From Ukraine there were four families', three from Russia (including one from Siberia), and two families from Poland. There were 16 individuals from German territories that had been incorporated into Poland. Some came from ethnic German minorities from areas that had historically been part of Germany (Schwember 2009). Only a few came from western Germany (ibid.).

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[47] A city located near the border with the Netherlands.

Many of the first members had to leave their country of origin during the Second World War after the Soviet Union annexed several territories where ethnic Germans lived, such as the Baltic States. The agreement between Hitler and Stalin led to the first major enforced movements of people such as ethnic Germans (Fulbrook 2002). Many of the first followers had been refugees and either fled from Stalin during the war or escaped from the Soviet Union after the war while some had been war prisoners in work camps in the Soviet Union. All these experiences with the Soviet Union contributed to create a profound fear of communism among the first members.

The general and growing anti-communist attitude in the western world after 1945 did not allay these personal fears. Paul Schäfer used this fear when he told his followers while being in Germany about a dream he had where the *Russians* attacked Europe and *trampled everything with their boots* so his followers could feel the fear. I have also been told by some of the older community members that many of them were afraid that a nuclear bomb from Russia would strike Germany. They had learned by Schäfer that, due to its geographical location, Chile was the safest country. Chile's geographical isolation is the product of formidable barriers: the Andes Mountains on its eastern flank, the Atacama Desert in its northernmost area, and the Pacific Ocean in the west. It was thought that the Andes Mountains would prevent sickness and epidemics; because of the mountains, only clean air would pass. The Pacific Ocean was assumed to provide similar protection. Schäfer and his collaborators made use of all of the above-mentioned ideas to induce a feeling of fear among the first followers, and prove the need to find a safe haven.

Life during the Third Reich gave the community's first followers experiences of living in a regime with an all-powerful leader. Deviating from Nazi ideology was not permitted. In order to be law-abiding, merely following the law was not sufficient; one had to identify oneself totally with the purpose and aim of the lawgiver. A total merging of the intentions of the lawgiver and oneself was expected. Living under such a regime as represented by the Third Reich did not give experiences of freedom and freedom of thought. It is possible that these experiences somehow contributed to create a lack of individual thinking among many of the movement's first followers. According to Arendt's thinking, such behaviour is more likely to develop in totalitarian regimes such as in Germany during Hitler's regime (Arendt 2004).

The Nazi slogan "One folk, one party, one leader" expresses the role of the individual in the Nazi regime. It was not much room for the individual and own thinking in this society. People in the Third Reich were supposed to follow one leader, party and people.

The majority of the first followers of Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera were probably familiar to obeying the words from a single all-powerful leader, follow one strong ideology and one collective. These experiences of the majority of the first followers may have been useful for Paul Schäfer and his closest collaborators when coming to power, and utilised as a way to mobilize the first followers in the construction of the community.

In addition, many of the early followers probably agreed with Nazi ideology, either out of real conviction, or as a result of Nazi propaganda, most likely due to both. German society was characterised by strong anti-Semitism and anti-communistic feelings. These were prejudices and ways of thinking that existed long before the Third Reich was established (Storeide 2010). These convictions facilitated acceptance of Nazi ideology among most Germans. At the time, the powerful Nazi propaganda was present in all parts of life in Germany. From kindergarten to schools and in youth organisations such as the Hitlerjugend people were exposed to one-sided national socialistic propaganda through marches, songs, salutes, and film. Many Germans were seduced by the idea of the unbeatable and powerful Germany that had the task of exterminating from the world "the communistic plague" that many believed the Jews to represent. Only a few of the community's first male followers had been active participants in the SS; the majority had been regular soldiers (Schwember 2009; Gemballa 1990).

What gathered the people who founded this particular community was a strong belief. Most were strongly religious without much education, but many of them were skilled craftsmen. A very few followers had an academic background (Schwember 2009:70). Most of them had in common their active participation in different religious activities such as evangelical youth camps, bible study groups and preacher meetings. The group would also meet in a cinema in Gronau for weekly religious gatherings where films would be combined with sermons and the word of God (Gemballa 1990:46). The religious context formed the backdrop to the rise of the community but also played an important role in the practice of the community during its first years in Germany. All of the members contributed, in the beginning, a part of their income, a tithe. Later, upon coming to Chile, they were to contribute their entire income. Based on this financial contribution and legacy from the community members, as well as their hard work, the community saved enough money to buy land for building their first community house in Heide close to Siegburg in Germany. The members did most of the work themselves by hand; preparing the ground for construction of the house, carpentry work, brick making, making the roof and so on. They would meet every weekend to work and in the late 50s the Jugendheim Heide was completed (Escotorin and Alvarez 1998).

The idea was to build not only a community house, but also a boarding home for the youngsters, who had been participating in the activities of the community on a daily basis. The establishment would offer technical and skilled training in the crafts, aiming to enable the youngsters to enter a trade and become self-sufficient. The house consisted of different workshops such as for carpentry and engineering, as well as a gymnasium, swimming pool and bakery. The idea was that in these workshops young people learned an occupation that would enable them to become independent. Furthermore should all the community members learned to play an instrument such as horn, violin, fagot, trumpet, and other classical instruments. Much time was used to practice and play music together. Parallel with building the Jugendheim Heide and recruiting more followers, the communal spirit among the members gained in strength. The movement's origins in Germany were characterised by the members helping each other considerably in daily life and sharing more and more of their time with each other. Gradually the relationship between the members became more important than the relationship to the outside world, and replaced the family structure. In this sense utopian communities may have something in common with a family (Kanter 1972:3).

DVD REF 3: VIDEO (BY CD/VB)

4.2 Traumatic war experiences

The lines below are from the prologue of the memorandum of the foundation of the community and were written in 1961 when the first members came to Chile.[48] In the prologue the first members' own pain and traumatic experiences from the war are strongly expressed in the text and presented as the main reason behind the making of this community:

> The true impulse of what we try to do is found behind the mute terror and the silent despair. It is because of that matter we formulate an unusual confession of reality.

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[48] Original text in Spanish. My translation.

The initiators proceed from an epoch and a country, where the breakdown of all values being material, spiritual or moral had been carried out. They come from a process of formation and fermentation from what came out of nothing other than humans being nude.

Those that have constituted the work are men that lost their family in a second; that gathered the body parts of their people.

That suffered an inferno of blood, death and terror for innumerable days and nights. That languished slowly in prison camps year after year.

They are men that witnessed the suffering of their mother and that suffered hunger until becoming nothing more than skeletons.

Men that of respect did not talk about the destiny suffered by their mothers, sisters and family members.

Men that saw an uncountable number of babies and children dying of hunger in the streets and among the ruins.

They saw children's corpses that were thrown by their own mothers from running trains.

They saw children and youth marching towards their ruin, hungry, helpless, wandering and abandoned.

In the end they are men that surviving these last consequences of human life and very conscious of their responsibility, they decided to help the needy ones wherever that may be and in an extended manner.

The prologue of the memorandum of the foundation of the community makes reference to the reasons behind the formation of Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera. This is related to "the silent despair", the unspeakable terrors of the war shared by the first community members. These words may be taken to echo on the one hand the difficulty of relating to wartime experience and at the same time express a need to articulate in one or another way such complex experiences. One way of dealing with "the silent despair" may have been by constructing an own community and seeking community spirit. Although the memorandum of the foundation is part of an official self-presentation that was created, there is no doubt that experiences from WWII were imperative for the creation of this particular German community.

Some of the older generations of the community most likely also had experiences from WWI, although I heard little of this. There is no doubt that the experiences of the German nation after the First World War and the feelings towards the Versailles Treaty were strong. WWI is said to have played an important role in the causes of WWII (Fulbrook 2002:7). The Treaty of Versailles imposed by the victorious powers[49] was much criticised among Germans. Most Germans felt that they were unfairly treated and there was a sense of contempt for the treaty in Germany. Among other things, the treaty made Germany solely responsible for the war and payment had been imposed on Germany as "reparations" for the costs of the war and damages (Hobsbawm 1994:98). It also called for German disarmament. As a result of the treaty, the Rhineland was demilitarised and occupied by the western Allied powers for fifteen years[50] and all overseas colonies were lost. For many Germans, the Versailles Treaty was very humiliating. Some academics claim that the Second World War is *the* major social and psychological turning point of the last century (Bessel and Schuman 2003). Others argue that WWI was even more dramatic in many ways (Hobsbawm 1994:25). What most academics can agree on is that in both World Wars the cultural and social effects of the mass experiences of death and violence were profound and influenced all aspects of life in the years to come after the wars.

The German population was exposed to tremendous violence towards the end of the Second World War. The degree of exposure to traumatic events differed according to military rank, and political and racial position; despite this, German civilians experienced life-threatening violence in a far-reaching manner. Millions were killed in the battlefields, millions were scarred for life, and millions of refugees fled or were expelled from former eastern homelands. Furthermore, many lost one or more close family members during the war, and many family members were prisoners of war, some of whom returned, and some who did not. The German inhabitants suffered from the mass bombing of civilians, in particular after 1942 with the intensified bombing of German cities.[51] The terrible noises of buildings falling apart, of screaming children, of sick and old people who could not move fast enough to hide from the bombs, of witnessing death and serious injuries, must all have left a huge impact on most civilians.

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[49] USA, Britain, France and Italy.
[50] Germany ceded Alsace-Lorraine, the Polish Corridor, and northern Schleswig-Holstein.
[51] Numbers used by Forster and Beck estimate that in 1945 air raids had killed 600,000 civilians, 900,000 were wounded and 7.5 million were made homeless.

An opinion poll from 1948, where eight hundred West Germans above the age of 18 were asked about their dreams, indicated the long-term effect of the bombing. Many expressed that they dreamt about the air raids (Forster and Beck 2003). Millions were subjected to sexual violence, as victims of mass rape, in particular in the eastern regions of Germany in the winter of 1944-45. It is estimated that after the invasion of the Red Army between April and September 1945 about 7 per cent of all women in Berlin were raped, regardless of age and appearance (ibid.).

Many Germans escaped from the Red Army, leaving all their personal belongings behind and started a dangerous journey to western Germany often with children and elderly and sick family members. Millions of people had to rebuild their lives in new surroundings, often not knowing where or with much help. It is estimated that nearly 7 million refugees and expellees from the eastern areas of Germany and 4 million minority Germans from Romania, Yugoslavia, Poland, Hungary, the Baltic region and Czechoslovakia moved to the western zone (Forster and Beck 2003).

During the first years after World War II, Germany was a country consisting of ruins after the bomb attacks and a demoralised population. There were problems of lack of fuel, diseases, homelessness, and malnutrition, and even famine at some points. Everything in Germany had to be re-constructed after years of war. These difficult living conditions and in particular the terrible war experiences exposed millions of German civilians to various traumas in the time after the Second World War. According to Forster and Beck (2003) almost half the adult German population after the war had some first-hand experiences of traumatic incidents. People who have faced serious traumatic experiences, often connected to war, may develop what psychiatrists and other researchers name *post-traumatic stress disorders* (PTSD). The term comprises symptoms that people develop after experiences of "an event that is outside the range of usual human experience and that would be markedly distressing to almost anyone" (Foster and Beck 2003:17). Even though PTSD is a medical diagnosis it is also a social construction, as shown by ethnography written about traumatic memory (Young 1995:5). In this light PTSD is a cultural product; "the reality of PTSD is confirmed empirically by its place in people's lives, by their experiences and convictions" (ibid.). People's traumatic experiences, PTSD, will be shaped by their modes of confession and self-narration. Based on the numerous and serious experiences with violence that most German civilians faced during and after the war one might expect that many would develop mental problems, including PTSD.

4.3 A German silence of a dark past

After the war Germany was divided among the Allied countries, consisting of an American zone, a British zone, a French zone and a Soviet zone. In addition, Germany lost territory to Poland and the USSR. During the first years of the occupation of Germany many people were afraid, particularly in Western Germany that poor economic conditions would lead to a rapid spread of communism. When looking at Eastern Europe, in particular Poland and former Czechoslovakia, many people feared the power of Stalin and the Soviet Union, afraid that the communist giant would expand even further.

As part of the democratic process the allies decided to include a denazification programme[52] aimed at "cleaning" Germany of Nazism as well as punishing Nazi criminals, but there were no clear agreements between the countries involved about how to achieve this. There was no clarity as to how to identify who was a passive or active Nazi or a war criminal, and whom to put on trial. Allied collaboration first occurred in connection with the Nuremberg trials 1945-1946, when the Allies co-operated to put on trial the major war criminals. With the Nuremberg trials numerous complex questions of legal, moral and political character all related to the nature of guilt in Nazi Germany had to be addressed for the first time. Although questions were asked, it was the Allies that asked and not the German nation. The way Germany dealt with their Nazi past in the first years after the war was dominated by the Allies' denazification programme and not the German nation. This contributed to creating a silent confrontation where no answers were given to these questions. Most Germans were still coping with their own pain and their disappointment with Hitler. In the 1950s the relation of the German nation to its Nazi past was characterised by silence and taboos (Storeide 2010:92). The silence was related to genocide, guilt, shame and responsibility. The principal focus was on own German suffering.

After the Second World War most people in Europe needed to find and rebuild their "normal" lives through family and work. The shock and the horrors of Nazism were profound and so deep in postwar Europe that it was necessary "to turn one`s back on death and seek to rebuild, in a strangely anesthetised state, "normal" life (Bessel and Schuman 2003:3). Nowhere was this more the case than in Germany itself. After World War II there was a longing in West Germany to return quickly to "normality;" this was particularly important in the Germany of the 1950s. Bessel and Schuman (2003) describe the 50s in postwar Europe as

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[52] A plan formulated by the Allies for remaking and re-educating Germany at the end of the war, with the aim of achieving systematic removal of Nazi leaders and Nazi thought (Schaffner 1948).

the decade of normality with an apparent "normalisation" and stabilisation of social, political and cultural relationships. This turn towards "normality" was characterised of being conservative. It was also reflected in the conservative content and character of television and film, the conservative message in politics, and in the controlled expression of sexuality (ibid.). After all the painful and terrible experiences of WWII there was a wish for control and security in the German nation and government. The official Germany struggled to create and find a sense of "normality" after the outburst of violence (ibid.). This search for "normality" and to recreate what was lost was not a wish to recreate pre-war society, or, indeed, German society during the war. There was a search for a model for rebuilding their German societies based on German national traditions and values (ibid.). The official Germany wanted to look forward and forget about the past (Fulbrook 1999), albeit following a conservative and known path.

In 1949 two separate states were founded on German soil, namely a West German and an East German state in the Soviet zone (Fulbrook 2002). The former got the name the new Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) and held its first national elections in 1949. Gradually after 1945, West Germany experienced economic growth together with a shared attitude and understanding of a possible although slow way back to a normal life. Parallel to the economic upturn, the West German state was increasingly being appreciated by the western world as partners in the international fight against communism (ibid.). The German Democratic Republic was formally established in 1949 with Wilhelm Pieck as president, although the real power lay in Moscow. In contrast with the West German state, the economic conditions in the East were not as positive at the beginning of this new era and political oppression became increasingly evident.

Even though living conditions were quite different in the two German states, the divided German nation did share some of the principal challenges related to their past as a German nation. Most Germans would look at the future and try to simply "forget" or contain the traumas of their recent past. This need to "forget" the past was also reflected in the two new German states. During the leadership of the newly-elected Chancellor Konrad Adenauer, the new West Germany looked firmly to the West and to their future as a new German state, and consequently there was silence about war memories and about those Germans who remained in East Germany (Fulbrook 2002). The German Democratic Republic would remember the killed communist heroes and present the point of view of the triumphant Soviet Union.

Both states had a need to break with the past and the need to forge a German national identity on the basis of what was "good" in Germany heritage such as hard work and discipline. Officially, West Germany did confront its National Socialist past by adopting a democratic system, and by condemning the Holocaust. West Germany called it a rupture with Nazi history but the nation as such did not have a genuine confrontation with its own past in the first years after the war. Former East Germany created its own war history focusing on resistance against fascism. West Germany created a notion about a nation that did not know about the Holocaust, and that had been seduced by Hitler. At the same time several prominent Nazi figures were re-integrated into society through an amnesty law.[53] According to Storeide (2010) the trial against Eichman in 1961 constituted a turning point in how Western Germany dealt with their Nazi past. The trial received tremendous international media attention, in particular in German television and newspapers. The many witness accounts from survivors of the concentration camps made a huge impact on people. This contributed to a growing awareness of the terrible actions of the Nazi against the Jews (Storeide 2010:121). In 1963 the Mulka process started the trial against 22 former SS men from the concentration camp Auschwitz. More than 356 survivors from Auschwitz gave their horrific testimonies. This trial was a major media event in Germany (Storeide 2010:131) and led to the question of how regular people could commit such terrible actions against other human beings.

The first members of Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera came to Chile the same year as the Eichman trial started[54], in 1961, before a real confrontation with the German Nazi past had taken place in Germany. This was a time when most Germans were still thinking about their own pain and not understanding or facing what had happened in Nazi Germany. The generation that came to Chile did not participate in the general German confrontation of Germany's Nazi past that started in the 60s (Storeide 2010). In Chile, the first followers experienced that it was possible to be proud of being German something that was rather difficult in post-war Europe.

4.4 The loss of German pride

Besides the terrible living conditions that most Germans had to face together with coping with traumatic wartime and post-war experiences, there were deeper challenges related to the

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[53] The denazification programme of the German nation was completed in the 50s. After this, several amnesty laws were passed in Germany aiming at giving amnesty for criminal acts done before 1949, including acts committed during the Nazi regime (Storeide 2010:96).

[54] Eichmann's trial before an Israeli tribunal in Jerusalem began on April 11th of 1961.

German nation and identity and their national history that would last for a much longer time. The German people did not want to recall a national history so terrible and the sense of belonging to a single nation was all but lost. In this period Germany and its citizens tried to rebuild post-war Germany, while coping with Hitler's defeat, as well as facing the horrors of the Holocaust and finding itself in a deep moral crisis. This moral crisis was connected to the German people's own sense of guilt and shame after the publication of the images from the Holocaust, and a loss of pride in being German.

In her book *Eichmann in Jerusalem* (2006) Hannah Arendt writes about the trial of Adolf Eichmann, one of the biggest war criminals after the Second World War. One of the reasons behind Eichmann's "willingness" to collaborate with the Israeli government that is mentioned in the book is related to the notion of guilt. During the trial Eichmann tells: "Approximately a year ago (in 1959) an acquaintance that had recently been visiting Germany, told me that part of the German youth were overwhelmed by a certain guilt complex…" (Arendt 2006:242). According to Arendt, Eichmann expressed during the trial that he wanted to take the burden of guilt away from the younger generations by not hiding anymore and by desiring a public execution. Arendt did not believe Eichmann but the important issue here is not whether Eichmann's words are true but the notion of guilt among German youth. I will expand on this notion of guilt which should be regarded as relevant not only for the youth but for most Germans after 1945. To put it in the words of the German philosopher Karl Jaspers:

> We Germans are indeed obliged without exception to understand clearly the question of our guilt, and to draw the conclusions. What obliges us is our human dignity. First, we cannot be indifferent to what the world thinks of us, for we know we are part of mankind – are human before we are Germans…The guilt question is more than a question put to us by others, it is one we put to ourselves (Jaspers 1961:22).

One of the oldest inhabitants from Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera that I got to know, Sigmund, told me how he experienced the time after WWII and in particular how he felt guilt about being German because of the Holocaust.

To know what I knew about the Holocaust as a young man and how one thought then as a young man around 20-21 years is different from a young man of today. I thought the Jews were the enemies. Although I did not like this thinking, this was how one thought then. I did

not understand as a young man what happened with the Jews. After the war one sees that there was a big guilt feeling among most Germans.

Sigmund is here talking about an issue that many of the people from Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera I got to know talked to me about eventually. It is related to the feeling of guilt among most Germans after the Second World War, and the issue that most Germans did not know what happened with the Jews during the Holocaust. Many Germans closed their eyes to how Jews were treated during the Third Reich or believed the propaganda. The expressed lack of knowledge about the faith of the Jews during Hitler's regime among most Germans after WWII was common (Storeide 2010). The other point made by Sigmund shared by many others I met was connected to the issue of a collective sense of guilt. Although individuals might not personally have not done anything bad during the Third Reich (against another person), Germans were seen as guilty in post-WWII Europe just because they were German. As Sigmund told me: *Not what the man did but if the man belonged to a group, then that was his guilt. That is not right.*

Regardless of their wartime experiences, they all shared that sense of having their German identity challenged as a result of the horrors of the Holocaust becoming known. As Germans they felt the loss of dignity as a nation. As a nation, how could they deal with such a terrible past? These feelings were in one or other way present among the majority of the first generation of community members that immigrated to Chile as adults. As Womas said to me one afternoon when we were talking about how he experienced the German identity after WWII:

I think Germany during that time lost a bit of its own identity. It was not well regarded to be too German, almost like today also when one talks about nationality. Many times there is a mix with nationalism in excess but I think it is very important to have one's own identity as a citizen of a certain country, for example as here in Chile. Here in Chile people are proud of their country and so they are not bad against another country but they are proud, they have their flag, their national songs and so on. If one practices that in Germany one is seen as a nationalist of the extreme right and that I don't find right. Every nation and its people have their roots, their nationality. As a youth some decades after the war, what do I have to do with the horrors of former generations? Therefore I don't have to throw away everything, this does not mean that I am super proud of being German but one has one's roots, loves one's country,

and loves the environment where one lived. I still today miss the landscape that we had at home but this does not mean that I am only thinking about Germany, no.

For Womas, it is important to belong to a nation and to be allowed to be proud of who one is. A search for a German identity that could be expressed and lived fully out was important for him. Due to the horrors of the Holocaust being proud of being German was experienced as rather difficult in post-war Europe. "For one thing, an unthinking national pride or taken-for-granted patriotism was no longer possible after Auschwitz" (Fulbrook 1999:2). Although most Germans found it hard to be proud of being German in post-war Europe, many of the same values from before WWII were appreciated among most Germans after the war. I am not thinking here of the idea that the Jew was the enemy that should be exterminated. The focus here is connected to some central values dear to German life such as; hard work, discipline, and cleanliness (Payne 1996:198).

These above mentioned values were also reflected during the Nazi era. There was an ideal of a particular German community based on racial purity according to the Nazi ideology and connected to German traditions that put emphasis on social harmony and appreciated "pure" living, hard work, and law and order. As stated by Alfred Rosenberg who is considered one of the main authors of crucial Nazi ideology:

> All National Socialists were proud that there was not a single conflict during the Nuremberg rally, despite the huge crowds. This is final proof of the fact that where National Socialism dominates the field, the German people's community becomes a reality.

> All this together reaffirmed the view that a National Socialist Party Rally is not a rally of the normal sort, but rather a rally of the people in the best sense of the word. The men who marched on the path to Germany's future, the women who spread millions of flowers in greeting, they all testified that the will is the driving element in all that we do. This fiery will inspires and imbues first of all the so varied thousands, and also gives the National Socialist view of the state its characteristic marks. A National Socialist party rally is most evident not in technical discussions, but rather everywhere it steels the will, wherever it builds people.

> The German people are the first and most important task of our movement. Only when the core is sure will our radical financial and economic program have any chance at

all. National Socialism first of all is a matter of character. The heart of our doctrine in the midst of a collapsed world is bringing out the fundamental values of character of the German people, the ideas of honor and freedom both in the personal and general senses. The old "national" parties failed the test of character, and the Internationale has proven itself the enemy of German values from the very beginning (Rosenberg 1927).

What is emphasised here is the notion of pureness, harmony, discipline, and hard work. All these virtues continued to be important for most Germans after WWII but it was difficult to be full of pride for being German. These above mentioned values were later further developed in an extreme manner among the first members of Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera.

There was a desire among Germans to define German national identity (Fulbrook 1999:4). This search for a German identity is related to German history and the nation's break with its past. The situation in Germany after the First World War and World War II divided the nation. The majority of Germans experienced the situation after *Stunde Null* – the capitulation of the Nazi government on May 8, 1945 at midnight, marking the end of World War II in Germany, as a profound rupture in history (Behrenbeck 2003). Most Germans, both those who supported Hitler's regime and those who did not, had to change their whole view of life. This marked rupture with the past was difficult to handle for most Germans. Human beings live their lives in divergence between past and future (Arendt 1961). As human creatures we not only live in space but we also develop ourselves in time. The relationship between past and future breaks after 1945.

4.5 A search for a community

The experiences of WWII made many, in particular Germans, embark on a search for safety and security, and a new meaning of life. Humans have an inherent need to search for meaning and correlation in their existence (Vigeland 2006:74). For some Germans there was a spiritual search (Escotorin and Alvarez 1998). For others, immigration was a way out. Schaffner claims that many German youths wanted to leave the country after the war: "Despite the love for Germany that was drilled into them in their childhood, young Germans do not feel committed to a Germany which at present offers them so little to build on. A very considerable number of them actually wish to leave the country…" (1948:92).

Many of the first community members searched for a refuge as Jan told me:

Most of the people who came to Chile were survivors from the Second World War and had experienced terrible things during the war. I have told you that my father for example was a soldier at the age of 16 on the border between France and Belgium when the Americans invaded. In his troop consisting of 200 soldiers only 6 survived; this is just one example. There were others that experienced awful things that gave them traumas. These people started to search for a way of living that is peaceful, to do the right thing. Even to isolate themselves from the world just to find their peace. And I think this is what happened in this case.

Jan tells here about his father and other community members, how many of the first generation had a wish to separate themselves from the world they lived in and find their peace. There was a need, a desire to find something else, and another way of living. The first generation wanted to construct their own community and work for its shared objectives, including charity as stated in the prologue of the memorandum of the foundation of the community from 1961. Although this was written with the explicit goal of presenting the community as a charity organisation, based on the encounters I have had with people, I believe that most of the adult followers of the community shared a sincere wish to help the needy. Sigmund expressed it like this to me: *We felt it was worthwhile doing social work to help the needy ones.* Or, in the words of Womas:

I had a lot of contact with the patients that used the hospital and from this I learned first-hand the meaning of social work in the hospital. People arrived and received all kinds of help. For me it was a very satisfactory labour. One had always the satisfaction of meeting people that were very grateful for the help that they got here. One could meet people that were born here, and years later when one would meet each other they would say: I was born in your hospital, I am very grateful. This is something very important for me.

Reflected in Womas words was the importance of helping others as well as the importance of feeling the gratefulness among the local Chileans towards the community. During my fieldwork I heard both the younger and the older Chileans state that the first members of the community had a strong desire to help them. One might say that gradually the wish of the community members to help the needy replaced the religious faith as *the glue* that created commonality among the members. The commitment among the first members was held

together by their ideal to help other humans. In utopia people's wishes are the same as what they have to do. One individual's interests are the same as the interest of the group (Kanter 1972). The wish among the majority of those Germans who joined this community in the beginning was to do something good through charity. This wish may be associated with the experience of being German in post-war Europe and the loss of dignity in the eyes of the world. One way of redressing this lack of dignity may have been through doing charity work. This does not mean that all the Germans part of this community who went to Chile wanted to help others because they wanted to regain dignity and respect, but rather that there may be an emotional relation between the loss of dignity as a German and the wish to help others.

Womas arrived in Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera in 1975 as a 25-year-old after being loosely connected to the community through family for years. He belonged to the generation of the 60s, a time of the student revolution when youths were searching and experimenting with alternative ways of living. As expressed by Womas:

Well I really belonged to the generation in Germany that was part of the student revolution of the 60s and that was very idealistic. We had all developed a high sense of commitment to social causes. My social concern was so developed that I was criticised by other people because I always thought about others first and secondly about my partner or myself. This social concern has remained until today.

Womas told me how, before coming to Chile, he had been searching for a community where social work could be done but that he felt that much of the social work was too political. He studied social pedagogy and was in France during the military coup in Chile in 1973. As a bearded young man Womas went to demonstrations in Paris fighting for the human rights of the Chilean people. When he arrived in Chile in the community in 1975, the leaders asked him immediately if he was a communist because of his beard and long hair, but also because of his way of thinking and expressing himself. He was told that the right wing in Chile had saved Chile from communism and that he should shave his beard and cut his hair.

I searched to belong to a community but a stable community because I had the experience as a student from living in many communities; at that time there was a custom or fashion that many students gathered in groups, lived together, and had a social life together. Many had even a sexual life together in groups but that I did not share. I always searched for a life in community and then we gathered in many groups and tried to live together some months

without problems, but there were always some daily problems. This stopped when I came to Chile where I was met with a group that was durable. And I was fascinated. I was fascinated. It was possible to live in groups in harmony and develop a common objective. I was so fascinated that time that I didn't even notice things that were not ideal. I had found something that I had always dreamt about.

As stated in Womas account above he was totally *fascinated* by the community when he arrived in Chile. He was searching for a community and commonality, and believed in the group life. According to Kanter (1972:33), a primordial aspect among members of utopian movements is an idealisation of group life.

In contradiction to Womas who came to Chile in the 70s while in his 20s, Sigmund came to Chile from Germany in 1961 together with most of the first followers. Sigmund had been part of this particular community from its first years in Germany, and had been a soldier during the Second World War and experienced the capitulation. Told in Sigmunds words:

After the war, the capitulation, we were close to the Danish border and there we were gathered, all the ex-soldiers and the Englishmen gave us permission to leave. Since my city of birth is located in eastern Germany, Poland, going back was impossible. Therefore I stayed in the village where we were for the capitulation. First I got work for some weeks cleaning a place for drainage. After that I went to work in agriculture. In November the Englishmen came with a Nazi law and obligated all of us ex-soldiers to work in the mines. Because of my glasses I did not go below ground, but above. There was a lot of coal there since during the last weeks of the war there was no transport. Now one had to take out the coal where it was needed, to the allies. A little before this I had got news about my parents. When in May the university in Hamburg was reopened my father inscribed me and I went and was accepted. At the time that was the only way of getting out of the mines. Then I started to study. It was 1946 until I got my degree in 1953.

It is during this time Sigmund got to know Paul Schäfer in connection with sermons. Sigmund told me how when getting to know Schäfer's group in Germany he had found something that he had not known before, *a community*. What both Womas and Sigmund shared was a search for commonality. The solidarity and unity that Sigmund and Womas found in what became Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera offered them safety and security. For the colony's first

members, the community became an extended family and a safe haven. One may say that the *community* became this something else they were searching for.

The first followers' commitment was voluntary and value-based in the beginning in Germany. Utopia in the context of utopian communities is held together by *commitment* and not forces (Kanter 1972:1). Utopia is an ideal that comes to life through people's engagement and commitment in common tasks. Without people's own commitment, the utopian ideal in Kanter's perspective cannot be achieved because it is through commitment that the utopia is held together. Although the voluntary commitment among the first members of the community was the movement's prime force and strength in the beginning in Germany and later Chile, already then a visible manipulative and dominant leadership was apparent, through Paul Schäfer.

4.6 Captivating hearts and minds

As mentioned earlier most of the first followers of Paul Schäfer belonged to a Baptist group in Westfalia, Germany. This group was divided between those who followed the new leader Schäfer and those who did not. According to one of the people I got to know who did not travel to Chile and still belonged to the same Baptist church in Germany, approximately half the congregation left for Chile while the rest stayed in Germany because they were not in favour of Paul Schäfer. The process of separation from the original religious group in Germany has been described as difficult and painful. In the little congregation of Gronau, Westfalia, with 356 members, several marriages were dissolved and many couples ended up living separately (Gemballa 1990:54). The community saw the need to create a women's house where separated women who had left their husbands could live with their children. Such a house was constructed in Gronau at the time (ibid.). The separation of the original religious group was possible due to religious seduction, and a charismatic all-powerful leader. This was done through making the followers feel a kind of closeness to God through theatrical speeches and an all-powerful leader that would exert pressure against those that doubted and would not follow him.

In post-war Germany charismatic preachers found audiences easily and at this time several religious movements appeared in Germany. Religious groups would contribute to providing security and something to believe in after some difficult post-war years; "…people who need spiritual and social support continue to turn to religion in huge numbers" (Hall,

Schuyler and Trinh 2000:4). A world undergoing dramatic change creates the need in people to search for something to believe in, and find meaning for their existence. Giving meaning to existence is often a religious matter and found in a religious community. But not everybody will join a religious community. This is because events do not have the same significance for everybody. Meanings are shaped differently according to particular social groups and specific generations, and meanings are "socially located" (Mannheim 1952). There were different reasons that are linked together behind why the first members of Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera become part of the community. For some were the search for a community powerful, others become seduced by a closeness to God and a charismatic and manipulative leader. Others searched for safety.

The experiences from the Second World War of the first generation of followers had probably "apocalyptic" significance for the first members. "War, plague, pestilence, economic depression, famine, genocide, and nuclear war have "apocalyptic" significance for whole societies…" (Hall, Schuyler and Trinh 2000:6). Based on their past experiences the first followers created a particular understanding of their present and future situation that embraced what might be named an apocalyptic narrative. "People make meanings about their social circumstances through narrated self-understandings, stories…". "These stories borrow, rework, and improvise meanings that invoke historical memories, available cultural motifs, interpretations of the present situation, and collective aspirations" (Hall, Schuyler and Trinh 2000:8). People's narratives are not only individual creations but meanings are created and disseminated socially. The first followers created meaning about their world in searching and later making their own community and their narrative was reinforced in the community. From the beginning the community would organise internally on the basis of apocalyptic ideas and yield a high degree of solidarity among the followers that later in Chile would be reinforced and become imperative.

Furthermore, as mentioned earlier, the first followers were frightened that the Russians would come to Germany and that the nuclear bomb might be used against Germany. These issues were exploited by the leadership of the community to create fear among people and re-enforce a sense of impending "apocalypse". Likewise, the leaders emphasised what was seen as the darker side of the modern world with examples ranging from the use of drugs to sexual liberation and experimentation, in particular among the youth. In the early stages of the community, in Germany, and later in Chile, the world outside the community was presented to the followers as evil and dangerous. All this was done in order to create cultural paranoia and uncertainty when it came to the world outside Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera. Carroll

(1977) looks at cultural paranoia as a result of cultural uncertainty and shifts. After the collapse of the Nazi regime, the German society was characterised by uncertainty and chaos. The first followers did not find congruence between their living conditions and a meaningful participation in social life as presented for them. They felt the need to search for and create a different, meaningful way of participating in their own future and life. In this landscape the family, understood as an extended one, a community, became an important value that provided social stability in the moral and material ruin after WWII (Storeide 2010:102).

The community from the very beginning in Germany had embraced a strict confession practice in which the members had to tell the leaders everything they thought about, did, dreamt of and even personal issues such as their sexual relations (Gemballa 1990). This practice made the preachers had a lot of knowledge about the lives of the people in the community. This also gave the leaders power in order to make people join them. There are stories about how some of the confessions about incest, domestic violence, infidelity and so on were used in order to force people to join Paul Schäfer and the new religious community and later travel to Chile (ibid.). Followers were told that if they did not come with the community to Chile or let some of their children go to Chile the police would be informed of the crimes they had committed. Several families were separated in this manner. One of the stories I heard was about a father who had sexually abused some of his children and confessed this to the spiritual leader Paul Schäfer. This confession had later been used against the man when he refused to travel to Chile with his family. He was told that if he did not allow the children and his wife to leave, the police would be informed of his acts. This resulted in his wife and children leaving for Chile and the man being left in Germany. As in most cases those that were left in Germany did not see their children or family again for decades. This happened also with this man.

Furthermore, in addition to separate families the community leaders tried to get hold of all the valuables of the followers. Many were persuaded to give up all their belongings and to transfer their pensions and other sources of income to the community. In some cases people signed blank papers and would later learn that they had donated all their belongings and economic means to Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera.

Another prominent aspect with the community was a growing isolation from the external world. People I met in Germany who had been part of the religious group during the first years but had remained in Germany told me how the community was already then isolating and distancing itself from established society. Most of the members would have less and less contact with people from the outside, even with close family members. On the one

hand this was because they were busy working for the community and with it, but also because the group started to develop towards a closed unit that functioned as a single organism, a group effort rather than one based on individual actions.

One of the people I got to know in Germany told me how she had approached the community house in Heide in order to meet her sister. She was not allowed to see her sister outside the house or alone, only together with other people from the group. She told me how her sister had a "silly" face during the whole gathering with her and seemed not to be thinking on her own but rather had been told what to say. One of Mina's friends who were not part of the religious group told me how she felt Mina gradually distanced herself from the world outside and from people not belonging to the community.

In the beginning of the 60s the spiritual leader, Paul Schäfer, was accused of child abuse in Germany and needed to escape from been investigated by German police (Gemballa 1990).[55] Very few of the members knew of these accusations. Those that knew saw the accusations as part of a religious persecution against their community. The great majority of the first followers had a sincere wish to help needy people. According to Cohen (1985:108), "A rigorous distinction has to be drawn by the analyst between the ideological rhetoric of the movement – its aims and inspirations as enunciated by its leaders – and the actual motivations of its individual members". The contradictions between the motivations of the spiritual leader Schäfer and the followers make Cohen's (1985) statement valid.

At the same time as Schäfer needed to leave Germany in order to escape from further investigations, the followers were persuaded by Schäfer to emigrate in order to do charity work outside Germany. Many of the community members started to think about having a bigger agricultural estate where all the families could live and work together exclusively for the cause, to do charity work. The followers wanted to help people in parts of the world that needed it. Before emigrating to Chile three community members belonging to the leadership were sent on a three-month mission to Spain, Morocco, Algeria, Libya, Egypt, Jordan, Israel and Turkey to investigate, as they said, the needs of the poor people in those countries, and probably also the possibilities of the community to emigrate to any of these countries. While Schäfer and his closest collaborators went on their three-month trip the others got in touch with the Chilean ambassador in Germany to inquire about the possibility of immigrating to Chile. They presented themselves as a charity community with the intention of continuing its social work in Chile where they would assist poor Chileans in bettering their situation and

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[55] Paul Schäfer left Germany before German police started to investigate the accusations against him (Gemballa 1990).

livelihood by building an orphan home. The community ended up being invited by the Chilean ambassador to settle down in Chile.

4.7 Establishing in Chile: hard work and structural changes

Everything was prepared in Germany for the journey to Chile and the massive emigration. The community house in Heide was sold and all the members sold their houses, belongings and such, and passed the money on to the leaders of the community. All these funds constituted a substantial amount which was used to buy the land where the community settled in Chile. In 1961 the group bought the land El Lavadero from the estate San Manuel that had previously been occupied by a group of Italian settlers. This land is located close to the estuary that gives its name to the land plot and the river Perquilauquén, close to Catillo, a village at the inner part of Parral towards the Andes Mountains.

It is estimated that approximately 250-300 people immigrated during 1961 and 1963, most of them German citizens with a few exceptions consisting of a few people from Austria and Holland (Schwember 2009). In 1961 the community received the status of a corporation of charity in Chile, by a decree issued by the Chilean Ministry of Justice. This status gave the community some valuable financial privileges such as not having to pay taxes or tribute to the Chilean state. Furthermore, the community hospital and later the school that was build would be subsidised by the Chilean state. Together with the new status the community changed its name to Sociedad Benefactora y Educacional Dignidad[56] but this quickly turned into most Chileans using the shorter name Colonia Dignidad.

The first group arrived by plane in Chile on 11th of February 1961. This consisted mainly of craftsmen who were needed to build the community buildings in Chile as well as several children who were sent in a hurry in order to avoid them being questioned by the German police due to the accusations of Paul Schäfer of sexual abuses against children. Several other groups would arrive mainly by boat in the coming months. The first group of people came by boat in March and later other groups arrived in April, and May and so on.

Tania was a six-year-old girl when she came to Chile with her family. She remembered the journey quite vividly:

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[56] Beneficient Society and Dignified Education. My translation.

We changed everything in order to move from Germany to Chile but we children did not know anything. We moved from one place to another, we left the house for another new one. Four times we moved and after that, in June 1962, we went one night in a lorry, the big ones sitting in the front and the little ones behind on the mattress, on top sleeping. We went to Siegburg and from there to Cologne and there we took the train and by train we went for two hours by night. No… let me see, that day we stayed in Siegburg and after during the night we went by train to Italy, Genova. The night and day we were on the train but it was beautiful because of the tunnels, the Alps and the beautiful landscape in southern Germany. Oh I remember this quite well. It was very beautiful. The little children, my brothers, let me see, the youngest was around one year, were sleeping. I looked through the window and found the landscape very beautiful. In Italy we went on the boat Marco Polo, I don't know how many we were, around 40 or 50 children, babies, and with grandparents. We went through the Mediterranean Sea, through the Atlantic sea[57]. Here Spain, there Africa and through the strait. I was looking to see how the boat worked. Afterwards always to the south, south, south, until reaching Valparaiso.[58] But the journey lasted four weeks, very long and for the children very boring. I missed the plants, the earth and the animals. On the boat I could only play with pieces of painting. We arrived in Chile in July 1962. From Valparaiso we had to stay in the customs house with the things we had with us until the evening without going out. We left during the night. Since it was July it was a cold night, the mountain range was white, I will never forget this trip with so much cold and we also had a dog with us, a German shepherd, in the same boat. It was upstairs on a box. At midnight we arrived at the main door (of the community), near the house of the door there is a warehouse, when one is leaving it is on the right side and this was the first house that was constructed. There we entered and there were tables and banks, without painting and there was soup and there we came.

The community brought with them everything they could of clothing, furniture, music instruments, books, kitchen utensils, working tools, dogs and so on. Later, bigger objects would be sent, such as machines, cars and equipment for the community hospital. This was a massive immigration aimed at staying and constructing their community in Chile. Several of the people I met repeated this; *we came to stay in Chile*.

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[57] They went through the Panama Canal. This is a 77-kilometre ship canal that joins the Atlantic Ocean and Pacific Ocean.

[58] Chilean port.

In the beginning, community members lived in tents and everybody worked together in order to settle down and to create their own community, in a new environment, with a new substructure. There was a pioneering spirit where everything had to be built from scratch and this was a joint task. In a letter from one of the members to family in Germany the "will to construct, to colonise" of the community is expressed (Heller 2006:27). The word *Colonia* reflects this pioneering spirit. *Colonia* is Latin and indicates a place designated for agricultural activities. According to Kanter many utopian communities share the ideal of returning to the land. "By carving out a piece of land of their own and engaging in agriculture, they fulfil a number of the impulses towards utopia" (Kanter 1972:53). Everybody, from adults to children, would work with the land and through this contribute to the common spirit. Based on the agricultural work the community could consume their self-produced products. To consume together their common "fruits" obtained through joint work strengthened the communal spirit the members were searching for. Furthermore, some agricultural tasks, such as the harvest, would have more of a flavour of joint labour than other tasks. During harvest everybody would participate in a common effort at the same time.

Everyday life revolved around work. There were large loudspeakers that would tell people to return from work or start work. Often music consisting of military marches would be played. Daily life had few "interruptions" caused by for example rituals and celebrations such as birthdays, anniversaries, marriages and Christmas. It was all about work. As Albert expressed it:

In former times we worked. We got up at seven and at eight we started to work and never finished at six but continued until ten or eleven p.m., work, work. Sunday was the same. The clothes were given here, there was a section here as the kitchen, the hospital, the bakery, a section where the clothes were washed, and distributed. For the different groups: the Heilsarmee, the knaphouse (names of male age groups) and the older ones were there and distributed the clothing. And everyone would get their package of clothes in the weekend, laundered and mended, but one could never select or buy anything.

The community members continued what they had started in Germany, but now to reconstruct their community in Chile. Creating everything from scratch implied a lot of work and resources. The motto of the members was: "to work is to serve God" (Araya and Lecaros 1998). This motto made the hard work meaningful and something that united the members.

Everybody would contribute and work either in the fields, kitchen, or with the children and so on. The work was organised as a cooperative where each member would be assigned different tasks according to age and gender. When looking at images of the community from this period one see people working in almost every image, such as men and women preparing the land, cleaning the roads and constructing the first communal houses that were primarily for the children to sleep in during the first phase. All the hard work that is part of constructing one's own community in a new land created a strong feeling of commonality among the people that were part of it.

DVD REF 4: VIDEO (BY CD/VB)

Another utopian value is connected to order (Kanter 1972:39). In contradiction to the external world that is understood as rather chaotic, utopian communities are perceived as structured and planned. There is an intention behind utopian communities where social life follows a pattern that gives the members of the group a sense of meaning. The hard physical work of constructing the community in Germany and later in Chile gave meaning, for it had a purpose for the first members in their search for and wish to construct their ideal community. The intentional aspect not only underlays the creation of a utopian community, but all other aspects of life tend to be planned in such a social movement. Everything, including when to work, eat, rest, play and so on, follows the specific rules and values of the community. How utopian communities organise their daily life is planned and controlled. In many communities people will live and eat in central communal buildings. To plan and organise the daily life in utopian communities requires central control by decision makers. This body of decision-makers tell the community members how to organise their lives. Sometimes this also includes private life, for instance whom to marry or if marriage should be decided by such a control organ (Kanter 1972:41). The social life of each individual is an issue concerning the whole community and not up to each individual to decide.

In Chile no community members would get a salary or money but they would contribute to the shared objectives and community. The idea was that everybody would work for the larger entity. The abolition of private possessions and shared property is an aspect of many utopian communities (Kanter 1972:43). People with particular skills were expected to share their knowledge and teach others in the community. In this way many of the community members learned different skills that became part of their education and contributed to the development of their community. Such distribution of knowledge among the members is also a way of creating bonds of brotherhood.

All kinds of celebrations were abolished upon coming to Chile. I experienced several times that when I talked with community members about Christmas Eve or New Year's Eve people would refer to these days as regular work days and not as holidays. I was told by one inhabitant that he remembered a theatre play being presented for the whole community when he was a child. The play consisted of a person that was presented as Santa Claus and was sitting in a boat on the river located on the premises of the community. This person would fall in the water and then Paul Schäfer would say that Santa Claus had drowned, so the community would not celebrate Christmas anymore.

Although Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera started among a group of followers from a Baptism community was religious practice with time banned after coming to Chile. It was claimed by Schäfer that the best way to praise God was through hard work and that it was no time for praying. This does not imply that the first followers were not believers. Among most of the people from the community is the presence of a religious faith strong. People in the community did not go to church to pray during the leadership of Schäfer but would express their faith through daily work.

From the beginning of the community in Germany classical music played an important role. This became institutionalised when coming to Chile. The community members learned to play specific instruments, and to play together. They learned about composers, different pieces and interpreters. Most of the inhabitants grew up playing an instrument, receiving group classes in horn, violin, fagot, trumpet, and other classical instruments according to age and gender. The community members used much time and effort to practice alone and together in their community orchestra. Furthermore the members played for guests during visits and other arrangements in and outside the community. Through practicing and playing music together a feeling of "us" was created among the members. But also a feeling of pride for the music they played together during music performances and concerts.

There was not much emphasis on the general well-being of the inhabitants of the community (Heller 2006). The hard work of establishing the community in Chile implied a lot of heavy manual labor. There was not much time for medical attention, or such as seeing a dentist. If necessary, the bad tooth was simply removed. Items such as toothpaste, shampoo or soap were seen as luxuries, and people would be issued a little bit that should last the entire week. Work was often done without appropriate tools or protective masks when for example using strong chemical fertilizer or pesticide. Since coming to Chile the community has mostly consumed its own products, at times resulting in a rather poor diet.

Coming to Chile not only implied working and changing the physical environment in order to establish the community in a new country. Over the years the community would transform itself to a world of its own, creating a new social structure, with its own rules (ibid.). There was a total structural transformation that consisted among other things in separating men and women, and according to age. In Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera was family affection undermined, to the degree of abolishing the family as unit.

In the beginning in Chile people in the community lived in tents since there were no buildings' in the community land. Separated tents for women and others for men were put up. Furthermore the working groups were separated according to gender. Men would do certain tasks while women would do others. Most aspects of social life in the community started to be based on gender segregation. Most of these issues were in the first years explained by those in power to be because of practical matters. The community could not give priority to build new houses for each family when there was so much work among needy people in Chile. It was stressed that it was more useful to build a hospital for needy local Chileans. It was therefore decided to first build common houses meant only for women, other for men and other for children. The great majority of the first followers approved these decisions thinking that it was better to construct a hospital to help the needy ones in Chile and to build common houses according to gender and age than to build houses for every single family.

With time in Chile would these changes be institutionalised and become part of deep structural changes of the community. The collective would raise the children, where all community men would become "uncle" and community women "auntie". Every individual would belong to a group according to age and gender, and the group would decide all further steps of the individual. All aspects of social life were collectivised as when to get up in the morning, what to dress, what and when to eat, work hours, what to do in spare time, and so on. All economic production and consumption were collectivised, and money and formal education (for the majority of people in the community) was abolished. Communication and

travel was strongly restricted for most people. These structural changes established the foundation for creating Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera in Chile and became later a way of controlling the members.

One important aspect of the structural changes that were introduced in Chile was raising the community children collectively. In 1961 there were 15 male children ages of 10-18 years, 30 children aged five to ten, and 24 up to the age of five years old (Schwember 2009:127). Although many of the people that came to Chile initially wanted to live together with their closest family various also shared an idea of a collective life. Many thought a life in communal houses was the best way of living and of raising their children. Sigmund expressed it like this: *To separate the children from the parents was done to give them a better education. The education was given by the community.* As Sigmund's words reflect there was an ideal that the community could raise the children better than the parents.

As babies, all children[59] lived in the children's house together with some few female adults from the community who took care of them. Furthermore, all children were divided in groups according to age and gender. The transition from one age group to another happened together with others in the same age group and of the same gender. The children would do everything with their peers in their age group and strictly within their own gender group. Age and gender have been important factors that have regulated the daily life of the people, among other things related to when one was seen as adult and allowed to participate in the common adults' gatherings. This was strictly for men. Furthermore, girls and boys would learn different tasks and receive knowledge about specific things in their respective age groups. Each child was raised in its particular group that would thus transfer the norms and values of the community to future generations.

Every child started to work hard and a lot at an early age. The relationship to work is reflected in the classification system of the different ages and gender. Previously, the boys would pass through several stages: Edelweiss for ages 0-5; this age group did not imply any work of the children. Keile for ages 6-12; in this age group the children started to work. Lila Gruppe was a special group for those who needed special discipline.[60] Heilsarmee for ages 13-18, Askaris and Mittlere Knappen for the age group 17-25, Grosse Knappen for age 25-30, and Komalos and Herren for the elder men (Heller 2006; Schwember 2009). For the children that grew up in Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera, life after the age of six was limited to work,

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[59] With some few exceptions as far as I know.
[60] Children that for one or another reason were less obedient then others. But as some of the accounts I have heard show, everybody could be seen as in need of "special discipline".

listen to Schäfer`s preaches, learning to play an instrument and some study. There was no room for individual choices of what to do or when to do it. Work was divided in two; work inside the house such as cleaning and cooking, and work in the fields outside. The work outside followed the seasons of harvesting and picking, preparing the land and caring for the animals. The girls and women would be divided in their own age groups that were named after different birds. Falken, Spechte, Vogel, Halalis and Dragoner, the group of grown-up and elderly women (Heller 2006). The girls and women worked primarily with cleaning, in the kitchen, taking care of children and old people, and so on.

The identity pertaining to the age group was strong and decided the individual's future social life. Some people I got to know described how they felt that their peers in their age-group were like siblings, and somehow contributed to feel safety. Belonging to one particular age group placed each individual in the social landscape with expectations and particular tasks to do. The individual disappeared in this social landscape and was replaced by a collective age group that decided the social life above and beyond the individual's needs and wishes. Tania, one of the people I got to know described how she was placed in her age group when coming to Chile and how this decided what she was going to do.

I was four weeks from being 16 years old when coming to Chile. In Germany I left school because I didn't like to study. When I came here I had to go to school again because the group I was put in had to go to school. So I had to go again for several years. After that, we always did work in groups, for example during the summer we had to collect raspberries and beans. They were planted and we had to cut them from the bush and put them in a sack. If there was a car that was not well-painted we removed the old painting.

As Tanias account shows, although she had finished school in Germany she had to continue in Chile because her age group did so. The social system practiced by the community based on age groups and gender is reminiscent of the traditional practice of many other societies studied by anthropologists. One such group is the Masai people from eastern Africa. The youth among the Masai have traditionally belonged to specific groups based on age and gender. Through belonging to their respective age groups the youth learn what are perceived as the necessary skills to become female and male adults in Masai society (Singer and Woodhead 1988).

A house for the children was constructed early in Chile. There were no beds but sacks full of straw, the floor was covered with straw and on the top there was burlap. The children would sleep one after the other. As Tania told me:

I don't remember when they made beds but at the beginning it was like that. Very interesting, nice, was the beginning. At the same time we had to start to prepare the field. Remove stones, take the roots, remove woody plants, and also the children had to help. And that I would like to explain. The adults worked very much too. And they had experienced the years in Germany of the war, and now a new start, making the houses, field, roads, that's why they (the old generation) now look so tired. They had to work very much here. There were no other workers then. The women had to take care of the cows, give them grass to eat, take care of the pigs. Our parents did everything. Our fathers went to the field to make the roads or worked making gravel in order to sell it.

As Tania's account reflects, there was much work to do and everybody had to participate in the tasks, even the children. When I asked her how she felt about her childhood she said:

I was already seven years old and felt like a big girl. I wanted to work but of course I also thought about playing, but there were no toys, nothing. Then we played with leaves from the trees, with little sticks, or with earth. There were no toys and there was no money either for this. The little money that we got we had to be spent in order to buy food or medication. Then when you ask me about my childhood I will say I had no childhood. Only hard work in the fields. There were harvests of vegetables, beans, peas; everything was done by hand and that was the work of the little girls. The little boys went to gather the sacks with wheat, the food for the animals and that is how it was.

As her story expresses, much of the life of adults and children in Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera was organised around work. Working hours did not follow Chilean law and nobody would have the weekends off or other official days with the exception of Sundays. For a long period Sunday was the day for news and common gatherings that were not about pure manual labour. For years, one particular person, Sigmund, would read in public about what happened in the world on Sundays. For a long period this would be the only "contact" with the external world. Gradually and with time the information about the world outside would be twisted and distorted. The world outside would be presented one-sided as a place of violence, tragedy and

with a constant communist threat. There were effective ideological manipulations from the power in the community in order to create fear among people in the community and heat up the situation of uncertainty.

This message would among other things be presented through films that were screened to the inhabitants on some Sundays. Some of the films were about exorcism and young people and showed how the devil lived in the youngsters. Another social issue of the period that was presented through the films was drug problems among youngsters. Other films were about life in the former DDR made from the western point of view and with the aim of demonstrating the brutality of the communist regime. There were made mention to the construction of the Berlin wall by the German Democratic Republic that started in 1961. The wall completely cut off West Berlin from East Germany and included guarded towers. The wall served to prevent people from leave East Germany. During the years of the wall there were several thousands of people that tried to defect in different ways to West Berlin. Many people died in their attempt shoot by the guards. The guards often let fugitives bleed to death if they were in no-man land. Films were screened to people in the community showing news about German people that had tried to escape, and others that had been killed in their attempt to come to West Berlin.

Other films would be of a more educational character such as about nature and classical fairy tales, but these were also selected carefully. Books would also be selected according to their content and modified. For example, books about human reproduction would be modified and pages removed in order to avoid any reference to sexual activity. Many of the local Chileans told me how when working in the community they saw Chilean newspapers used to wrap something or to protect while working. However, these newspapers were often missing pages. These had been removed because of images of women in bikinis or other images or texts that were considered to be "delicate" for the community members

When the community came to Chile in the beginning of the 1960s was Chile in a growing period of political divisions between the political left and right, economic inequality, and social upheaval. A coalition of left-wing parties called the Unidad Popular (Popular Unity, UP) led by Salvador Allende won the Chilean presidency in 1970. The situation in Chile would with time become more chaotic. This was related to rapid economic changes part of Allendes economic program that led to high inflation, rationing, and black market profiteering. The United States also worked against Allende by sponsoring economic sabotage that lead to strikes, and organising CIA-directed operations in order to stimulate political dissent (Sanabria 2007). Furthermore, part of Allendes program was land invasions and factory takeovers (ibid.). Many private farms were made forced communal, to be run as a

joint enterprise by the workers. Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera was afraid that their land would be taken away from them and converted into a cooperative. News from the chaotic social-political situation in Chile was also presented to the people living in the community. All these issues heated up the situation in the community and contributed to create uncertainty among the people part of Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera that had bad experiences from the "red danger" from Germany..

Although the practice of age and gender groups has been a part of traditional communities, it is also a phenomenon among some utopian communities. Utopian communities search for alternative ways of living. Finding other manners of organising their communities such as raising the children communally is part of the utopian search (Kanter 1972:45). According to Kanter, brotherhood is a utopian value (Kanter 1972:43). This thinking implies that people can be brought into harmony with other human beings. In order to achieve harmony among people, utopians believe that it is necessary to remove those aspects of interpersonal relations that create conflict and tension and prevent "pure" relationships from developing. In order to remove these obstacles to harmony, utopian communities will try to substitute individual relationships and possessions for communal ones. In many communities an individual's own family would be replaced by the community and no special privileges would exist among members of the same family. In the utopian community Oneida, the children would be raised communally. All the children would live together in a building separated from the adults (Kanter 1972:45). This was also how the children were raised in Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera.

Separate houses for women and others for men would be constructed when coming to Chile. In addition to constructing separate houses for women and men, the genders would be divided into two categories, men who would be called uncle and women who would be called auntie. This would also be valid for people not in family relationships to each other, for example children would learn to call all men "uncle" and all women "auntie". I experienced several times how some of the people I got to know would call me *tía*, the Chilean world for auntie, or how some would call women or men in their close family auntie or uncle. Although it is the custom in Chile[61] to call people one cares for as auntie or uncle in my opinion this is not the only reason for the community inhabitants using these terms. Rather, the use of these terms also reflects the structural changes developed in the community when coming to Chile.

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[61] Many local Chileans called the Germans for *los tíos,* a term that includes uncles and aunties.
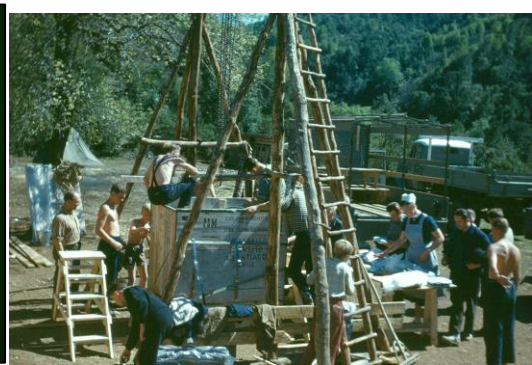
Photos of daily life from the first years in Chile (all by CD/VB)

Photos of daily life from the first years in Chile (all by CD/VB)

It was not only about separating men and women but also about some ideas about sexuality. Some of the people from Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera I got to know told me that Schäfer believed that women were temptresses whose sexuality should be kept under control. Otherwise would women drive men wild with desire and lead them away from God. For Schäfer was sexual intercourse a tool of the Devil. As a way of protecting men from the "Devil", Schäfer created in the community an atmosphere of minimal temptation. Men worked and lived separately from women. Women wore loose-fitting homemade dresses, so that almost no trace of the female form remained visible. Their long hair was rolled into tight buns. Even when living in such conditions would some women and men in the community fell in love. If romantic relationships developed Schäfer would decide the further path. With a few exceptions, was marriage abolished in the community. Some of those few belonging to the leadership were permitted to marry by Schäfer and, occasionally, to have children. What often happened was when a man asked Schaefer for authorisation to marry; Schaefer might allow the wish but then require that he be the one to select the bride. This would often be another women than the one desired.

As a consequence, for a long time there were very few marriages. Those couples that did marry had to keep their marriages secret. Most of the married couples had to continue to live separately in their respective gender houses and would hardly see each other in everyday life. According to many community members I talked to, marriage was seen as a barrier between humans and God. Therefore nobody should marry. One should not talk about marriage either or "show" pictures or display other symbols of matrimony such as wedding rings. This was in order to prevent others from wanting to get married and thus making them suffer, I was told. The relationship between parents and children was also abolished because it was considered a barrier between individuals and God. Furthermore, the great majority of the inhabitants were not allowed to have children. Pregnant women should not be seen in the community, and for a long time no children were born. For Schaefer were pregnancy uncommon and a result of a sinful act. In time, the leadership realised that the failure to reproduce created a problem of continuity for the community. This might have resulted that some few privileged members were allowed to have families. Or it might have been a way of keeping people close to the leadership in the community and "happier". The few who were allowed to fall pregnant had to hide the pregnancy from the other members and in the end be separated from the rest of the people. After giving birth, the baby would be placed in the children's house and the mother returned to her house and continued life as if nothing had happened.

According to Schwember (2009), there were six families that were allowed to reproduce from 1961 to 1980. These families had five or more children each. Furthermore, the community adopted some Chilean children from poor local farmers. 21 Chilean children grew up in Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera since the beginning in Chile (Schwember 2009:128). The term "adopted" is rather broad. Some of the children were retained against their families' wishes, while other Chilean children were given up by their own families in order to provide a better future for them. In some cases, the legal way in which the children arrived in the community was unclear. These children were raised as the German children and did not belong to a family consisting of parents and siblings, but were raised by the community.

It is not rare for utopian communities to construct their unique forms of human relationships (Kanter 1972:51). This is related to the experimental characteristics of utopians and new ways of doing things. New forms of marriage, child-rearing, and sexual union are often implemented, such as was the case in this particular German community. Utopian communities experiment with other practices than those of the surrounding society. One consequence might be that the newly adopted practices are illegal or seen as deviant by the general society. Despite this, the members of utopian communities do not understand these practices as "wrong", but rather as part of their ideal society.

By growing up in the children's house many of the community children born in Chile did not acquire any knowledge of the traditional western concept of family. Maria, Albert's wife, who was born in Chile, told me how she discovered the concept of family as an adult. She was raised like all the children, in the community children's house. She had never lived together with her parents or four siblings, and had no experiences of the traditional western concept of family. She knew who her father and mother were but not her siblings. Her father sometimes used to come and see her in the children's house in secret. Maria only had knowledge and experience of the community`s way of life. She thought that everybody lived in the same way. When she, as a result of her job at the office that paid the Chilean workers` salaries at the beginning of the 1990s, discovered that the workers lived together with their families she was very surprised. Her job was to manage the salary of each Chilean worker. This also included having knowledge about the family status of the workers in terms of who was married and had children. She would sometimes meet some of them in the office. During these informal gatherings she would chat with the workers and then slowly started to understand that many of the workers were married and lived together with their families and children. At the beginning she thought that this was something peculiar to Chilean culture.

After many years and through talking with her father when she was a grown woman she got to know that Germany had the same family structure as the Chileans. One day after this revelation her father gave her a present that consisted of a photo album with images of her parents, siblings and grandparents. Her father wanted to show her "the family" through the photos and communicated with Maria through the photos about the concept of family. Maria later showed the album to others such as me when presenting her family. In a proud voice she would tell me all the names and who was who. Other stories I was told were about inhabitants who, unlike Maria, did not know who their parents or siblings were during their upbringing. Not until after the late 90s and as adults they learn about the traditional western family concept and who their parents and / or siblings were.

With time people in the community developed a particular style of clothing and hairstyle. What people wore and hairstyle depended on gender, age, and what they were doing. When working, then most men in the community would wear blue cotton fabric trousers and jackets, often with a cap made of the same fabric. All the men had short hair parted in the same direction and were clean-shaven. The members used shoes made within the community from car tyres, and leather sandals. Women would wear dresses or skirts with an apron on the outside, and pants beneath their dresses during winter. Their hair was covered with a headscarf and was long, either in plaits for the youngest ones or put up for the older ones. The women who worked in the hospital would have a nurse's uniform with a red-cross pin and a corresponding hat. When performing or receiving visits, other clothing would be used that was more like traditional German costume such as lederhosen for men that is traditionally work wear for working-class men. Women would wear dresses such the tracht, and other dresses influenced by farmer culture, characterised by the use of cotton, embroidery and so on.

The inhabitants thus started to dress in a uniform way where individual differences disappeared and two categories were left according to gender and age. Mina told me how she experienced that all her personal belongings little by little disappeared after coming to Chile. One day her Bible was gone, another day some of her clothes and so on. One day she was told to hand over her watch to someone in charge, and was told that one did not need a watch in the community. Also, her personal documents such as her passport, diplomas and such were handed over. Many other inhabitants have reported the same stories. The uniform way of dressing became institutionalised in Chile. Every week the members got a package with the necessary clothes for a week, from underwear to outerwear. At the end of the week all the clothes were returned to the communal laundry where a new package was issued. It is not unusual for members of utopian communities to wear the same clothing (Kanter 1972:45). By

eliminating individual differences through clothes and hairstyle the group was expressing a "we" feeling and contributing to creating a group spirit or as Kanter (ibid.) expressed it: "symbolising their joint endeavour".

Every community is characterised by particularities that embrace specific ways of living, moving, dominant colours and patterns, eating, sleeping, dressing, body language, buildings, the tempo of life and so on. In other words all the small and large aspects that are part of daily life and that differ from one society to another. The centre of attention here is the relation of humans to their societies, "to how people feel in, and respond to, the world" (Howard Morphy quoted in MacDougall 2006:95). Through this perspective, the cultural landscape, through physical attributes, is connected with the sensory one, through patterns of behaviour. These *social landscapes* (MacDougall 2006:95) will be unique for each community and recognised by its residents. The uniformed way of dressing, and ordered and fixed way of living in Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera contributed somehow to creating a group spirit among the first members who came to Chile. An aesthetics that aimed at gathering people is typical among groups that develop in isolation.

"Although it is unclear why some societies stress the aesthetics of social life more than others, those that have developed in isolation, or that draw their membership from varied backgrounds, or that need to contain serious internal divisions, may find in the sharing of a strong aesthetic experience a unifying principle" (MacDougall 1998). Aesthetic concern is part of most societies and cultures but will be more prominent in small, constructed communities (MacDougall 2006:96) such as Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera is an example of. For MacDougall (2006) the aesthetic patterns are a force in its own that might influence events and decisions in a community alongside other social forces of ideology, politics, history and economics. In other words the aesthetics patterns influenced the community, and shaped the bodies, minds and identities of its inhabitants, and furthermore the physical environment and temporal routines.

Another way the community might have expressed and created a spirit of brotherhood was though their communal way of meeting people from the outside. The coming together of the community in a particular way when having guests, and sharing songs, food, symbols and other communal expressions contributed to the "we-feeling" (Kanter 1972:49). The community would organise different gatherings where local authorities and others were invited. Cultural performances would be held where members would sing and dance traditional German folk music. Food made of products from the community presented according to traditional German recipes would be offered to the guests and often competitions

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would be organised between the German community members and the guests. All these gatherings contributed to symbolising their common project. Furthermore, members of utopian communities are strongly aware and conscious of belonging to a community. This implies that there is a clear distinction between the community and the external world (Kanter 1972:52). A Chilean woman Rosa, who came from the neighbouring locality, was invited to a gathering in Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera in the 60s. She told me the following:

I think it was in 1967 or maybe a year later, I was headmistress at a school not far away from Colonia Diognidad, with students up to 16 years old, we had approximately 90 pupils. At that time the school got an invitation letter from the German community, inviting all the teachers and students on a day trip to the community. After this I contacted all the parents and presented the invitation. There were no objections from the parents so we responded that we wanted to come to visit and thanked them for the invitation. Then the day for the visit arrived. Everything was carefully planned, the point of time, where to meet the German bus that would come and get us and so on. The bus arrived punctually.

Rosa described the delicious German food they were served, the guided tour they had received around the place and on which they saw the hospital, the fields and so on. They had seen and heard a folklore group sing and dance traditional German songs and dances. They had seen animals that were not common in the region such as peacock. She said that the Chilean pupils and adults were quite excited about seeing such unfamiliar animals. According to Rosa, the German community organised group competitions among the Germans and Chileans during their visit where the Chileans lost every time.

By looking at the pupils, the children, one could see a big difference among them both when it came to physical and size differences. The Chilean pupils and teachers lost all the competitions against the Germans. Some of the exercises were about a rope that two groups would pull in each direction. I and the other Chileans felt quite inferior to the Germans. By virtue of their clothing, cleanness, light colours, body language, and being taller, the Germans seemed to be above the Chileans. Our children were dirty, had old dirty clothes, were small and short, and had no sense of order. Everything was so perfect in the community, from the smallest detail to bigger things. Everything was somehow under control. All the Germans had their role; the old people took care of animals, the children took care of other

things and so on. We were guests there. They (the Germans) did not speak with us while we were there. It was rather an observation from their (the Germans) side.

Rosa's account is representative of what characterised the communication between the community and the local Chileans. The communication took place primarily on the community grounds and between the community as a whole and their guests as a group. Individual relationships between regular community members and local Chileans would seldom develop unless they were part of the leadership. In the beginning this might have been related to the lack of a common language but was not only due to the language barriers. It was also part of the communication pattern of closure that Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera had gradually developed in Germany. In Chile the community communicated by presenting cultural performances consisting of traditional German dances and singing. Guests were offered German food and beverages and competitions between local Chileans and Germans were also part of the programme. Sometimes the community would also present sketches for their guests. In addition, they would offer their guests a guided tour around the community in order to see the development of the place and people. These tours were organised and with a fixed programme. Guests were not allowed to move around freely. I have heard many accounts of how Chilean guests were corrected if they went to places not included in the guided tour.

DVD REF 5: VIDEO (BY CD/VB)

The German heritage expressed through food and cultural performances, and the charity work in the hospital and school, represented how Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera was known and presented in Chile for a long time. This image was challenged when the first known community member, Wolfgang Kneese, managed to escape for the third time in 1966.[62] He told the German Embassy of a life in the community that consisted of forced slave work, a surveillance system, sexual and violent abuse and forced medication. Wolfgang told his story not only to the Embassy but also to a Chilean journalist who published the story of horror. This triggered a wave of media interest in Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera. Wolfgang was accused of lying and the community sued him. Wolfgang lost the suit in Chile and he was sentenced to jail.[63]

After the episode with Kneese the Chilean Senate initiated an investigation of the community. The commission that was assigned the case ended their report in 1968 stating that no wrongdoings had been uncovered in Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera. After this incident the community continued with the process of establishing itself in Chile, and gradually towards becoming a totalitarian community. One of the community members has described this process to me by using the metaphor of: *how the water tap was closed little by little in Chile until finally it was closed completely*. The first followers that came to Chile with their families found themselves soon living in a radical changed world than the one they left in Germany. It was a world that was hard to get out of and leave.

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[62] There are others who are known to have escaped from the community during this time such as Wilhelmine Lindermann with her three children but she was convinced to return to the community (Escotorin and Alvarez 1998)
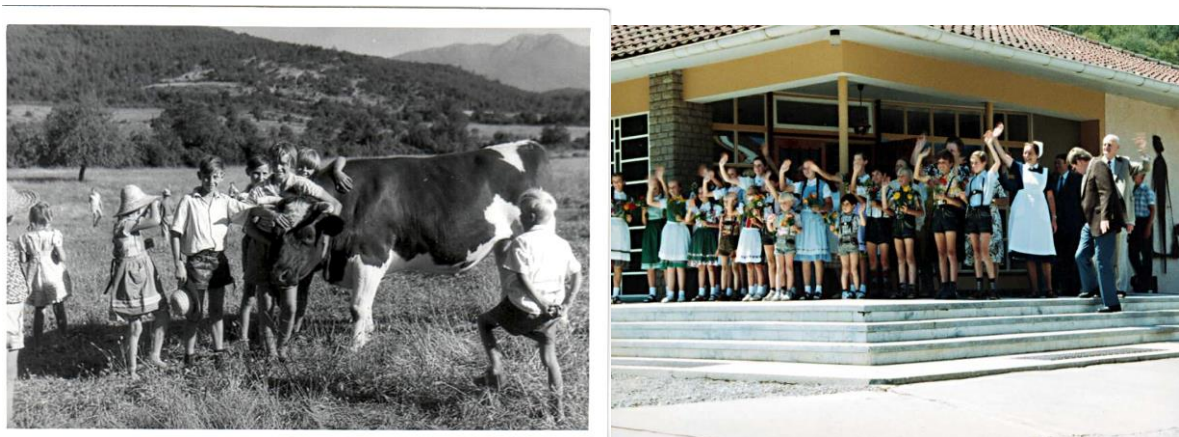
[63] He moved to Germany after this where he started an organisation aiming at telling the world about the abuse of children in the community.
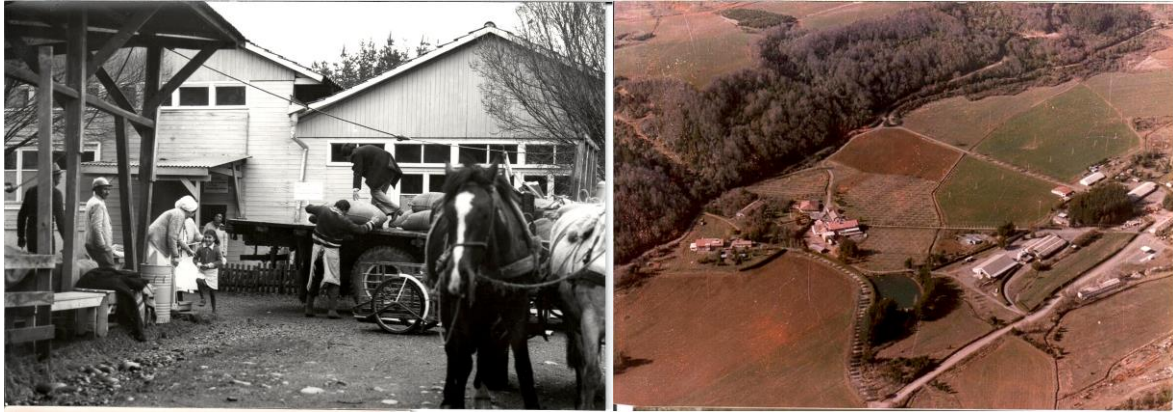
The first years in Chile

Paul Schäfer driving and dancing in a community feast

Young community children in Chile with an oxe, and reciving guests (all by CD/VB)

CHAPTER FIVE

DESCENT INTO TOTALITARIANISM

This chapter focuses on the process underlying the course of Colonia Dignida/Villa Baviera becoming a totalitarian community that was final with the military coup in Chile in 1973. As presented in previous chapter, the community members' experiences related to the Second World War, the presence of a charismatic and strong leader and structural changes introduced and developed on their arrival in Chile were all aspects that influenced and shaped the community's shift towards totalitarianism.

Arendt's understanding of totalitarianism implies a dehumanisation of the world. The notion as used by Arendt (1973) refers to what totalitarianism does to humans, turning them into a predictable group that will not act on their own but according to an ideology. The process of change towards dehumanisation and to total domination consists of three parts according to Arendt (2004). It passes through several stages: killing the juridical person in man, then the moral, and finally eliminating the human's individuality so that totalitarianism can be achieved (ibid.). In the community, people were, over time, placed outside the law after they arrived in Chile, and the established moral norms were gradually transformed. Finally, individuality among the community's members became superficial and was perceived as wrong. In this way people were made part of a predictable mass that would react as expected, and be, according to Arendt, dehumanised. Following Arendts understanding, the leadership of the community gradually dissolved much of humanity within the community and created a twisted understanding of reality among the community's inhabitants, including that of their own community and that of the world outside it.

According to Arendt the radical evil of totalitarianism is realised through the working hands of those who follow up one useful action with another. These individuals will only do what they are told to do. Such people will keep the system going without stopping and reflecting on their own actions. They hold a blind belief that there is another power than their own actions that is the driving force. They therefore consider themselves and their own actions as insignificant. The willing "working hands" in the community belonged to the generation that came to Chile as adults, and in particular to those that belonged to the power elite. Many of the people in this group committed terrible acts against their fellow inhabitants, in particular against those that came as children or were born in Chile, including their own children.

5.1 The end of the Chilean socialist dream

In 1970, Senator Salvador Allende who headed the Unidad Popular[64] was elected and appointed President of Chile by the Chilean Congress. The Allende experiment enjoyed a triumphant first year, followed by difficult final years. Unidad Popular consisted of a broad coalition of socialists, communists, radicals, and dissident Christian Democrats. The Unidad Popular's programme included the nationalisation of most remaining private industries and banks, massive land expropriation, and collectivisation[65] (Sanabria 2007). The socialist experiment in Chile was not only a political project but also a cultural-political project reflected in the flourishing cultural life in Chile of these years. The musical movement that was born during the '60s, La Nueva Canción Chilena[66] was closely associated with the left-wing government. This musical project originated in the wish or need to find Chilean roots through the music. The music was for the people, by the people. Visual aesthetics were also influenced by this trend, and reflected the search for Chileans' popular roots, as evinced in the use of the traditional clothing *poncho* not as the upper-class elegant *poncho,* but an indigenous one. The same applied when it came to the use of colours or symbols, such as the peace dove and fist, frequently seen on the record covers and posters of the period. A socio-political literature project was initiated by the name of Quimantu, with a view to getting literature out to the people. The Chilean film industry of that period was also influenced by this new era and produced a manifesto which stated that one made films for the people, by the people, in the service of the people.

In Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera the period was characterised by growing scepticism towards and closure from the outside world, and a fear of communism, which was represented by the newly elected Chilean president Allende and his government. The community members were given paramilitary training, and the community perceived a need for weapons. A male community member told me that they received military training during this time by a German man in his late 40s who visited the community at the time. He was a former SS soldier from WWII who would teach them to fight, and he shared his experiences from the war, and of killing Jews and civilians, with great enthusiasm.

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[64] Popular Unity. My translation.
[65] Allende's proposal also included the nationalisation of U.S. interests in Chile's major copper mines.
[66] The New Chilean song. My translation.

In addition, together with other groups such as the Chilean nationalist right extreme group, Patria y Libertad[67], Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera participated actively in the work against president Allende. The leader of this nationalist right group, Roberto Thieme, had German ancestors and was strongly anti-Communist, as were the first followers that established the community. Patria y Libertad developed close links to the community and were invited to have military training together with them (Schwember 2009).

The Chilean nation and identity were tried as the country was subjected to profound political, economic, and social changes during the period of 1970-73. Socialisation of the means of production spread rapidly and widely. The government took over virtually all the great estates and turned the lands over to the resident workers. The government also allowed expropriation of industries without congressional approval. It turned many factories over to management by the workers and the state. By 1972 food production had fallen and food imports had risen. Severe shortages of consumer goods, food, and manufactured products were widespread, and inflation reached 1,000% per annum. Mass demonstrations became almost daily events. Recurring strikes, violence by government supporters and opponents, including right-wing groups such as Patria y Libertad, and extreme left-wing groups such as Movimiento de Izquierda Revolucionaria[68], became part of Chileans' daily life. The regular armed forces halted an attempted coup by tank commanders in June 1973, warning the nation that the military was getting restless. Thereafter, the armed forces prepared the road for support among Chileans for a massive coup. By 1973, Chilean society had split into two hostile camps, on the political right and left respectively. In spite of this, many Chileans did not expect a military coup. This can be seen in the light of Chile to be one of the first countries in Latin America to have installed a durable constitutional system of government (Valenzuela 1990). Traditionally Chile has been viewed as one of South America's most stable and politically sophisticated nations. Chile enjoyed a constitutional and democratic government for most of its history as a republic, which began in 1891 (ibid.).

For Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera this was a time of great worry since the majority of the members and the community's leader were strongly anti-communist. During one of the conversations I had with the community doctor Hopp he told me about how they (the community) felt during this time:

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[67] Fatherland and Liberty. My translation.
[68] Revolutionary Left Movement. My translation.

We were afraid during the time of Unidad Popular since we had experienced the Second World War and what had happened with Germany after, with the wall that divided the West and the East. Luckily things went well and not as we feared. One can understand the community members' fear of the socialist government of Allende in the light of these personal experiences during WWII and the subsequent split between East and West in post-war Europe. The community had shared interests with other opponents of the Unidad Popular government, in particular with the conservative stratum of society, i.e. the landowners in Chile and the upper class, but also with many of the Chilean peasants in the region where the community had settled. In the years before the military coup, the community developed good relationships with opponents of communism and Allende's government. These were developed further during the military regime.

The wave of social and economic change during the Allende presidency affected the region where the community is located, specifically through the expropriation of estates and the peasants' movements. For centuries much of the best agricultural land, concentrated in the central south part of the country, had been divided into enormous private estates that were set up immediately after the Spanish conquest.[69] Since, only very small parts of the land have been in the hands of small peasants. This situation continued until 1967, when legal reforms were introduced: La Ley de Sindicalización Campesina y La Ley de Reforma Agraria[70] permitted and facilitated mobilisation among peasants that endured until the military coup in 1973. The community was afraid that the Allende government would expropriate their community land, as happened to several estates in the region where the German community is located. This did not happen, mainly because Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera had status as a charity organisation (Schwember 2009).

On September 11th, 1973, events culminated in a military coup and a military government led by General Augusto Pinochet took over control of the country. President Allende allegedly committed suicide on that day while being in the presidential palace. In the following years, thousands of the members and supporters of the Unidad Popular government were tortured, murdered or disappeared in official and secret camps. Many were sent to exile in remote parts of Chile or out of the country. The first years of the regime were marked by serious human rights violations.

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[69] According to a 1925 census these estates covered nearly 90% of all the land in this region and were in the hands of a few landowners. Some of these estates cover more than 5,000 hectares.

[70] The law of syndicalisation of peasants and the law of agricultural reform. My translation.

During the military regime of Pinochet, torture became widespread in Chile. According to the National Commission for Truth and Reconciliation[71] the armed forces and security forces were responsible for the deaths of 2,115 Chileans in the years following the 1973 coup, as well as the systematic torture or imprisonment of thousands of other opponents of the Pinochet regime (Informe de la Comision Nacional de Verdad y Reconciliacion Tomos I, II y III 1991). The actual number of people that were killed and disappeared is believed to be higher. In doing so the Pinochet-led military generated a culture of fear that:

> Was embodied in individualized abduction, political cleanings of key institutions such as schools and universities, and massive sweeps of targeted neighbourhood's to search homes and arrest suspects. Danger and violence would be so pervasive and intimidating that potential critics would presumable be frightened into apathy, a kind of active rejection of political knowledge and concern as legitimate activity (Stern 2004:32).

Alex Hinton's (2004) work on the Cambodian genocide *Why did they kill?* concerns Pol Pot's Khmer Rouge radical experiment in constructing a new kind of society in 1975, a communist utopia for the needy peasant masses which aimed at creating an agricultural state based on rice production. In 1979, 1.7 million out of a population of 8 million Cambodians had been starved to death or assassinated by communist cadres; others perished from starvation, overwork, illness, and malnutrition (ibid.).

The process of creating a violent community may be understood through the metaphors of "priming" and "heat" and concepts "genocidal priming" and "genocidal activation" (Hinton 2004:280). To "prime" something is to make it ready or prepared for something else (Hinton 2004). Hinton (ibid.) suggests the term "genocidal priming" to reference the set of related processes that establish the preconditions for genocide to take place within a given socio-political context. He identify "primers" to include among others socio-economic upheaval and dissemination of messages of hate. The activation of this process – genocidal priming – will happen in different velocity. Often there will be a set of various primers that connect up, and involving some sort of "more or less organised pushes from above – that triggers the "charge" that has been primed" (Hinton 2004:280). The social context in question will be "heated" by a set of primes often after a war that will contribute to a period of economic, social, or political upheaval (Hinton 2004).

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[71] An eight-member investigating body created by the government of Patricio Aylwin Azócar (1990-94). The commission did not have a judicial character or the power to sentence anyone.

Mass violence is not an automatic result of a "hot" situation but lies within the realm of the possible. This is particularly likely to be the case if genocide receives a "push" and some kind of activation is involved that may increase the "heat". This will usually be from ideologues that help generate a climate of fear in order to activate mass violence.

The social context of Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera when coming to Chile can be understood as "heated" by several aspects related to socioeconomic and political upheaval in Chile. The '60s in Chile were characterised by socioeconomic disorder and deep political divisions in Chilean society, and a socialist president was elected in 1970. This added to the insecurity and fear of the "red danger" among the people in the community. The community and the first followers identified themselves with the political right wing in Chile and supported the military coup in 1973. With the Chilean military coup in 1973, the path of the community towards totalitarianism was activated.

5.2 Collaboration with the military regime

Totalitarian regimes will often gain support and power by promising to revitalise the country (Hinton 2004). Unfortunately such promises of revitalisation often heighten structural divisions in the state by accusing a victim group for the country's miseries and legitimating violence directed toward such causes of "contamination" (ibid.). A good example of this process of "genocidal priming" is the Holocaust. The Nazis came to power during a time of socioeconomic chaos in Germany. The Nazi solution was to construct a new society, clean of Jews and other unwanted persons, which were represented as a "disease" for the German nation and country that gave rise to social miseries. Similarly an ideology of hate was distributed that would legitimate and encourage the destruction of these victim groups, such as a strongly anti-Semitic rhetoric.

Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera started in postwar Europe a time of chaos after the war. The leaders promised the first followers a better and correct life away from the established world that was perceived chaotic and morally depraved through constructing an own community. Hard work, discipline and total obedience to the leader was necessary in order to construct the desired community in Chile. Communism and communists were presented as a "danger" for the construction of their community and subsequently enemy of the community.

An ideology of hate was constructed and disseminated that would largely legitimate violence as the "right" way of treating those that were perceived as "enemy" of the community. This was aided by an effective ideological manipulation by the right wing in Chile. In this context an identifiable target group was developed, those that supported president Allende were understood as "enemy".

The testimonies of several Chileans belonging to the political left express the brutality they were treated with while being keept in Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera:

> My body was full of cuts and bruises. I was rotting everywhere. I had pus in my eyes, my nose. My mouth was completely numb. I could feel nothing in my penis and I couldn't feel my limbs. My body was full of cigarette burns...

> They tied me to a metal cot, but this time they put a helmet on my head. It had movable earflaps which allowed them to apply electrical current to my ears and rubber bands for around the jaw. This was so that when they kicked or punched me, my jaw wouldn't get thrust out of joint. They taped little wires to my wrists, thighs, glands, chest, neck and applied current in different parts.

> There was also an agent who used a little rubber object which gave off shocks when he hit me with it. They had something they used on my eyes, mouth, teeth, under my tongue and sometimes, when I was shouting, they'd put it right at the back of the palate. I had another one in my anus, at the base of the urethra and another under my nails... This went on for hours and hours. ...The pain was so great that I twisted and several times lifted up the bed. I even bent the cot which was of iron and broke the straps with the strength of desperation.

> The brutality of the treatment made me think I was the subject of an experiment to find out how much I could resist both physically and mentally. I was the guinea pig and they were there to learn (Sagaris 1996, part of the testimony of Luis Peebles).

Another testimony:

They took me into interrogation, the shouting grew louder and there was music, I remember having heard "Capricho italiano" by Tchaikovsky. A man they called the prosecutor (fiscal) or "Doctor" did the questioning. They applied current; when they finished I could still hear the cries of others being tortured. It gave me diarrhoea. ... I had electrodes everywhere and something gave me shocks that passed right through my body. I felt torn apart; just as I felt I was being emptied by mouth and anus, I lost consciousness (Sagaris 1996, part of the testimony of Adriana Bórquez).

Both these testimonies, along with that of other survivors and former agents of the secret Chilean secret police (DINA), formed the basis of reports by Amnesty International (1977), the United Nations and other human rights organisations that accused Colonia Dignidad of functioning as a secret prison camp and center for training and experimentation with torture techniques, after the 1973 military coup (Sagaris 1996).

It was also reported documented dogs trained to attack and destroy the sexual organs of both sexes, experiments testing torture tolerance limits, and the use of special psychoactive drugs on subjects (Freed & Landis 1980:115). Some of the drugs that have been reported to be used in cases of torture are drugs like pentothal to inhibit all physical or mental resistance to sexual abuse or interrogation. It was established that Colonia Dignidad was being used as "research centre" of torture:

...prisoners have allegedly been subjected to different "experiments" without any interrogation... Prisoners charge that torture is "personalized" through an initial interrogation which establishes the personal traits of the individual... This data is then used to program the torture sessions so that the result is a totally debilitated person who will comply with any demand (Graham 1987:A29-A30).

The making of the community as a secret detention and "research centre" of torture happened in a close collaboration with the secret Chilean Police (DINA) but with the power in the community in charge and with active participation from some community members. A former

DINA agent Samuel Enrique Fuenzalida Devia, testified for Amnesty International vs. Colonia Dignidad trial in Bonn in 1979[72]:

> During the time I was a DINA agent I went to Colonia Dignidad twice. My first visit to Colonia Dignidad ... was in the winter of 1974... I had to accompany an officer to the south; we were going to "the Germans"... We had orders to first go and pick up a prisoner from Cuatro Alamos in Santiago... it was Loro Matías... This prisoner was totally broken, he had been tortured. Too many things had happened for him to have been released....

> The witness, the officer and the prisoner travel south to Parral.

> We stopped at some gates. The prisoner was forced to get in a Mercedes. Two Germans were inside the car. The captain spoke German with them. I could tell by their language they were Germans.... the Captain, I had been told, also spoke German... almost all the DINA officers speak German.. the Captain at one point called one of the Germans "Professor." Once inside the compound, the prisoner was taken away by the "Professor" and the Captain, and the witness was led into a house. There was a table set for everyone. Once we were seated... the "Professor" came in. He was carrying a black German shepherd... On entering, the "Professor" made a gesture using both arms, which according to my way of thinking meant the prisoner was dead....

> The DINA didn't use the official name "Colonia Dignidad". In the colony, when one mentioned the place, we could only speak of "the Germans". I suppose this was so the prisoners would have no idea of where they were. If the prisoners heard the DINA agents talking about "the Germans" they could not know what they were talking about, because in Chile there are many Germans all over the place... Because of my activities in the DINA I know that President Pinochet made a visit to Colonia

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[72] In 1977 Amnesty International (AI) in Germany drafted a pamphlet called "Colonia Dignidad – German model farm in Chile – a torture camp of the DINA". Colonia Dignidad/ Villa Baviera went to trial to stop AI to publish the pamphlet which sustained that opponents of the military regime were systematically tortured in the community. In November 18th, 1997 Colonia Dignidad loses the legal case with AI as the Provincial Court of Bonn, Germany rejects a lawsuit brought 20 years earlier by the colony against AI. The ruling means AI can publish the pamphlet drafted in 1977 stating that opponents of the military regime were systematically tortured in the German community.

Dignidad in August 1974 on his return from a tour to the south of Chile (Derechoschile.com, part of the testimony of Fuenzalida).

As the testimony of Fuenzalida gives account of the leadership of the community and some of the inhabitants collaborated in an active way as the helping hand off totalitarianism in Chile introducing terror.

For many of those community members that were not personally active in the torture of left-wing Chileans it was difficult in one or another way not to notice the changes in the community connected to the community becoming a secret detention and torture centre. This was relating to: unknown Chileans entering the community in custody (of Chilean military), the need of more food for the prisoners, new places that were created for torture and for keeping the prisoners, screaming of people being tortured and so on.

During my fieldwork, I got to know how every night one inhabitant, who at the time was a 12 year-old boy, would be locked inside the house where he worked as an assistant. This was also the place where he slept during the night. The adults would bring him food in the evening and carefully lock the door. In the silence of the night he could hear sounds and in particular screaming. Part of the time he could hear terrible human screams from the basement of the house. Sometimes he would hear what he now believes were Spanish words by people that seemed to be in pain. Knowing about the dark past of Chile and Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera – he is convinced that the screaming came from the basement of the house of people who were tortured. This was during the first years of the military regime.

This person told me that as a young boy he was afraid he was next in line for being brought to the basement and that the sound of the terrible screams caused feelings of fear and guilt. To this day he can hear the screams in nightmares. He further told me that when the Chilean government sent their lawyer to investigate the crimes against humans in Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera he was, as most of the adult inhabitants, interrogated about the torture of left-wing Chileans but said he did not know anything. He did not trust the government and was afraid of being seen as complicit in the torture. When I urged him to testify in a trial he said that it was too late, in particular after saying no to the prosecuting authorities. He did, however, show me the place where he had slept and worked as a young boy and where left-wing Chileans presumably were tortured.

5.3 Abolishing close relationships

The first generations that established Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera were in search of an ideal community. As part of this search they experimented with ways of living, in particular how to rear children and control gender relationships. In spite of the wish to experiment with ways of living as part of the utopian dream (as discussed in chapter four) many of the people I met during fieldwork expressed to me that the original idea was that every family should live together in Chile in their own houses. Although some of the first followers might have wanted to live in communal houses, and rear children collectively, most wanted to live with their closest families within a community. This was not possible upon arrival in Chile because there were no houses there.

The first members in Chile were told that it would be too time-consuming to build houses for each single family. Together with the first followers, the leaders decided to put emphasis on the aspect of charity, and to construct the hospital first. People were promised that when the community had resources and time to do so, several houses would be constructed for families. Womas explained this to me as follows:

Well, during the first years the separation of men and women in living quarters was not so abnormal because it was necessary. Here, it meant nothing. It was necessary to construct first something very simple to live in and afterwards we saw the necessity of the people around us in terms of health. The personal needs of the inhabitants were put off, and later this was converted into an institution. So at first this was out of necessity and later it was transformed into a norm. Herr Schäfer knew how to take advantage of this situation. He tried to justify this. For example he said: Who is your father? Who is your mother? It is those who are fulfilling the wish of God. Then one started to think that yes my father is my father and my mother is my mother but everybody is the same. In this manner the family system declined and with time it was so internalised that everybody accepted it and felt bad, as if it were a sin if one thought about one's own family.

As Womas narrates, the family system in the community fell into decline when the family members started to live separately. Only a very few members, belonging to the leadership, were permitted to live with their family members. Otherwise, women would live in the house for women and men in the men's house. Children would live in the house for children. The system of separating the family members in everyday life contributed to eliminating family structures in the community.

With time there would be minimal if any contact between the genders; men and women would live in separate worlds. One of the community members who came as a six year-old boy told me how he did not speak a single word with his own sister for more than 30 years, this in spite of living close to each other. He once showed me a picture of himself as a little boy and his family taken in Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera. In the photo he is standing next to one of his sisters but leaning towards the opposite side in order to avoid contact with her. He told me how he felt that it was wrong, a sin, to be close to her since she was not a boy. By separating the genders and family members, first for practical reasons and later under the pretext that this was done in order to be closer to God, it became easier for the leadership to obtain total control of each individual. The avoidance of close family bonds facilitated greater control of the inhabitants for the leadership (Heller 2006).

Another important aspect of the social structure in the community was the age groups. Apart from being a way of placing the inhabitants in a social landscape that would determine when and what to learn, and with whom to do so, these age groups had another function. They were also a way of exerting social control. Each age group had a leader who would inform Schäfer of everything pertaining to the group. By suppressing close relationships among family members and within married couples the everyday significance of these relationships between the members was reduced.

There were two categories of people in the community, men and women. After the totalitarian period of the community commenced, men and women belonged to different worlds that had little contact with each other. The collective of women would work with specific tasks and the men with others. All contact was controlled and contact by their own choice was forbidden between genders, even between siblings. People in the community were not allowed to do things on their own or with somebody from the opposite gender. In spite of the formal rules some few of the people I got to know, in particular those who came as adults with experience of the outside world, have told me about how they used to sneak out in the dark in order to meet a sweetheart. This was always done in secret and with great fear of being discovered.

Each member belonged to a primary group, either the male or the female group, and in addition he or she would be placed in an age group. This implies that freedom and unpredictability were to a great extent eliminated. There was no room for individual choices. People were unable to become visible as unique individuals in a common human world. They were reduced to raw material to be shaped in a particular fashion, reducing them to parts of a predictable mass of humans. In totalitarianism, the public space where freedom and plurality

can be expressed is eliminated. This is the space where each individual can become visible as a unique and active human being. This removing of what is the characteristic of the human being, individuality and initiative, is what Arendt names a radical evil. In Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera, the individual replaced with a collective that followed an all-powerful leader and ideology. The total domination that was introduced in the community attempted to make all humans equal (Arendt 1973).

Paul Schäfer usurped individual choice and conscience by breaking up marriages and denying any contact between men and women. He went even further and not only separated people by gender but abolished the family as a concept in the community. For decades it was forbidden for most people to have children and no children were born in the community for a period of 20 years (Schwember 2009). From 1961 until 2009, 110 people were born in the community (Schwember 2009:71). There were a few adopted Chilean children and some privileged inhabitants that were permitted to have children. Some of the inhabitants were even sterilised without their knowledge in order to avoid having children (Schwember 2009). All children who came to Chile with their families would be raised in the children's house and learn as stated earlier to call all women "auntie" and all the men "uncle". Most of the children did not know who their parents were and if they knew, they had no family life as we know it.

Children and adults lived in separate worlds but shared the same father figure. Schäfer became the "father" for everybody in the community and had paternal authority to decide in all matters, and was assumed to know what was best. Furthermore, Schäfer taught his followers to search for and punish those who violated the norms that he set out. This happened between parents and children and between partners. By teaching his followers to betray each other, Schäfer undermined close relationships of trust between members as well as creating a spirit of fear and suspicion within the community.

Womas and Davida

During my conversations with people in the community, many told me of their dream of, and their struggle to be allowed to, getting married and having children. Some of the people who shared with me their love story were Womas and Davida. They were the first couple to be married after a long period when this was forbidden. Many others had to wait until after the year 2000 and the end of Schäfer's leadership. Womas and Davida's experience of how they fell in love in secret and years later got married is quite representative for many of the people in the community. Nobody could marry without permission, and obtaining permission to do

so was very difficult. Therefore many people were secret sweethearts for years in spite of this not being permitted by the leader. As Womas told me: *To start a relationship with somebody without the approval of the leaders was not accepted and would be violently reacted to by the leaders of that time. That sort of thing was punished brutally. In our case, to avoid such problems, in the end we told them about ourselves.*

According to Davida and Womas, they were afraid the other inhabitants in the community would notice that they had something special going on when they looked at each other. Nevertheless, they dared to be secret sweethearts for years before revealing this to the leaders. This may be related to the fact that Womas worked closely with the leadership and as part of his work he moved in and out of the community. Furthermore, Womas arrived in Chile as a grown-up man and had knowledge of life in Germany and the world outside. All these factors helped strengthen position inside the community. This may have made it possible for him to act more freely and dare to start a relationship, and made it easier for Davida to be with him.

In spite of Womas's powerful position, they were not allowed to be a couple when they finally told the leaders about their feelings for each other. In order to prevent contact between Womas and Davida, she was sent to Bulnes located 150 km from the community premises to work at the community office, while Womas remained. It is likely that Womas' position and relationship with the leader prevented a stronger punitive response. The couple's opportunities to seeing each other were reduced to the weekends when Womas had to work as a waiter at the community restaurant in Bulnes. They continued as secret sweethearts but it was not easy for them to communicate with each other because of the strict separation of the genders in Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera. When I asked them to tell me how they managed to communicate secretly for so many years they laughed, and Womas said: *It was an art, an art… each of us had to make our own strategy.*

His wife Davida continued:

We wrote letters and found a person to send them since I was working in Bulnes. Ten years I worked at the office there, and Womas was in Bulnes only at the weekends to work as a waiter at the community restaurant. It was difficult for us. Sometimes I phoned from the office to the restaurant only to talk with my husband but if the appropriate person did not answer I did not talk and hung up.

Womas explained further:

It was so extreme that one wrote a little letter that was folded several times and searched for a person who could bring it to Bulnes. The problem was to find a suitable person because if one found a person who, after receiving the letter, suffered a conflict of conscience and would feel the need to accuse… or confess their "sin" to Herr Schäfer then the score would be settled later. It was very conflictive, very difficult to have contact for us.

They communicated like this for several years. Today they blame themselves for not having decided more firmly about their wish to be together earlier. They explain this with the internal conflict of always feeling that they were doing something wrong. As Davida expressed it: *Paul Schäfer always talked about marriage negatively, one had the impression that to get married was a sin, something bad*. They were convinced that to get married was a sin and therefore they were conflicted when wanting to marry.

Their experiences parallel those of other groups of closed and destructive sects, such as the accounts provided by survivors of The People's Temple (Levine 2003). Followers of such communities often feel insecure and mistaken about their own feelings and wishes, even when relating to important and personal issues and concerning their own families. The word of the all-powerful leader becomes more important and proper than the individual. In Levine (2003) there is an account of some parents who belonged to The People's Temple reporting an incident where their young daughter was brutally punished for a minor offence by Jim Jones. The parents felt very bad about watching Jones decide the punishment and listening to their child scream. Although they felt bad listening to what was happening with their child, they felt that Jones was right in punishing her.

After years of being secret sweethearts, Davida and Womas again decided to ask the leadership in the community for permission to marry. Womas explained it like this:

During the years this happened, what we called the time of the persecution, we wondered how we could think about each other when there were so many conflicts in the community. Therefore our (Womas's and Davida's) *relationship was always postponed in order to concentrate on the problems of the community. We should only think about the community because it needed us. That was how our personal wish and desire was put off. That was how it was until we thought about our parents. They got married during the war* (WWII). *Then we*

started to wonder why we couldn't get married during our conflicts if they could, it was the same. Then one day we said: this is enough, we won't accept it anymore, and we got married.

Womas and Davida finally got permission to marry in 1995. They started their relationship on 31st of July 1988 and got married on 15th of November 1995. The '90s was a time when Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera was being investigated by the Chilean government for crimes committed during the military regime. The community inhabitants felt that they were persecuted by the democratic government in Chile and were struggling with all the accusations and headlines in the press. This situation and the position of Womas may have contributed to the leader's decision to allow them to get married. For Womas and Davida, the persecution they felt their community was exposed to may have made them feel insecure about the future of the community. This in turn may have contributed to strengthening their sense of the need to get married and to enjoy the companionship of a partner rather than feeling alone.

Womas and Davida told me how Schäfer preached that married people should "protect" the unmarried by keeping the institution of marriage and those who participated in it a secret. This implied that unmarried people should not be aware of marriage, know if a person was married and what this implied. Everything related to Womas and Davida's wedding and life after marriage happened in secret from the rest of the people living in the community. They went alone to the closest register of marriages in regular clothes and formalised their marriage. They had bought rings that they gave each other. Right after the ceremony they returned as if nothing had happened, put the wedding rings in their pockets and continued daily life without any celebration or party. Not being able to express in public their feelings and happiness at being married was not easy for Davida and Womas. As expressed by Davida: *Yes, in one way we were happy and proud of finally being married but we could not show it to anybody. And that was a little complicated and sad.* They continued with their old, separate lives; she in Bulnes, and Womas in the community. Their communication continued through secret letters, trying to telephone each other sometimes and always afraid of being discovered by the wrong person.

Schäfer told everybody in the community that nobody should come between them and God. There should be a direct communication between each person and God so everybody could "do the work of Good" without interruptions by feelings of love or desire for other persons. Therefore members were not allowed to have a partner or to be married. In this moral context it is understandable that people in the community thought that not being married was

the right thing. To put it in Davida's words: *People felt bad or sinful if they had thoughts of living in family, about their children, worrying about their children, until they believed it was a sin to think like that at all*.

According to Womas and Davida, they eventually came to feel less guilty about being married. Nevertheless, for years they would avoid revealing their marriage to others, in particular the youngest ones, because they did not want to set a bad example. This became more complex when Davida fell pregnant with their eldest son. As part of the moral code introduced and preached by Schäfer, falling pregnant or displaying a pregnant body was not right, as it would remind other inhabitants of the possibility of having a partner and family, something that in turn would be considered an obstacle between the person and God.

Davida told me how she felt guilty when pregnant: *When I met with Paul Schäfer I always had the impression that I had done something wrong being pregnant since he preached a lot about morals until one had to think that married life is something bad, a sin, and therefore to be pregnant is a result of sin*. As a result, Davida hid the pregnancy from all the other inhabitants until the baby was born. This was not an easy task in a community were clothes were communal and given to you and not chosen by the person; where all daily activities were done in collective arenas, even intimate ones, and at collective gatherings decided by the leadership. For example, showers were taken in collective bathrooms together with other women at specific hours. During the last stage of her pregnancy Davida was sent to a place outside the community. And when the baby was born it did not live with Davida or Womas; they did not live together, but in the children's house and without the child being publicly presented as their child.

The internal conflict of guilt that Womas and Davida felt when being allowed to marry and having children is the result of the indoctrination they were subjected to in the community. Ideology makes total domination possible. Arendt (1973) mentions the function of propaganda, and then more precisely that of indoctrination. Its success seems to derive from the very character of a doctrine that leaves no place for doubt. Totalitarianism is, in effect, accompanied by an absolute affirmation of law. It deprives all positive laws of their function and destroys the *consensus juris* that assures people of their rights and mutual obligations in a shared world. At the same time, the subject finds herself deprived of the capacity to determine her own conduct and to account for her actions to herself and others according to norms of justice and injustice, truth and falsity, good and bad.

Both Davida and Womas had internalised the law of Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera that stated that close relationships with other humans, even one's own children and close family, would be a barrier to their relationship with God. It was therefore a sin to have or want a family or feel a close relationship to your own children.

Some years later Womas and Davida had a second child and still felt that this was difficult in relation to the others. They felt it might be painful for those not allowed to have children. This one account Womas told me:

I remember very well when we had our second child. Sometimes I had the desire to hide him (the child). *Not because I thought it was bad to have a child but because the others did not have any, the others did not "have" the privilege of getting married, the privilege of having children. Then, for example I remember very well one day when I saw my brother some 100 meters away and I was with my child and I thought about what I should do. I thought of maybe taking another road so he would not notice that I was with my child. Even though he knew that I had children I thought that showing him the child would be painful for him. I thought that he as well as others had a great desire to have children. This desire would make him suffer. Therefore my conscience said it was better to hide my child in order for them not to suffer as much from not having what I had. So there was a permanent conflict.*

It was not only seen as a sin to be pregnant; pregnant women would be treated very badly by the leadership. One of the inhabitants told me how when she became pregnant she was forced to do hard work, resulting in two miscarriages. The fact that she carried her third baby to term was a miracle. Like Davida, she had been ordered to hide the pregnancy from the others in the community. This was not easy since she lived and slept in the same room as three other girls. Others have told me how they were forced to lose their unborn babies under different circumstances. Furthermore, many women and men were sterilised while growing up in the community without their given consent. Some of them became aware of this only after the year 2000. Many of the inhabitants who came as children to Chile did not learn about how to conceive children until they were adults and after the reign of Paul Schäfer. Most people were only allowed to get married after a certain age when it would be difficult for them to have children. The former leadership systematically prevented and forbade the majority of the inhabitants from having children in order to obtain absolute control (Schwember 2009).

Sebastian

One day when I was walking around in the community I got to know Sebastian. He approached me and asked for help to find some oil-driven lamps made by Kawasaki that the community members used when hunting rabbits. When they saw the strong light, the rabbits would freeze making it easier to kill them. Originally, the community had brought with them six lamps when coming from Germany to Chile in the '60s but at the time of my fieldwork only two worked. Sebastian showed me the lamps he wanted to buy and talked warmly about them being from Europe and their excellent quality, and asked if I wanted to try them. He told me that he had tried to contact Kawasaki to see if they sold the lamps but had not been able to get an answer. Sebastian and I talked for a long time and this became the start of our friendship. During conversations he asked me about my studies, my life in Norway and family.

Sebastian had a strong need to talk and share his experience of living in Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera. He had come to Chile as a five-year old boy together with his mother. His father, who was a pharmacist, had been found dead under mysterious circumstances in Germany while Sebastian was in Chile and a little boy. Sebastian did not remember his father very much but had some pictures of him. He did not have a close relationship with his mother today. This was a consequence of almost no contact with her in his childhood where he was raised in an age group. He told me that he still felt the lack of love from his mother.

Quite early after we got to know each other he told me how in 2000, as a 41-year-old man he decided to marry. He felt lonely and wanted a partner but his main reason for getting married was that he wanted to have children. As he told me: *I took that step only in order to have children, to continue ahead, how can we continue without children*? He had decided then to ask one of the ladies in the community to marry him. His future wife, Nora, was in her late 40s at this time. She accepted his proposal right away.

Although they had both lived in the community since the '60s they did not know each other well due to the gender segregation, only by face. The day before their wedding, which would take place at the local register of marriages, his mother told him that she wanted to talk to him. She told him then that he should be aware that he and his wife could have difficulty conceiving children because of Nora's age. They could risk not having children at all and maybe having sick children. Sebastian's reaction to this was: *And then I felt very bad and I was very anxious and desperate. What should I do? We did not have any knowledge about life*. Sebastian had already spoken with his fiancée and family-in-law. Everything was settled for the marriage. Sebastian told me that he could not refuse to marry her. It was too late. He

prayed the whole night before the wedding and decided to complete what he had started and let God decide. In a low voice he told me how they had a beautiful and healthy little baby boy one year after they married. He saw this as a miracle and a sign of God. Sebastian's story is not unique. Many couples got married at a mature age, after the late '90s when things began to gradually change. Not everybody was as lucky as Sebastian and Nora. Many couples were too old when they got married to have children and some found out that they had been sterilised. Many couples wanted to adopt but this proved difficult because of the dark past of the community.

5.4 Total domination

The older generation in the community started to believe in the propaganda they were exposed to by those in power and not in the reality of own experiences. The younger generation in the community did not know another way of thinking and were sosialised into the world that was presented by the leadership.

When people have lost contact with their fellow men as well as the reality around them, permanent domination has succeeded (Arendt 1973; Swift 2009). Gradually after arrival in Chile, the reality of experiences and distinction between true and false no longer existed for those in Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera; this is what Arendt called domination from within (Arendt 1973). The leadership, including their closest collaborators, spread a sense of the power of terror and fear through isolating the community, and through ideological propaganda.Through indoctrination and violence they achieved total control and domination of the community members. "Wherever totalitarianism possesses absolute control it replaces propaganda with indoctrination and uses violence not so much to frighten people as to realise constantly its ideological doctrines and its practical lies." (Arendt 1973:341)

Most of the inhabitants that did not belong to the elite of leaders were exposed to physical and psychological torture. This was particularly relevant for those who came as children or were born in Chile. As part of their socialisation, most children were exposed to violence during their upbringing in the community. Those children that were seen of different reasons as "difficult" experienced most violence. Through this institutionalised way of using violence, terror and fear were fostered among most of the inhabitants.

The following is the account of Eva a community member that reflects the absolute domination that was experienced by many community members:

This happened when I was approximately 10 years old, in the '80s. At that time I belonged to the group Falten[73] but for a reason I don't remember I was taken out of the group and send to the bakery where I was watched by the aunties that worked there. One day I was doing my homework that I did in isolation from the other children, and Paul Schäfer suddenly entered the room. Everybody ran to meet him except me, who continued doing my homework. Then Paul Schäfer approached me and asked why I didn't greet him. I told him that I was afraid of him and therefore wouldn't greet him. He then called his sprinter[74] and said to him: She will have a reason to be afraid of me, go and get a stick and beat her on her bottom. The auntie that was in charge in the bakery gave the sprinter a wooden broom that he used to brutally beat me on my bottom. It was so long-lasting and painful, and after I could not sit on the chair because of pain. After I was beaten, everybody that was watching did not say anything. Schäfer then told me: now you have a reason to be afraid of me. Go and do your homework. That evening I had to do my math homework. My designated teacher scolded me because I had done my homework badly, and asked me what I was thinking of. I told her what had happened: that I hadn't greeted the uncle[75]and had therefore been beaten. One of the aunties present then went right away by bicycle to Zippelhaus and told Schäfer everything I had told my math teacher.

Later that evening the door of the bakery was suddenly and roughly opened and Schäfer entered and said to me: So you can continue to talk badly about me beating you, now I will bet you even stronger. He called his sprinter again and asked him to beat me without mercy. The sprinter took the wooden broom and started to beat me in front of all the people in the bakery until the broom broke. Then Schäfer asked one of the aunties if there were not anything more resistant there that could be used to beat me with. The aunty ran out and returned back with a garden hose that was used to beat me. At one moment Schäfer stopped the beating, and pulled down my skirt and underwear and the sprinter continued to beat me. Schäfer kept me from falling down

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[73] Age group for young girls in the community.
[74] A young male community member that accompanied Schäfer.
[75] A common nickname used on Paul Schäfer by community members.

so the beating could continue. I don't know for how long this continued. Then Schäfer said, laughing, that now I had a reason for talking bad about him. (Schwember 2009:23-24).[76]

As the testimony of Eva tells, a particular way of thinking or consciousness was developed in the community. This way of thinking served to make the followers obedient to the leader and to remain in the community out of commitment, but also because of fear. Their fear and obedience were as much a result of rhetoric as of the disappearance of the freedom to leave. Paul Schäfer became the all-powerful leader of the members. This process was initiated in Germany but would be completed in Chile. His words were the law. Where the transcendence of law is abolished, the result, in Arendt's terms, is an "identification of man with the law", or the emergence of a humanity that becomes the "living incarnation of law". This requires the position of a mediator, of a leader, in whom infallible knowledge and absolute power are vested. This supreme and unconditional authority, however, seems to derive from a conception of law as history or nature: a law of movement in both cases, of a movement that inhabits the subject. In the community Paul Schäfer became this "living incarnation of law". This is reflected in Sigmund's words: *I have it quite clear. I thought that Paul Schäfer was a superior spiritually and therefore I delivered to him my reason and my conscience. His words were everything*. Or, as Albert said: *I thought Paul Schäfer was God*. Sigmund's and Albert's words were repeated by many of the people I got to know; they all thought that Paul Schäfer was above them as humans.

According to Schaffner (1948:91), it is possible to postulate that the German youth from WWII were searching for "a new father-symbol, a new leader, and a new set of beliefs". This might lead the followers of Schäfer to support a strong leader figure. The experience of followers who consider their community leader as superhuman is shared by many people who have been part of what can be understood as destructive cults or communities. One example of such a community was the People's Temple where Jim Jones became an absolute leader. In 1978, 918 members of all ages committed collective suicide in Jonestown, Guyana.[77] Schäfer, like Jones, was seen by his followers as the only one that could lead them and be their "father". Both Jones and Schäfer worked in order to reach such a level of control over their supporters. To do this, Schäfer had to be clear and strong about being the only one in power to guide his followers. "The leader seeks the image that he and only he has the

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[76] My translation.

[77] Although there is no question that freedom of choice was severely limited in the final hours of Jonestown.

characteristics needed to direct the group, that only he merits the authority to dictate members every moment" (Levine 2003:213).

Schäfer carefully crafted his image as an all-powerful leader through manipulation, spying activities and stage-managed theatrical performances. Many of the people I met told me about how knowledgeable Schäfer was when it came to the Bible and the word of God and how he was a great speaker. He was not only a charismatic person but in his speeches he also told people what they wanted to hear. This was made possible by the confession system. His wisdom, charisma and extraordinary understanding of human nature are all descriptions that people in the community used when they talked about Schäfer to me. Amidst the feelings of deception, betrayal and trickery, most of the people I talked to were also - albeit to different degrees - in awe of Schäfer as a great man. It was not only among his own followers that Schäfer was seen as extraordinary. Many prominent people supported Schäfer and the work the community did for years.

In Chile, in time most of the followers would submit to the community leadership's absolute control. A dual world developed in which Paul Schäfer and his followers represented the divine and an example of absolute goodness. Opponents or anyone questioning him, on the other hand, represented absolute evil. To reach the level of absolute control Schäfer achieved, trust by the followers in the beginning is an important prerequisite. As presented in chapter four, in Germany Schäfer developed a culture of absolute reliance within the community. Members had to share and confess all their dreams, ideas and wishes to him and his closest collaborators. Subsequently this information could be used against the person. This custom was continued in Chile but would become even more systematic to the extent where everybody was spying on everybody. All the inhabitants used to gather once a week in the old part of the Zippelhaus where there was a blackboard. Everybody who knew that someone had done something "wrong" would write the name of that person on the blackboard. Then that person would be asked in public about the "sin" she or he had committed. If the person did not confess then the others would punish and hit the person until a confession followed.

Inside Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera there were hidden microphones in order to spy on the members. Conversations among people were recorded in secret (Heller 2006). Letters that people got from family members in Germany were not given to their owners but read by somebody that would control the content at public gatherings. Furthermore, all letters written by the inhabitants were subject to censorship and controlled by the leadership. Most letters written by members were dictated and the person "writing" the letter would merely sign. Making telephone calls was not permitted, and this was before the time of Internet and mobile

phones. People were not allowed to leave the community without permission and this was only given rarely. Even in situations where medical help that did not exist in the community was needed, residents were not permitted to leave. As a result many of the inhabitants who had accidents while working and sustained injuries were not treated properly.

One of the community's patriarchal institutions was *the men's meeting* that, depending on the theme and the context, consisted of men above the age of 30. They would control the daily activities and when "necessary" punish and torture others in the community (Heller 2006). Through this system many of the people in the community have, in one way or another, participated in the violence against each other, including parents against their own children, and husbands against wives. Furthermore, there was a security group that consisted of men who belonged to the leadership. They were in charge of the security system of the community and eventually dealt with weapons and maintained relationships with the military regime in Chile. The use of violence and control became part of the community's leadership structure.

The leaders' aim appears to have been gaining total social control over the people living on the grounds of the community. Social control refers to social mechanisms that regulate individual and group behaviour according to the rules of a given society or social group. In the community most members were subjected to manipulation, indoctrination and terror by the leadership as ways of internalising the dominant norms and values of the community.

The internal life in the community became very restricted for most of the members, except a little group that had close relationships to the leadership. Forced work, forced medication and treatment, restricted access to information and to moving around in and outside the community grounds, and physical and psychological violence shaped much of the life of the people that were not part of the leadership elite. This is in strong contradiction to the idea behind utopian projects according to Brumann's definition of such movements (2000), as based on a voluntary commitment by the members.

The system of power developed in Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera matches Hannah Arendt's definition of totalitarian[78] phenomena as total domination by ideology and terror (1973). Although Arendt's approach to the concept of totalitarianism conceives this type of rule in a strict sense to be limited to certain periods of Nazism[79] and Communism,[80] I find her

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[78] The concept of totalitarianism originated with the Italian fascists under Mussolini and with the philosopher Giovanni Gentile who defined it as "comprehensive, all embracing, pervasive – the total state".
[79] National Socialist regime 1938-1945.

thinking relevant for my work. According to Canovan (2000), generally speaking one can divide the many understandings of the concept of totalitarianism into two broad approaches where Arendt (1973) is said to represent one of them. Arendt's (ibid.) understanding of a totalitarian state emphasises not a political system of a structured kind but rather a kind of dehumanisation of the world. Her notion refers to what totalitarianism does with humans, making humans a predictable group that will not act on their own but according to an ideology. Arendt's thinking refers to a movement of destruction that attacks all features of human nature and world. The other approach that represents the dominant model refers to a coherent socio-political system with an ideology (Canovan 2000:25). Here, a single party is in charge, legitimised by the ideology and with unlimited power and means of indoctrination (ibid.). According to this understanding totalitarianism has been seen as a political system of a structured kind of "totalitarianism", a condition caused by "over-ambitious political ideas and radical actions" (Canovan 2000:26).

In both understandings of totalitarianism there is a focus on an all-embracing ideology and coercion. According to Canovan (2000), what makes these understandings different is related to Arendt's focus on the Holocaust. This makes Arendt's understanding of totalitarianism different from the dominant model. "Totalitarianism" in Arendt's thinking means a "chaotic, non-utilitarian, manically dynamic movement of destruction that assails all the features of human nature and the human world that make politics possible" (Canovan 2000:26).

The kind of "totalitarianism" that was developed in Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera was closer to a dehumanisation of the social world, where features of the human nature and human world where destroyed. People in the community were submitted to an all-powerful ideology constructed by the leadership and shaped into a specific kind of human being. The "totalitarianism" of Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera is thus closer to Arendt's (1973) understanding of the concept than that of a structured political system. For Arendt, totalitarianism was about: "The killing of man's individuality, of the uniqueness shaped in equal parts by nature, will, and destiny, which has become so self-evident a premise for all human relations that even identical twins inspire a certain uneasiness…" (Arendt 1973:454).

Terror is the very essence of totalitarian government (Arendt 1973). Terror and violence in totalitarian organisations are first used to abolish opposition and later to frighten people. Moreover, violence is used "to realise constantly its ideological doctrines and its

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[80] Soviet Stalinism 1930-53.

practical lies" (Arendt 1973:341). A totalitarian organisation produces a separate reality where members act and react according to the rules of a fictitious world. Through totalitarian organisation the natural human bonds of solidarity are broken; they are replaced by distrust and informing. The goal is to destroy the spontaneous human bonds and to pervert human plurality into a mass of fragmented individuals. To express a unique personal identity was not possible in the community. What Arendt understood as the "new beginning" inherent in birth and central to the human condition, became transformed when coming to Chile into a predictable act. In the community, power became consolidated into an ideology dictated and expressed by a single, almighty leader.

There were clear rules about everything from how to live and with whom, when to eat, when to sleep, when to brush your teeth, how to wear your hair, what clothes to wear, with whom to speak, what one was allowed to look at and so on. Social life was totally controlled and the inhabitants of the community were punished if they did not follow the rules. According to Arendt, totalitarian rule is characterised by an inherent tendency to destroy human spontaneity and to undermine and disrupt any stable system of behavioural norms (1973). The spontaneity of personal or independent decision-making was not possible during this time in the community.

One of the people I got to know, Dorothea, told me how when she came to Chile in her twenties after some days in the community she realised that life in the community was totally different from what she had expected. She felt trapped and *felt suffocated by the mountains Dreitorspitze* that are close by. In Germany she had been a strong young woman with strong opinions and a forceful character. All this disappeared in the community. Dorothea was forced to let her hair grow and have braids and clothes that she did not like. She had felt like a little girl because of the clothing, hairstyle and the lack of self-empowerment. She was not allowed to decide anything about her own life.

The particular way of dressing and hairstyle that Dorothea described was imposed gradually in Chile on all the females in the community. Both women and men were in time obligated to dress and wear their hair in a specific way according to age and gender. During my fieldwork I experienced several times how some of the people I got to know from the community would tell me how they were – unlike in former periods – were now allowed to have beards. Through a particular way of dressing, hairstyle, and lifestyle, a particular aesthetic was constructed. The aesthetic is present in all social life but will often appear more systematically ordered in some communities than in others, especially in small constructed ones (MacDougall 2006:96). In Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera the aesthetic to a certain

degree created a sense of "we" among the people, as presented in chapter four. At the same time, aesthetics also became another mechanism of social control. Like Dorothea, all the members were obligated to dress and arrange their hair in specific manners. This was a way of removing individual differences and in accordance with the totalitarian aim of removing the uniqueness of each human.

The community leaders also used other tools to obtain full control over their followers. Music was misused to cause damage and destruct personality (Bauer 2009). Music played a very important role during all the years in the community. Some inhabitants would tell me how music was part of their education and gave them pleasure and helped them in their daily lives. Playing and listening to music and learning about composers' music provided support for them in difficult moments, but also a connection to the world outside their community. Although the inhabitants that played instruments were not allowed to speak to the public, they could see the audience.

Most of the inhabitants grew up playing an instrument, receiving group classes in horn, violin, bassoon, trumpet, and other classical instruments according to age and gender. I was told that for ten years they had an orchestra conductor from Germany. This man came regularly and studied very difficult pieces with the orchestra. The orchestra and choir were utilised for social events; every time the community wanted to demonstrate a "happy German family life" they had to perform in a specific manner. The public consisted of specially invited neighbours and military officers or politicians. The intention was to give a good impression. The community members played German and Chilean music, and sang Chilean songs, including the national anthem.

Mina told me how she loved to practice and play her flute while living in the community, but the leader would misuse her love of playing. She told me how one day Paul Schäfer asked her about her favourite instrument. Mina then told him that she liked to play the flute, which she had been practicing for years. After this conversation she could not find her flute again. It was removed. For Mina the flute was more than an instrument she enjoyed playing. In the harsh environment she lived in, the music provided her with a place to feel, to be an individual and be happy. All this was changed when her flute was removed and she was forced to play a different instrument. Even today she could not understand why the flute was taken from her. Mina's story is not unique. Many of the people I met told me about how they were forced to play other instruments than those they enjoyed.

There were also rules about how to conduct oneself while playing music. Showing any emotion while playing was forbidden, including any displays of pride or ambition. This was

severely punished. Everybody was told not to show emotions, or to smile or to communicate with the audience. Even if the audience clapped and wanted an encore, the musicians were not to respond. The inhabitants were not supposed to play with each other in the sense of responding to each other or others when playing. The musicians were supposed to be one body, one group and not individual humans. Their mission was to play the instrument only. In the orchestra and in the choir they stood together and played or sang together, but they did not watch each other, they had to face the director. They were not expected to enjoy their music. What kind of music they should play was decided by Schäfer. From one day to the next he would change rhythms and melodies. Whoever did not follow his new arrangements was punished and blamed in front of everybody else.

The worst punishment was to be excluded and to sit down on a bench beside him, sometimes for weeks without participating. This made the members feel guilty and ashamed. This was a cruel way of being together without being together, without connection, without empathy among them. Music was also used to separate people: every day, after lunch and after dinner, they had to practice on their instruments, individually. This made it almost impossible to have time or space to relate to each other directly, without control and without being observed. In spite of promoting togetherness, the use of music produced more and more isolation. Through music the former leaders would keep people together, but in a controlled manner (Bauer 2009).

The development towards a totalitarian community in Chile was facilitated by the geographical location of Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera. Far away in a remote corner of Chile, without many communication tools such as telephones, a post office or local buses and with minimal if any knowledge of the Chilean language, culture or the local area, community members were isolated from the rest of the Chilean society. After giving up all their values and personal possessions to the community, the majority of the members had no money left. All their personal documents were handed over to the leadership that would decide if and when one needed them back. In addition to the natural physical and mental isolation of the members, the community gradually constructed physical barriers of concrete and barbed wire around the entire community grounds. The barriers consisted of an enormous fence made with 8000 cement pillars and was 2.80 metres tall with barbed wire on the top. I was told that previously the top of all the metal fences had been smeared with oil in order to make it more difficult to pass over them. Watchtowers would also be built and eventually an expensive and sophisticated security system was implemented. A light and movement sensor was installed on every fifth cement pillar, and on the main roads and at the gates there were surveillance

cameras. Furthermore, there were alarms, microphones, and cameras located in tree stumps, mounds and bushy plants (Heller 2006). There were also security squads with trained dogs from the community that would work as guards during the nights. The apparent reason for this was to keep outsiders from entering. The leaders would claim that this was a way to keep the communists out. Finally, secret bunkers and other hidden constructions were built to ward off "a possible invasion" of communists.

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DVD REF 6: VIDE0 (BY MD)
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There is no doubt that this security system was set up in order to keep people inside Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera. As a young inhabitant told me: *Who would be interested in sneaking inside and for what purpose?* Over the years, many of the people in the community tried to escape, but escape was difficult.[81] Without any money or contact with local Chileans, with little if any knowledge about the Chilean society or language, and hindered by a close collaboration between the community and local Chilean police and later the military regime, the few that tried to escape did not get very far. One of the inhabitants told me how he used to run to the woods in the premises of the community for days as a way of dealing with his yearning to leave. He always came back because he did not know where to go or how to leave.

Other people that I got to know have also told me that they wanted to commit suicide during their time in the community rather than continue living in the community. While some told me about how they tried to end their lives by eating grass that had been treated with pesticide. According to Heller (2006) many of the community members did not commit suicide because they did not know *how* since they had been living in isolation. This may be only part of the, truth but as farmers used to working the land and caring for animals I am inclined to believe that most of them would have known how to take a life. Instead, I would

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[81] A few people are known to have managed to escape during the years of the community in Chile (Escotorin and Alvarez 1998).

suggest that many of the people after years in Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera had no will of their own. Their personality had been annihilated and therefore few people tried to commit suicide. Those seen as rebellious and "difficult" were forced to take medication in order to become "calmer", and were exposed to torture and violence that weakened them mentally and physically.

Fences along the community and former security centre with a community member (By MD)

A hidden bunker below earth in the community ground, and a forensic group searching for human remains in the community (By *El Mercurio*)

Life in the community developed into something different from what most of the first followers had expected. Mina arrived in Chile as an adult in 1973 after working for the community in Germany. Like many others she had seen films of the life in Chile: *I liked what I saw but it was only on film while the reality was very different. Therefore it was a deception. It was like a film, just beautiful things we saw and very different from what it was actually like.* Mina told me that she felt tricked when coming to Chile. Like many others who came after her, she did not know what the community system that was practiced in Chile consisted of.

I thought there was freedom there. That I could do the things that I wanted to do or work at the hospital. I had already worked a lot in the hospital in Germany. The things inside the community I did not like. The people that lived there thought or believed that living there was like an Eden. I always thought and asked myself, what is happening here (Mina).

5.5 Narrations of violence

All aspects of social life in Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera were totally controlled and the members were punished if they did not follow the common rules in the community. The leaders tried to control even those aspects of human life that belong to the inner core of an individual, such as sexuality; electro shocks and medication were among the methods used to do so. Schäfer believed that through giving children and young men and women electro shocks in their genitals as well as other parts of the body all sexual desire would be eliminated. Medication was also given to many of the community members in order to keep them calm without own will.

Many of the people from the community I got to know have been exposed to different experiences that can be identified as human suffering, including the most extreme form of them all, torture. How does one define such a grim practice as torture? To start with, torture is perhaps the most clearly banned practice as "cruel and inhumane" in the world today (Levinson 2004:23). A simple but effective way of defining torture is: "Torture is a crime committed against a body" (Dorfman 2004:8). Furthermore, torture also includes "invisible injuries inflicted on the mind, self, or soul" (Young 1996:89).

"Though violence may or may not entail physical harm, we may conclude that a person's humanity is violated whenever his or her status as a subject is reduced *against his or her will* to mere objectivity…" (Jackson 2002:45).

Although a researcher can identify examples of violence, violence itself is difficult to grasp, both as a human experience and as a concept to define (Hastrup 2003). A growing number of anthropological work researching violence and suffering have put emphasis on how "terror hyper-individuates the victim because pain cannot be shared" (Daniel 1994:238). The experiences of violence are localised in the victim's body. Moreover, much research into violence has shown how culture plays almost no role, "suffering makes no cultural distinctions but obliterates them all" (Hastrup 2003:312). The sense of pain makes language unnecessary, "physical pain does not simply resist language but actively destroys it bringing about an immediate reversion to a state anterior to language, to the sounds and cries a human being makes before language is learned" (Scarry 1985:232). These above-mentioned issues make it hard for anthropologists to understand a person's lived experiences with violence: "I have been caught in a scene of writing in which the moral urgency has far outpaced the capacity to render the violence intelligible" (Das 2000:59).

When I realised the violent past of the community, I tried to find "meaning" and to understand how the first generation that came to Chile to construct their ideal community could allow their children to be beaten, given electric shocks, given forced medication, sexually abused, sterilised without knowing and denied food and water, to mention some of the experiences people I met during fieldwork have been subject to. While working on this thesis, I realised at one moment that some actions and experiences, in particular those connected to violence, are unintelligible. As Hastrup (2003:314) expressed, "to acknowledge what cannot be knowledged".

Ethnographers of violence (Hastrup 2003; Daniel 1994) have claimed that: "…the individual in terror cannot speak because he or she is objectified and can only be talked to and spoken about" (Hastrup 2003:314). The individual experience of being objectified is connected to the collective level where groups of people, the Others, that are defined "as less than human" (ibid.) are being isolated from the rest of the community. This shows how violence is part of structural violence "in other words those forms of violence that systematically negate and restrain the agency of individual selves" (Jackson 2002:43).

The suffering of most of the inhabitants of Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera is no different to the trauma suffered by people who have been beaten, imprisoned, tortured, sexually abused, mistreated in different ways or by other violent experiences. These are all lived experiences of pain.

According to Kleinman, Das and Lock (1997) human suffering comprises conditions that include health, welfare, legal, moral and religious issues. Often these conditions overlap with each other. For example, the traumatic and painful experiences of many of the inhabitants' childhood and life in the community may relate to health conditions but they will often also be cultural and political matters. In a community such as Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera where most people in one way or another have personally experienced violence or through others' experiences with atrocities, issues related to legal and moral aspects of social life are relevant. This shows how the forms of human suffering may be at the same time both collective and individual and the modes of experiencing pain and trauma can be both local and global at the same time. "Social suffering results from what political, economic, and institutional power do to people and, reciprocally, from how these forms of power themselves influence responses to social problems" (Kleinman, Das and Lock 1997:ix).

Painful and traumatic accounts are not mere "medical words for physical wounds" (Antze and Lambek 1996:65). People's accounts can also be understood as different ways of remembering traumatic experiences that are shaped by personal and cultural forces. "Narratives of trauma may be understood then as cultural constructions of personal and historical memory" (Kirmayer 1996:175). The painful experiences that many inhabitants told me are coloured by their own personal and cultural experiences. Like violence, pain is a concept we understand but is slippery to define. It is closely connected to the subjective realm of life, "Pain is at the same time the most private and least communicable" of all experiences (Arendt 1998:50-51). Through telling about painful experiences the singular, subjective and private is transformed into the shared, social and public realm.

Although the inhabitants I got to know had different experiences connected to their power position in the community, I felt they all coped with painful lived experiences. To do research and write about people with such experiences does not imply that I solely look at them as victims, being acted upon. As Arendt (1998:181-188) asserts, every person is at once an actor and acted upon, "…a subject who actively participates in the making or unmaking of his or her world, and a subject who suffers and is subjected to actions by others, as well as forces of circumstances that lie largely outside his or her control (Jackson 2002:12-13).

Several researchers argue that it is when human beings are hit hard by crisis or confronted with violent events that the narrative's ability to connect events in a lapse of time and to create continuity and coherence comes to the front. This is a way to understand and explain what happened and why (Bruner 1996:166).

The primary function of narration is thus to create order in chaos. It is about handling rupture and creating meaning in the meaningless (Jackson 2002). This process of reconstructing reality implies that we reinvent ourselves. We actively rework our experiences in an interplay between others and our imagination (Jackson 2002:15). This perspective does not imply that "we *are* the stories we tell" (McAdams 1993:5) or that storytelling necessarily helps us to understand the world (Jackson 2002). Rather, storytelling is a strategy, a means, to changing our experiences. It allows us to feel that we participate in a world that seemed out of reach. This is a transformation process that varies the balance between acted upon and actor (ibid.). "Storytelling is a coping strategy that involves making words stand for the world, and then, by manipulating them, changing one's *experience* of the world" (Jackson 2002:18). Narratives can be seen as a means to produce meaning and giving continuity to people (Jackson 2002). As such narration comes to be viewed as a basic human strategy for coming to terms with time, process, and change. "Storytelling transforms private experience to public meaning, and it sustains a sense of agency in the face of disempowerment" (Hastrup 2003:314).

Some of the inhabitants gave me their accounts of experiences of suffering by telling me their life stories. Unlike other inhabitants, they managed to present their lived experiences with a certain continuity and coherence. I consider their accounts a way of coping with a painful past and a strategy, to act – participate – and be in charge in their own lives "… as a vital human strategy for sustaining a sense of agency in the face of disempowering circumstances" (Jackson 2002:15). Furthermore, narratives change over time. New experiences and knowledge people have acquired might end in a changed understanding of former events. The relationship to the past is thus determined by context. Many people I got to know in Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera were not capable of telling me their life stories with much degree of continuity but would search for the right words and for a narrative. Nevertheless, many of them wanted to share their experiences with me.

Although many of the people that I talked to during my work with this thesis agree that their community had been dictatorial, they did not understand it as such under the former regime. Most of the children who were born or raised in Chile believed that the use of violence was the right thing. If they were punished they would think that they "deserved" to

be punished. Some did not see the use of cruelty as violence but as part of daily life in the community and as such something as ordinary as other habits of daily life.

Gradually, after Paul Schäfer left Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera many gained knowledge about other ways of living. This applied particularly to the younger generation. This would contribute to making many people in the community more aware of the abuses they had been exposed to during their lives in the community.

Albert and Maria

Albert had come to Chile as a five month-old baby with his parents and five other siblings in 1961. Like all children in the community he had been raised in the children's house without his parents. Although he knew who his parents were he never felt close to them. In 2001 he married Maria, the youngest of six siblings and who was born in Chile in 1974. Maria was also raised in the common children's house and in gender and age groups. She knew who her parents were during her childhood but had no experiences of living with her family. In fact, she did not know the concept of "family" as we understand it in the western world. She thought that everybody was raised in a children's house until quite a grown up age. When she became older she was placed with other girls of her age in a separate room to live and was guarded by an older woman. Only in 2001 when she met Albert did she acquire basic knowledge about the concept of "family". During the time of my fieldwork Albert and Maria had two children and would later have another little boy. They lived in the building where the few married adults lived during the time of Schäfer. After some people had returned to Germany and moved to other places in Chile Albert and Maria had more room for themselves. Now they shared three rooms that they had recently transformed to suit their needs. One room functioned as the living room and kitchen. The kitchen had no kitchen furniture and a little washbasin was used to do the washing-up. The two other rooms were one for the children and one for Albert and Maria. They shared a toilet and bathroom located in a common hall with another young couple with children. They hoped in the future to live in their own house with a private toilet and bathroom.

Albert was the brother of Michael, who was married to Mina. He told me that: *Mina always talked about you, and Michael too. I always saw you there by the security gate and one noticed an honest face, a transparent person, one sees that.* Albert had heard good things about me from his brother and sister-in-law. He worked on the land and therefore he went in

and out of the community. Albert had seen me many times sitting by the security gate, and, shaking his head, Albert said to me: *How they kept you sitting there.* Here is Albert referring to the time I was not allowed to enter inside the community. He wanted to help me and tell me about his upbringing in Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera because: *I do this for you because you have been studying for many years. Then you must know all of the truth, all*. For Albert it was important that all the aspects of the community were told and not only parts. Furthermore Albert told me that he wanted me to film his account.

For Albert, the camera represented a way of expressing himself. There is a parallel here about how Albert saw the potential of the camera and what Crawford (2006:305) experienced in his research on the Reef Islands. Crawford (ibid.) and his colleagues became aware of how the main person in their film project had become conscious of the potential of the media "in shaping their lives as both individuals and as local communities". Albert had also realised this when he approached me about filming him. He wanted not only to tell me about his experiences but also to tell the world about them through my person and the camera. For Albert it was important to let the world know about what had happened to him and others in the community. He was motivated by the desire to prevent the same things from happening elsewhere.

Albert told me that he did not talk with journalists about the community because they always wrote about the community in a sensationalist manner. To talk about his experiences with others in the community was not easy since he did not trust many people there. It was also hard to talk about his experiences with the few people he knew from the external world. They would know very little about the community, and what they knew came mostly from newspapers. At the same time he had a need to talk about his thoughts and experiences. This is I believe how I came to be a person that Albert could talk to about his past experiences. I combined knowledge about the community with being an outsider.

The day we were going to film, Albert and I agreed to meet outside Zippelhaus. He wanted our meeting to be as secret as possible. As I waited, Womas arrived. I had my small camera bag with me which was not very large but recognisable to Womas who used to film and had used to make many of the videos of the community. After some minutes Albert came and we all chit-chatted for a while. It was clear to me that Albert did not want to tell Womas about our planned filming. After a few minutes Albert and I left for the car even though he only lived four minutes' walk from Zippelhaus. Albert said that he had no problem with my filming, but he did not want the others in the community to see what was filmed.

In Albert`s words: *They are bothered about what I talk about. Do you understand? The upbringing we were given in my age group was very bad. The leaders of that time decided what life was like here and they are very bothered when one talks about the past. Do you understand?*. According to Albert many people in the community and in particular the former leaders thought that some things should be kept inside the walls of the community and not be talked about to outsiders. If other inhabitants got to know what he wanted to tell me he might end up having problems later. As he said to me: *I have to continue living here with my family and relate to the others*. Together with Albert we decided that he would see the filmed sequences before anyone else. He would also have the right to decide what I would use of the filmed material of him. Our agreement was not based on a written contract but on my word and his trust in me. Since this happen several years have passed and Albert is not so bothered anymore if all the people know what he thinks and thought, because so much was revealed eventually.

Another issue that makes a difference is Albert's involvement in a documentary film. The German filmmakers Martin Farkas and Matthias Zuber made a documentary named *German Souls* (2009) about Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera containing sequences with Albert. In the film Albert is very open. The documentary film was screened in the presence of the film directors in the community in 2009. According to the filmmakers almost all of the inhabitants participated in the screening, and:

> Afterwards silence dominated. A young man came up on stage and demonstrated his respect for Albert's sincerity in this movie. He also referred to the audience to be more frank with the younger generation and the things they had to suffer. He stopped and had to break up his speech because he was overwhelmed by his emotions (text from the webpage of the film: www.deutsche-seelen.de/content/motiva.html)

I started our planned filmed conversation with Albert by asking a single question: "how was your upbringing in the community?" After this Albert talked non-stop without any further questions from me:

Well, as a child I was raised in the children's house. There I was brought up in small groups. As little children we played until seven years old, but after that a horrible life started. There are some intimate things that one can't speak much about but there one started to suffer. Shall I tell you frankly? Well, we (he is here referring to his age group) *were taken from the*

house of children. We were accused by the old man (Schäfer) *of having sexual relations with the girls. We as children did not have a clue about any of that. What had happened was children's play and I also participated in that. We were three little boys and a girl. We wanted to know what a girl was like under her clothing and we pulled down her pants. Somebody saw it and told him* (Schäfer) *but nothing else, nothing else happened. Even my own daughter does this and even more, these are children's games. Today I know this. This became a big problem then and Paul Schäfer then said that we had to work hard. At seven or eight years old we carried heavy bundles of bale into the shed. We were little boys, in short pants and after carrying up bundles, we were very hot, dusty, and with little food or drink but very thirsty and hungry. For instance, they would bring us to the field, close to the churchyard in order to cut cardoon. The field was full of weeds and a lot of cardoon. I suffered the most from hunger and thirst. We slept in a children's home. Today they call it a shelter. As children during the night we were taken out of bed and given electric shocks. They used the electric devices that are used on cows. They took us out of the house and close to the shed where the buses and cars are kept. We were always brought to a bus there. We were in our pyjamas and it was night and they applied electricity and hit us there. I don't know why. I still don't know why. In the middle of the night we were taken out of bed and during the day we worked hard. Those are my experiences from childhood. Later a house was constructed close to the hospital, the famous Nuekra. Have you heard about Nuekra? Yes, there was a hall there and all the boys in my age group had a bed separated with a folding screen, an arch with curtains. There one had to sleep and there was a guard. We as youths, as a group, were put there and each one had to go to bed. Then the guard would come and put cotton in our ears. And a black towel on our heads and pull down our pants so we were totally naked. Then every night they applied electricity. Always to our testicles and also the head. No night passed without waking up from electric shocks. Those electric devices were also the equipment that one could notice when connected to the power grid because they gave a very powerful sound. Well, I believe this lasted one year, one year, a complete year, and every night. Sometimes they brought me out to the bathroom where the shower was and they put me under water and put electricity on me and I was totally naked. Two men that were around 30 years each, and with equipment they applied electricity to me. And I don't know why. Why? Because Paul Schäfer ordered it. Well, it ended. One year or more passed. At least one year and during the day we always had to go for trips. They were called trips, up to the mountains, for me it was very hard, very hard. I was a very weak child. During the summertime we went to the river and we did not get anything to drink and we were not allowed to drink from the*

river. I was very thirsty. We went to the river to swim. I just got under the water and drank, drank and drank as I remember. We suffered from hunger and thirst besides the other things. Then one day this stopped and our age group was sent to different places in the community. I for example was taken to a workshop with a craftsman that would teach me a skill. He was a good person. Others went to the chicken house, to the mill, the garage, all over. The children from our age group were spread out and not allowed to be together. This lasted for about a year or more. Afterwards we were returned one by one to the group, the Heilsarmee and there we were. We were called the bemehl and those who took care of us from the same group, a little older but not part of that group that was punished in this manner were called bamer. Paul Schäfer had full control over this. Then at least five years or more we (that belonged to the group bamer) were forbidden to talk a single word with each other and were not allowed to approach each other. We had to maintain a distance of at least once metre from each other. I don't know why this was so. Maybe to prevent us from talking about what had happened. The most cruel years must have been 71 or 72, or between 69 and 73, those were the cruellest years. There I was in the group. I completely lost one year of school. I had a teacher who never trained as a teacher. Until 7th grade we had teachers that were not teachers by profession. Then it was work only and no more classes. Or to play sports well and that was my youth until I was 18. Then after that what happened in between can't be told. It is too much. Some time passed again and Paul Schäfer accused me of something, of what I don't know. It was all a figment of his imagination. All the children were together there and youngsters, 50 or more, and he accused me of something. Everybody thought that I had done something bad sexually but I had not and in the end I was brought to the kitchen in the Freihaus. I was beaten so badly, so much and after that arrested at the central, at the top (of the Zippelhaus) *where I got something to eat. After that I was brought to the hospital and then I don't remember. I only remember that I had injections, got lots of medicine and I thought that I was such a bad character. That I was such a bad person, that I would never manage to come to God or to heaven. I was in the hospital and he* (Paul Schäfer) *came sometimes to see me and gave me a little book to read, the Gospel of John. I had to read it and I read it and I started to pray to God. I had my doubts and I thought God did not exist. I started to doubt God and I prayed and prayed very much. My head was not good. I could not think clearly. I remember that well and I said to God: give me a sign that you exist. I don't believe* (that God exist)*. That is how I started to pray. Then suddenly after weeks had passed in the hospital I* suddenly *felt bad and I got up. I was in a little room and close by my bed was the sink to wash my hands. I started to vomit into the sink and I vomited the sink full to the top. It was full of*

white liquid, all medicine. Later I told those who visited me about this, people very loyal to him (Paul Schäfer) *or that he had sent to visit me. I told them what had happened to me. They told him and I know today that he talked behind my back to the other youngsters that I had vomited frogs and snakes. This was a tactic of his because he always told a story about a girl named the exorcist. There is a book and a film about this girl. In other words he wanted to say that I was full of demons. The others, the youngsters had their perception of me and looked me up and down. I was in the hospital for months. I remember I spent time in the hospital on two further occasions. I never liked the hospital. They took me out little by little and I started to work in agriculture. Years passed like this. First I worked in the fields with my bare hands loading food for cows, picking potatoes with the others. And little by little, since my former work boss went to Germany I took care of farming. This was my personal life for 40 years… I don't know. My contact with my own sister Maria, for 35 years I did not speak a single word with her even though we lived close to each other. I did not even greet her, nothing. One was educated to go to work only. For me it was a sin to talk to them* (the girls)*, or greet them. The most pure life was for me to avoid everything involving women and such.*

While Albert was talking about his terrible experiences of abuses, his hands would take a good grip of the arm support of the chair he was sitting on. His face muscles tightened. For me it became impossible to listen to his painful and violent memories of life in the community and not feel anything as a passive spectator. My body reacted in its own manner and I wanted to cry. The video testimony of Albert made me "willing to share the testimony and become a co-witness or secondary witness of the memory that he or she helps to extend in space and time" (Assmann 2006:265).

DVD REF 7[82]: VIDE0 (BY MD)

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[82] At the time of writing, this video clip is only intended for the evaluation committee and not the general public. This is for ethical considerations.

Albert's words made me feel an enormous responsibility when it came to how to manage what he told me but at the same time also make sure to tell his story to the world outside the community. As Cuellar (2005:169) states, " …the original act of speaking (to an anthropologist), of telling my story to him", theoretically would become that "moment of recognition," an acknowledgement that would transcend the intimacy of the spoken testimony into the social realm". Through Albert's telling me of his painful experiences, his words became part of my research and in this manner potentially communicated to other humans.

As memories recall acts of violence against individuals or entire groups they carry additional burdens as confessions (Antze and Lambek 1996:vii). Albert's memories of the violence he suffered in the community are transformed into testimony. "In the telling, the trauma becomes a testimony" (Herman quoted in Leys 1996:123). Through telling and giving his traumatic account to me Albert speaks out the truth of his past. But through giving his visual testimony, the terror of his trauma is re-enacted in the actual situation of the interviews, thus confronting the viewer with his traumatic experiences as something that is not past, but still very present (Assman 2006:266).

In video testimonies such as the example of Albert, victim and witness are no longer separated but rather two aspects of the same person (Assmann 2006:267). Albert is both a victim of human right abuses and a witness of what happened in Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera. Like many other of the people I meet in the community, he focuses his testimony on the community. At the same time Albert's focus is mediated through a specific personality whose individual experience is, "as unforgettable to the attentive listener as the tone of the voice and the expression of the face" (Assmann 2006:267). The video testimonies are not only testimonies of the collective history of Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera, "they are also memorials of individual human suffering and surviving" (ibid.).

To express himself about his past not only has potential personal therapeutic importance for Albert but also a collective importance for society in general. Testimony comprises both a private dimension that includes a spiritual and confessional side, and a public dimension, which is judicial and political (Leys 1996:123). Albert's testimony to me, the researcher, has more than a potential therapeutic effect. His testimony could also be a contribution to some of the many public investigations of the community by the Chilean authorities. Apart from the personal aspect, testimonies of violence are therefore also important in other ways. "Remembering and telling the truth about terrible events are prerequisites both for the restoration of the social order and for the healing of individual victims" (Herman quoted in Leys 1996:123). Acts of remembering will often take on

performative meaning within a charged field of contested political and moral claims. Remembering the past is not only about describing a past but also about establishing one's relationship to it. Memories and the utterance of these will place the subject in reference to a past (Antze and Lambek 1996: introduction). This place can turn out to be a troublesome one. As Albert told me during this time, talking with outsiders about the past and in particular about the torture he and others had been exposed to was taboo in Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera.

Later when talking with Albert about how his experiences from his life in the community had influenced him he told me:

I have an inferiority complex. Firstly, when I am with strangers I don't know much because I did not study anything. Everybody talks openly and I don't know what to say, one always feels awkward among others. And how all the world says Paul Schäfer abused the children and everything that one sees in the colony one also feels embarrassment in front of the external world. It is a mix. I don't know. In me there is a mix of embarrassment and anger for the old system. Anger towards those who want to continue that system and all. And, well, I don't know, it is difficult to pronounce it, but as I said on the one hand I feel embarrassment for being from Colonia Dignidad and on the other hand I have a big inferiority complex. I don't know anything. I studied nothing. In gatherings with others when one is invited to meetings, one doesn't know what to talk about and one doesn't know Spanish and all that is shameful.

Albert's experiences from the past extend to his perception of his own person as adult in relation to others, social ties, and masculine identity. His painful experiences have transformed his relationship with others. This is similar to the conclusions reached by George (1996) who in a study of narratives of sexual abuse among women in Western Newfoundland argues for how the personal narratives of the women are never forgotten. These experiences are mediated within shifting arenas and social relations of gender and family (George 1996:46). Albert has not forgotten his own experiences from his upbringing in the community. These experiences have shaped his attitude to social life with others outside the community.

Holger

Another community inhabitant I got to know well during fieldwork was Holger. He had come to Chile as a little boy with his siblings and parents. In Chile he had been brought up in the

children's house like Albert and the other children. Holger had no family of his own and one of his biggest dreams was to marry someone and have children. He lived in the part of Zippelhaus where the young unmarried men used to live under the previous regime. Now he had his room to himself but previously five other young men shared the same room. Holger was not close to his parents who had recently moved to live near the community restaurant in Bulnes, El Casino Familiar, located 150 km away from the community, nor was he close to his other siblings. All of them lived in Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera at that time except one of his brothers who had moved to Argentina.[83] Unlike Albert, Holger earned much less money and was not able to travel. Besides his regular work in the community, Holger tried to obtain income by other means. He hunted rabbits that he sold to local Chileans, gathered berries, and took any work he was offered. I would often see Holger on his bike. With his bike he went to nearby places outside the community, often several kilometers away. His Spanish was not as fluent as Albert's but in spite of this, talking to him was not a problem.

Holger was lonely and would often seek my company. Since he did not have much else to do except work he would use his time to find me in the community area. I experienced several times that other people, in particular those working at the security gate, lied to Holger about where I was. This was done on purpose so Holger would not find me. One example of this was when we had agreed to meet in one particular place in the community. After waiting for some time I just continued to walk around. When later by coincidence I met Holger he asked me why I had cancelled our agreement. He had been told by some of the ladies at the security gate that I had gone out some time ago with my car. As he often did, he said that it was no problem. Holger seemed used to this way of being treated by others in the community.

While Albert managed to put words to his painful experiences and integrate them into a narrative, Holger did not always manage to do so. Holger had also been given sedatives for more than 30 years. After years of taking drugs he was still addicted and continued to take some of them. I belive this influenced his memory; he often had problems when telling me about things and trying to put them into a storyline. Although Holger told me about violence and abuse that he had been exposed to, unlike Albert, who wanted to give me his testimony, Holger was not primarily concerned about giving testimony. I think for him talking to me was rather about seeking human contact.

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[83] He was wanted by the Chilean authorities.

Simon

One day I got to know Simon through Holger. Like Holger he lived in Zippelhaus, but on the top floor. This used to be the room used by security staff and where "difficult" community inhabitants were put under "arrest". Simon's room had a panorama view of most of the community grounds. There used to be television cameras and speakers all around the room. It was still possible to see traces of the wires, monitors and so on. Simon had a satellite dish and could see television channels from all over the world. Like Albert and Holger, Simon was forthcoming and open, and welcomed me. He could not walk easily by himself and since he lived on the top floor he spent a lot of time alone. Simon could talk for hours about his life and upbringing. While Albert had a family of his own and a car, and Holger could now move around in and out of the community grounds on his bike, Simon was not in that situation. Without close family and due to his health problems he was rather lonely in his room separated from the rest of the community.

Simon was in his late 40s, round and short with dark hair. He had some problems with his hips and legs and walked with difficulty. He lived on the third floor without an elevator. This made him spend a lot of the day in his room and he was probably therefore happy to have company. He was interested in television and technical equipment. Being filmed by me and talking about technical matters was therefore quite exciting for him. For much of each day he would sit and watch television or listen to music. He made copies of television programs or music and burned them on DVDs or CDs. These he exchanged or sold to others in the community. This was how he earned money at this time. Simon spoke fluent German and often when we talked together he would switch between Spanish and German. Sometimes it was challenging to talk to Simon because he would never stop talking, and would mix subject and language in the same sentence. Sometimes this made it difficult for me to follow what he was saying and to understand.

Simon had been in the community for 36 years after his Chilean mother had left him there when he was 12 years old. The community had consequently adopted him. His biological mother had left him in the care of the Germans, thinking that it would be better for Simon to be brought up there. She had later wanted to bring him home but it was too late. He told me that his family had not been permitted to see him for a long time. First as an adult man after 2000 he visited his Chilean mother and family in Santiago. The following is Simon`s account:

I came here in 1969 at the end of the year when the summer was reaching its end and the year 70 began. Then I came. My mother brought me as a 12-year old because I could not walk. I walked like a dog on my hands and feet, everywhere, in the streets. We lived in Santiago in an apartment in a shanty town and every Saturday we went out to see television. My mother brought me here and I had surgery many times here. I had surgery four, five, six times. I don't remember. I missed my family very much in the beginning, yes, very much. At the beginning, the first years, I wrote letters to my mother and they (those in power in Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera) *corrected the letters, changed things and that is how it started. All this because he* (Schäfer) *wanted to separate me from my family. He knew that I wanted to leave. I wanted to leave. My family wanted to come and see me but were always given excuses. He (about himself) went to the sea or here and there. My family was told that I was never here in the community when they came to see me. I never knew about it. He* (Paul Schäfer) *wanted to separate me from my family because he knew that I wanted to leave. I wanted to leave. Well this happened. I don't hate anybody. Those that did me wrong I have forgiven them all, why hate. It doesn't help because when one comes to the grave one must be clear with the Lord.*

Like Albert, Simon was also tortured as a child and "treated" in the community hospital with electrical shocks, and forced to take medication for years. In Simon`s words:

Früher we always got those medicaments to make us schläfrig, sleepy and half-stoned, you weren't really awake. You were living alone, tired, working and I know others that were working hard on saws, heavy machines, and dangerous machines. And those were under that dose (of drugs) and had to work there. I know some here that had cut their arm off but only a piece and things like that and one with the machine, a little bit of finger gone. That was bad.

The effect of taking medicaments such as Valium that many in the community were given for decades is very dangerous. Many have become addicted, have memory problems and have internal problems with their bodies. According to Heller (2006) in the communal kitchen there was a drawer with boxes of Valium that had the name of each member of the community who was seen as "rebellious". Those who did not take their "medicine" were sent to the hospital for further treatment and the "medicine" was injected.

Simon was still very religious and it seemed as if he still considered Paul Schäfer as a divine person in spite of the abuse. Simon would often start to talk about God and have long monologues about his relation to God. For Simon, the community represented security,

something familiar. The following is an example of a conversation with Simon that reflects the security aspect:

Paul Schäfer helped me find God. He preached many times the word of God so we got emotional. Why he did it was another thing but what I got back from him to my heart… well, I knew God from before but here it was reinforced. Like this was life here. God will guide all of us. I know all of us love God in particular the adults. I know all here and how they live.

I like it here. I like this life and will never never leave it. I always think that if I abandon this I will leave God for always and that is very bad. In the Bible it says but God opened my mind with all the orders and those things that are written in the Bible, to divide between the good and the bad. To walk right.

I thought Paul Schäfer was a semi-God - a prophet of God and therefore I never opposed Paul Schäfer. Never never, that was firm in my mind and I could see him do things with the children sometimes but I always thought that he had to do it because he is the father of, educates, all the children.

Simon talked about his lived experiences from the community in a different manner to Albert and Holger. Albert would be aware of the injustice he had been subjected to and wanted to tell the world about it. He would give his account of violence in a way others could follow. Holger was not concerned about giving *his* testimony. He talked about the present and his daily life. Simon's way of talking about Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera on the other hand was a mixture of words in different languages. He would praise God and the community in one breath. This did not imply that the past experiences were not as painful for Simon as for Albert and Holger. The years of living in a totalitarian system had left different marks on Albert, Holger and Simon that was experienced and expressed differently.

CHAPTER SIX

THE AESTHETICS OF A DUBIOUS DEFENCE

This chapter deals with Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera after 1990 when General Pinochet gave up the presidency and the military regime ended. The advent of democracy in Chile led to investigations and allegations against the community by the Chilean government, causing the community's members and Chilean supporters name the period after 1990 *the time of persecution*. The community and its members went from being somehow part of mainstream politics under Pinochet's government to feeling persecuted in the new democratic Chile. This contributed that a support movement was created named The Vigil of Pain which was directed and organised by the community with the help of Chileans from the neighbour localities. In addition to the support movement the community started to produce several propaganda films about their community, all with a specific message about the community being innocent in all accusations.

In connection with constructing their community there was a need to construct an image of the community. This was done through documenting aspects of daily life in the community by the use of film, photos and a specific aesthetics. As presented in previous chapters, a community was constructed in Chile that in time developed and became a totalitarian one. The totalitarian aspects of the community make it nessesary and important to explore how Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera constructed their history. What kind of image was constructed and why? It was a particular image, of a beautiful and apparently perfect community consisting of happy people, and with a strong emphasis on order and the cultivation of beauty. This was expressed among other ways through young bodies that performed perfect music and danced in a "perfect" community. The image thus constructed and history that was told aimed to cover and to legalise what kind of community Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera had become, and what "the helping hands" in the community had done and contributed to. The history the community told in this manner would change in line with the political landscape in Chile.

The use of photos, film and aesthetics reflects how the community constructed their community through the use of documentation. It is not unusual that societies document how they live, who they are, and so on. Furthermore, often societies embellish the way they live, and their own history. In this sense Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera is no different than other communites. But in the case of this particular community, there is a big gap between the told history and the lived experiences of people who formed part of the community. As argued in

Chapter five the community that was constructed in Chile dehumanised people, with a culture characterised by terror and violence. The leadership of the community needed to be in charge of and control what was said about the community and the people living there. There was no rom for the expression of individual experiences or meanings. A single history that applied for all was constructed.

The community documented their utopian ideals through - among others things - emphasising commonality, and being a community that constituted an Eden. There was no room for expressing the painful experiences of violence or terror that many people in the community had experienced. The community tried to make their community appear a normal community. Glimpses of daily life were presented in photos and film aiming at describing a normal community.

This involved rewriting their history as a community. A community that has developed in the manner that Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera did, and that at the moment I started my fieldwork continued to have many skeletons in the closet had a need to tell their history in a particular way. The photos, film and aestehics are evidence of the utopian ideals of the first generation that came to Chile, of their thinking of what the community should be like. This material does not show what the community became in real life, or how it was experienced by most of the people living in the community.

The community reconstructed their history, and made propaganda. All the pressure from the world outside contributed that Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera engaged with propaganda activities through creating the support movement and making films. According to Arendt (1973) the more pressure totalitarian organisations receive from the external world the more they will engage with propaganda as a way to deal with the non-totalitarian world. The creation of a support movement and the making of propaganda films helped the community leaders to organise the response against all the charges during this time. Main means of totalitarian domination is "organization" (ibid.). To organise individuals who had been atomised and isolated is the goal of totalitarianism achieved through the accumulation of power (ibid.). In totalitarian organisations' are natural bonds of solidarity and communication broke. These bonds are replaced by distrust and informing those in power. People will follow their leader blindly and act as part of a mass. It is possible to perceive through the support movement and in the films how the community members performed as a single mass led by their leader.

A predominant aspect of totalitarianism is a manipulation of reality. In the community the leader portrayed the world outside the community into an evil, dangerous and unfriendly

place while the community was considered as an ideal community, an Eden. The terrifying element specific to totalitarianism is the terror caused by the radical transformation of a habitable world into a fictitious world; a world turned upside down where the monstrous and the absurd are the rule; a world characterised not just by arbitrariness, but by absolute coherence within this arbitrariness (Arendt 1973). There was a manipulation of consciousness among people in the community by focusing on beauty and perfection. Through making people forget the chaos and dissension that exist in the surrounding world by emphasising beauty are peoples consciousness manipulated in totalitarianism (Hagtvet 2011). A cultivation of beauty is the organising political principle that is the vehicle behind this manipulation (ibid.).

The aesthetics expressed in the films made by the community and through the support movement`s attracted local Chileans that participated in the activities part of the support movement. Furthermore it gathered people in the community and contributed to strengthen a "we" feeling among the inhabitants. In such totalitarian communities as Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera, or where fascism is present, "fascism power had to express itself visually" (Mosse 1996: 245). Through exploring fascism's self-representation it might be possible to understand its appeal.

> The aesthetics of the human body and of color and form were used in order to nationalise the masses, to shape and control the mass meetings which were an essential part of fascist politics. The aesthetic of the human body, and the youth who marched and saluted were supposed to be ideal types who represented the movement and the nation. The mise-en-scène of these meetings, the setting constructed or chosen for their venue, represented a spectacle suffused with grandeur and beauty, and through their dynamic and virile movements the assembled and disciplined masses once more symbolised order and progress and served to reconcile both (Mosse 1996:251).

The understanding of how the community used film, photos and aesthetics as a way of constructing their community, and of reconstructing their history in order to control and cover what was happening in the community became apperent for me with time and not while doing fieldwork.

6.1 Towards Democracy in Chile

After losing the national plebiscite in 1988[84] General Pinochet left power in 1990 and the Christian Democrat Patricio Aylwin became the first president of Chile after the return to democratic rule. The beginning of the 90s was a time for investigating and facing as a nation the contested past of Chile when it came to violations of human rights. Societies emerging from periods of political violence characterised by violation of human rights face the difficult task of confronting their pasts (Doretti and Burrell 2007). With the establishment of democracy came also the immediate need to investigate the human rights violations of the recent past (ibid.). The Chilean government started gradually after 1990 to investigate the many cases of human right abuses resulting in the deaths and disappearances committed in Chile or abroad during the years of military rule under General Augusto Pinochet.[85] As part of this work, a national truth and reconciliation commission, The National Commission for Truth and Reconciliation, was established. The commission finalised their report named the Rettig Report in 1991 and concluded among other things that Colonia Dignidad had close relations to the secret Chilean police during the military regime. Further it stated that:

> The Commission must therefore conclude that a certain number of people arrested by the secret Chilean police were effectively taken to Colonia Dignidad, held there for a while, and some tortured, with not only the secret Chilean police agents' participation but also with that of people who lived there. The Commission likewise received specific denunciations regarding disappeared (other than those who were only temporarily held at Colonia Dignidad), whose trace had been definitively lost in Colonia Dignidad. Apart from the fact that the Commission effectively considers these people disappeared, and the existence of indications that they may have been taken to Colonia Dignidad after their arrest, only one individual - Alvaro Vallejos Villagran, can strictly be said to have disappeared forever after being transferred to Colonia Dignidad (Informe de la Comisión Nacional de Verdad y Reconciliación, Tomo II, Volumen 1,1991:739).[86]

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[84] The 1988 plebiscite was a national referendum held to determine whether or not General Augusto Pinochet would extend his rule for another eight-year term in office. The plebiscite consisted of two choices: yes and no.
[85] The military regime started September 11, 1973 and ended on March 11, 1990.
[86] My translation.

One of the first decisions by president Aylwin was to withdraw the charity status of the German community in 1991 by a judicial decree. The reason for this was based on the results of an investigation started by President Aylwin to explore if Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera had fulfilled their by-laws of helping the poor local Chileans as presented in 1961 when they got the charity status by constructing the hospital and school and offering free medical aid and education for the local Chilean children. The investigation looked also closer at the lack of freedom of the community members. As a former senator in the 60s, President Aylwin had questioned the German community already at that time. He had formed part of the investigation group[87] then designated by the members of the Chilean Parliament.[88]

The community members called the decree that ended the charity status of Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera as *the decree of death.* The loss of charity status was received with anger, pain and incredulity among the community members and their local Chilean neighbours. Moreover, together with the loss of charity status the Chilean government demanded regulation of education, working hours, retirement pensions and so on for the inhabitants of the community. As part of this the Chilean government demanded that all staff at the community hospital had to renew their education in Chile. In some cases this also meant to study again in Chile in order to fulfil the Chilean requirements for working as a nurse. All the German nurses had until then studied in Germany and had been working in the hospital since the 60s without any previous regulation of their education. The majority of them were at a mature age. The idea to go back to school and study something that they had been working with for years and in Spanish did not attract them. This demand was perceived among the community members as part of a "political persecution" against them from the Chilean government. As a consequence, the school and hospital were closed for some periods. The school was after some time opened again and continued its work while the hospital was later reopened only on daily basis. After the charity status was taken away the community created and financed the organisation Perquilauken in order to be in charge of the hospital. The organisation should continue the charity work of the community, as Dr. Hopp expressed it: *All expenses are paid by this organisation also medicine, staff and the exams. Some people*

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[87] The committee from the 60s was composed of thirteen deputy members from different political parties (Escotorin and Alvarez 1998: 113).

[88] This investigation was initiated after the escape of the first community inhabitant Wolfgang Muller. In spite of Muller's account of a communal life in violence and lack of freedom the majority of the deputy members in contradiction to Aylwin conclude that it was no need to investigate more into the German settlement.

have a system of provision that has a value of 5000 pesos.[89] *For that they get medical care and medicine as long as they need it.*

The lost charity status of the community and in particular the change of the hospital created strong feelings among the inhabitants of the community and the Chileans living in the localities around. Dr. Hopp told me:

I felt terrible when the hospital was closed (he is referring to the night closure) *for two reasons, one because it was an administrative act by the government that was contrary to the law since the hospital was functioning after an expressive authority decree by the government and that decree was reversed without any preview argumentation. Can you imagine that after 20 years of having the hospital functioning, and everything working in a legal manner, that an arbitrary act dissolved that function? It is an act of injustice that not only affects us but also in particular people of poor means who have no place else to go. People who have not received attention other places have died so it has a double consequence, one is personal and the other is the people who need that care.*

Furthermore, the change of status had also economic implications for Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera. The community stopped receiving subsidies from the Chilean state.[90] More importantly, the community was accused of tax fraud since their activities were interpreted as not having fulfilled the obligations as a charity organisation given in 1961. In the end the community was sentenced by the Chilean Supreme Court to pay a large amount of money back to the Chilean state. It has been claimed that in order to avoid paying the requested amount of money, the community transferred their means out of the community and in the name of a few inhabitants. Thus the community claimed that they had no means to pay with (Schwember 2009).

When the many accusations against Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera were presented in the 90s, the great majority of the community members did not believe them.

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[89] Approximated 59,5 nkr.
[90] As a charity organisation the community did not have to pay taxes to the Chilean state, Colonia Dignidad/ Villa Baviera got economic subsidies for each Chilean patient that received medical help in the hospital and for each Chilean child attending the community-driven school for locals.

The experience of losing the charity status and the many investigations and allegations by the Chilean government and human rights organisations made the members feel they were persecuted. Many of the people I got to know expressed that one of the reasons behind the persecution was believed to be the political closeness to the former military regime but also that the outer world did not understand their communal way of living. As a reaction to this the members felt the need to defend themselves and express their point of view, in particular through organised gatherings part of the support movement The Vigil of Pain (La Vigilia del Dolor). The great majority believed that they were persecuted by the Chilean democratic government and participated in the many activities of The Vigil of Pain from their hearts. As explored in previous chapter Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera developed to become a totalitarian community. A community organised internally on the basis of apocalyptic ideas that yielded a high degree of solidarity. During the time of persecution the degree of solidarity among the members became even stronger. This was crucial in the organisation of the defense movement.

6.2 The Vigil of pain

The loss of charity status and the many allegations against Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera started a 10-year period (1991 – 2001)[91] of The Vigil of Pain (La Vigilia del Dolor), as the movement was called, in support of the community. This support movement was financed and directed by the leadership of the community and consisted of community members and Chileans from the area close by. The Vigil of Pain aimed primarily at getting back the lost charity status and the reopening of the community hospital.[92] On another level the movement also wanted to "clean" the community name against all allegations. The community was challenged after the 90s, something that led to an emphasis on propaganda by the community leadership. "The greater the pressure on totalitarian regimes from the outside world – a pressure that even behind iron curtains cannot be ignored entirely – the more actively will the totalitarian dictators engage in propaganda" (Arendt 1973:343-344). The very aim of totalitarian propaganda is not to persuade through propaganda but rather to organise power (Arendt 1973). The support movement became a "living" propaganda tool for the community, and as such a tool for organising power in order to defend and create support for the

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[91] I have been told different years (1997, 1999 and 2001) of when the movement ended. The year 2001 has been the one most people have referred to. This year is also presented in the printed material provided by the community.

[92] To reopen the hospital when it was closed. Later to permit the hospital to work during night.

community. In the beginning the support movement was characterised by ad hoc gatherings of local Chileans that came to the main entrance of the community to express their sympathy with the community.

Later organised gatherings would be planned and carried out. Buses from the community drove around and collected local Chileans in order for them to participate in gatherings. Walterio told me how he and others would spread flyers with information about events so people would come to support the community. Food for the local Chileans demonstrators was prepared and distributed, and tents to sleep in were put up. It is estimated that hundreds of Chileans from the area participated together with members of the German settlement.

The Chileans from the localities around the community became crucial in the support movement. There are several reasons for the local Chileans' active participation. As presented in chapter three and four for three decades the community had offered their local Chilean workers free medical attention in the community hospital and free schooling for their children.[93] In the course of my fieldwork I heard countless accounts from local Chileans who would tell me about the many years they had been patients at the hospital. Some of the people I met had tears in their eyes when they talked about the help they had got from *the Germans*. In addition to medical care in the hospital the help took the form of neighbourly assistance. Grown-up men and farmers told me how *the Germans* had given them seed in time of need and they had only to give seed back when they could; they also received water in times of drought.

A sentiment that was repeated among many of the people I talked to was that the community hospital was much better than a public Chilean hospital. As one young Chilean man who had been born in the hospital in 1973 and had been a patient since then said: *It is not possible to compare this hospital and what is here with other places. There is nothing like this, for me there is no comparison because it is different, the way they treat you, everything, and one can't compare.* His statement very much expresses the opinion of most of the local Chileans who had been or were then treated in the community hospital. When the hospital opened in the 60s, there was no other hospital close by and the local population had to go to the nearby city of Parral or San Carlos, often on foot or horse to get medical help.

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[93] According to numbers of Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera and their supporters, 25.829 patients were registered as users of the community hospital until July 1997. The numbers might have been coloured by the community's wish of emphasising their charity work. What is certain is that very likely a high number of the closest Chilean neighbours were for decades treated in the hospital.

During my fieldwork several local Chileans told me of some of their terrible experiences with the local public Chilean health system. Some women told me how they were refused pain relief in childbirth because they could not pay for it. While at the community hospital they would get free medical care, medicine, and hot meals and above all, they would be treated with respect, something they had not experienced in their meetings with local public Chilean health care.

It is true that the Chileans living in the localities around the community got free treatment in the hospital for more than 30 years. Included in the treatment they would get free food, medicine and, according to the former patients, they were treated with solicitude and kindness. However, neither the community's spokesmen, or Dr. Hopp, mentioned the fact that the community received financial help from the Chilean state to run the hospital.

The Chilean state re-imbursed the community for the costs incurred in connection with each patient who received medical attention in the hospital. The hospital had been constructed without a loan, and most of the equipment and furniture were given as donations from Germany, and none of the workers in the hospital received salaries (Heller 2006). In this manner the community ended up earning money since Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera did not incur any expenses running the hospital and was refunded a specific sum for each patient that they treated. This shows that the community was less charitable than they claimed to be.

If perceived as a relationship of gratitude, the strong commitment of the local population in the support movement is not surprising. As presented in chapter three, the relationship between the local Chileans, working for Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera, follows the traditional model of landowners and peasants where local Chileans are thankful workers, often for generations. As Mauss (1990) has shown, a gift creates social relations between the recipient and the donor. By giving, the donor will show generosity and thus deserve respect, while the recipient will feel the obligation to return the gift. In a country where good medical attention is expensive, free medical care as provided by the community is something special that is appreciated by the local Chileans.

A particular place, named The Arch of Pain (El Arco del Dolor), was created by the community for the support movement's main gatherings, located close by the main entrance of the community. Like most other places associated with the community it was locked and fenced in. On that site a metal arch was built. Above the arch was a stage of concrete with several seats along a hill, and on the top were some flag poles. On the hill stood a stone with an inscription saying: The Vigil of pain. For Dignity. The supreme judge we wait for (Viglia del Dolor. Por Dignidad. Al supremo juez lo esperamos).

Close by the stone, the community had an eternal gas flame that was lit day and night. I was told that the flame symbolised liberty. The stone was carved in 1992 and got the name The Stone of Pain (La Roca del Dolor).

The meetings organised at The Arch of Pain consisted of different acts including pure protests mixed with cultural gatherings all aimed at demonstrating support for the community. Meetings such as *Lechetones*[94], which were solidarity actions destined to collect milk and food for those who needed it were organised. Social gatherings for fun were organised to collect money for the support movement. These gatherings consisted in the selling of traditional Chilean *empanadas*[95] and bingo games were held and live music was played. According to Nilda, such gatherings were very nice because it seemed that *the Germans* could relax and enjoy life.

Most of the activities at The Arch of Pain included cultural performances of different types where German community members and local Chileans participated. Local Chileans would perform Chilean folk music and dance; and they would change the lyrics in honour of Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera. Thus the message of the support movement was also expressed and disseminated through music. This was complemented by community members performing German folk music and dance. The German community's choir and orchestra would play and perform traditional Bavarian music and dance. Sometimes the lyrics would be changed a bit to express the sentiments of the inhabitants of the community, as for example when one of the singers sang about those who had stopped to support the community as *traitors*.

DVD REF 8: VIDEO (BY CD/VB)

DVD REF 9: AUDIO (BY CD/VB)

DVD REF 10: AUDIO (BY CD/VB)

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[94] *Lecheton* is a word derived from the Spanish word *leche* (milk).
[95] An empanada is a stuffed pastry baked or fried and a traditional Chilean dish.

Although The Vigil of Pain was primarily a support movement, it also became a socio-cultural meeting place for the members of the German community and the local Chileans. The time of persecution and The Vigil of Pain thus created a space where local Chileans and inhabitants from Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera would meet and get to know each other after more than 30 years of the community's social seclusion from the outer world, including from most of their closest neighbours. Although a kind of relationship was established between some of the local Chileans and some of the community members, this was primarily in the context of The Vigil of Pain. Most community members were still not permitted to move free outside the community. Many of the people I met from the community pointed out during our conversations that many of the Chilean friends that they have today are from the time of The Vigil of Pain. The social dimension of the support movement reflects how new spaces created new modes of interaction between the local Chileans and the Germans from the community.

Most of the gatherings at The Vigil of Pain were filmed by specific community members in charge and later edited into films. According to Albert and others from the community, the leadership organised many of the gatherings, partly in order to obtain the best possible documentation through filming and photographing. The Chilean media was often invited to attend the gatherings and were permitted to film them from specific places in order to present the crowd of people supporting the community. There were also organised hunger strikes among many of the community members and the Chilean media was invited to film and write about this. Given the total domination of the members described in chapter five, the majority of the community members fully backed the support movement.

The community members functioned as an entity and were used by the leadership of that time in order to protest against the charges, investigations and loss of charity status. The success of totalitarian propaganda relies on the fanaticism of members of totalitarian movements who have no self-interest and who are prepared to sacrifice themselves (Arendt 1973). Totalitarian organisations are made to transmit the propaganda message from a fictional world created by the leaders and constructed around a lie. In the case of Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera this was about the persecution of the community by the outer world. This was confirmed by many of the people I meet from the community. For example, Davida told me that she had been working in one of the community offices, and the office that received my fax in 2001 asking for permission to come to the commmunity to do fieldwork. She had then not understood what I wanted and had seen my interest in the community as part of what she then felt as *persecution*. Albert told me how he at this time felt that *the whole world was out to get them* (the community).

The community members and Chilean supporters would protest in front of the city hall and authorities against the loss of charity status.[96] There were several violent encounters with the police on the community grounds where supporters and members of Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera were arrested. In addition, the Chilean police raided the community grounds in their search for the leader Paul Schäefer that had escaped the community. Some of the Chileans from the area told me how inhabitants of the German community would have ready hay balls to put on fire along their territory as a way of communicating to everybody that the police were coming. The local Chileans supporting the community would help the Germans in this. The church bells would also be rung and heard in the whole area. Walterio had been told by some of community members that the use of burning hay balls in order to alert was a technique from Germany during the Second World War. During many of the encounters with the Chilean police specific community members would in secret take photos and film with a video camera and used it as "evidence" of the use of power by the police troops and others and disseminate this through their production of films, printed media and web pages.

There were also violent encounters when people belonging to Chilean human rights organisations as well as family members of and former political prisoner demonstrated outside the community's main entrance. Community supporters and inhabitants would attack these demonstrators or make the demonstrations difficult by blocking the road, pouring water on the demonstrators and so on. Thus The Arch of Pain and the close-by area of the community entrance became a site of power struggle and contestation. The community members and the supporters experienced this place with their own particular significance during this time, as a place for charity work and dignity. However, people belonging to the human rights organisations and others perceived it differently. For them the community represented a place of torture of and violence against left-wing Chileans. Place and space are social constructs, ways for humans to consider the physical world in which they exist, and as social constructs, both reflect and shape the culture in which they arise (Feld and Basso 1996). Nor are place and space unitary constructions; they will be constructed differently by different people and social groups, and these various constructions reflect differences in interest and power as well as culture.

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[96] According to Walterio and others, some of the most important actions were carried out by the patients: the protest in front of the district council in Talca; a group of Chilean mothers with their babies took the district council; the Cathedral of Talca was also taken in order that the bishop would listen to them; a hunger strike for 18 days; protests in front of the buildings of the regional ministerial secretary of Health care and education; in front of the Health Care office of del Maule and protests in front of the presidential palace La Moneda.

This layering of construction creates what may be thought of as place as palimpsest, a layered text with different readings at different levels. Nor do these readings simply coincide; they may be and often are contested. As Rodman (1992) has claimed, there is a need to study places that takes greater account of multiplicities of voice and action.

The Stone of Pain (By CD/VB)   The Arch of Pain (By MD)
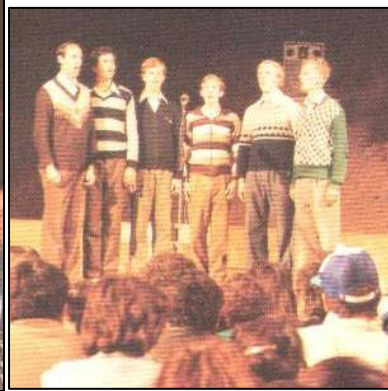
Gatherings at The Arch of Pain with Chileans and community members (By CD/VB)

During one of the support gatherings and at a protest against Chilean authorities

Symbols of the support movement and youth movement (all by CD/VB)

6.3 Youth movement

As part of The Vigil of Pain, a youth movement, The Permanent Youth Watch (Juventud Vigilia Permanente)[97] was created in 1991. This movement was directed and organised by the Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera leadership. German youths and Chilean youngsters from the area close by participated with their parents. I have been told by some of the local neighbour Chileans that when the support movement first began Chileans would spend longer periods of time in The Arch of Pain, often sleeping there as well. People started to bring their children and the need to take care of the children was born. Thus The Permanent Youth Watch was initiated. Although the movement may have initially started as a way of taking care of the local Chilean children while their parents were participating in The Vigil of Pain, the German leaders early on realised the potential of using the youth movement as part of their propaganda apparatus. Permanent Youth Watch became a powerful tool for defending Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera against the felt persecution. This was achieved through acts organised by the community's leadership, acts in which the youth movement participated.

The movement provided free assistance consisting of food; clothing and entertainment to more than 4000[98] Chilean youths that passed through the community during the years The Permanent Youth Watch existed. The children participating in the youth movement were organised in groups according to gender, age and locality. On every weekend, vacation, and festive day a bus from the community would fetch and bring home Chilean youths from the locality to the community participating in the movement. This became a very popular activity among the local youths. *It was impressive to see when the girls started to cry because they did not want to go back home after being here* (in Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera) *for a weekend*, one of the local Chileans girl told me. According to her this also came about because there was not very much to do for the local Chilean youths in the area. The children and youth were thus provided with free weekend and holiday activities that did not cost the families anything. In time the community organised a boarding school on the community grounds with some of the children who participated in the youth movement.

On a deeper level the youth movement was also a way of transmitting some of the principal values of the community to the local Chilean youth. Jan from the community who had been one of the youth leaders of The Permanent Youth Watch, replied the following when I asked him about the aims of the movement:

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[97] Abbreviated to J.V.P.
[98] These are numbers supplied by Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera; it is difficult to know if they are correct.

It was about educating youth with values, so they would not be contaminated by all the vicious anti-values such as smoking, drinking, freedom of access, and the life of the discothèques. Jan's description of The Permanent Youth Watch's objectives was confirmed by several others from the community and local Chileans who participated in the movement.

One day I saw one of the family photos in the house of Nilda and Walterio. It was a photo of Daniela, her sister Belen and their cousin. From the photo I could see that it was taken some years previously. They wore skirts, had white headbands, their hair was plaited in a particular manner and they wore white t-shirts with the emblem of The Blue Lady. In the 90s this emblem was put on all kinds of objects [99] as part of the community's support movement. Daniela told me that the photo was taken when they were part of the youth movement. The Chilean children participating would be lent clothes and all other necessary personal belongings. The reason for this was purportedly to avoid lice and other health-related problems. This was also done in order to avoid having the children transport their belongings to and from. Since the girls and boys borrowed all their clothes from the community except their underwear they were, in practice, uniformed.

While being in the community as part of The Permanent Youth Watch all the girls wore the same style of clothes consisting of a skirt, with trousers beneath if it was cold, and sandals that were made by the members of the community and that many of the Chilean children in Permanent Youth Watch would learn to make. They would often wear socks in the sandals, their hair would be plaited and frequently they wore a white headband. Most of the girls learned to plait their hair according to the German style. Daniela told me how she learned to make the particular German braid during her time in the youth movement when they all went to the swimming pool. She used to comb the hair of the little girls and plait it. According to Daniela, the hairstyle reflected the girls' age. The young girls used this hairstyle when they were little and as a young women but then after their 30s their hair would be put up in a bun. There were rules for the appearance of the community males as well. Young and old men had to have short hair, combed to the same side and no beard. The look of the Chilean youth participating in The Permanent Youth Watch was very similar to the look of the German youths in Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera at this time. The local Chileans were thus assimilated into the community's aesthetics.

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[99] I have seen the emblem on t-shirts, badges, books, banners and signboards, etc.

As explored in previous chapters, social life in Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera was organised in groups according to gender and age where there would be minimal to no interaction between the genders. The Permanent Youth Watch was organised in groups according to gender and age, similar to how the German youth in the community were raised. In this manner the social structure of The Permanent Youth Watch followed the social structures established in the community. Everything was systematic and strong discipline prevailed. The local Chilean girls as well as the boys learned to socialise in this world when being in the community part of The Permanent Youth Watch.

The groups were further divided according to the place individuals came from. For example, Daniela would belong to the group of young people from the place where she lived, Campanillas. Every group was directed by a youth from the community; the girls would have a young woman from Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera while the boys would have a young man. In addition an adult Chilean woman, "auntie," or man, "uncle," would be responsible of taking care of each group. Every group would make their own small banner with an embroidered symbol of The Permanent Youth Watch and the name of the place they represented as a group. Daniela told me how each group learned the importance of taking care of their banner so that the other groups would not to steal it. They would play a game where some of the other groups would try to steal the banner. Sometimes this happened. Then the group that had stolen the banner would challenge the other group to recover it. In this context the banner symbolised the group and through this game each participant learned about group loyalty.

Dani and other local Chilean youth during different gatherings with The youth movement
(all from the Vera family)

The Permanent Youth Watch had their own hymn that they would sing, their own songs in honour of their banner, and songs for trips and so on. The youth movement created two songbooks with many of these songs and with several handmade drawings by the German youth. During the young people's festivities (Las fiestas juveniles) the youth would gather and march in uniform with their banners and sing. Daniela and others told me that during such gatherings that everybody held a torch in their hand symbolising the vigil in the darkness. For them, the torch represented painful moments lived in this place because Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera lost their charity status and was persecuted by the Chilean governemnt. Sometimes there were official acts at The Arch of Pain or inside the community itself and then the youth of The Permanent Youth Watch would wear their green uniforms. They would march with their small flag, hold a torch and sing their hymn and some of the youths would hold an appeal. Many of the gatherings took place in the evenings in the light of fire.

Apart from the above-mentioned gatherings, the youngsters' part of the movement engaged in many activities such as going hiking in the mountains, camping, sports and competitions and other excursions. They would also work for the community picking fruit, preparing fruit for juice-making and so on. Workshops were arranged in order to teach handicrafts. For example *the day of the toy* was created in order to make toys from scratch that were then given to local Chilean children. Most of the toys were made in the workshops while others were purchased. In this manner the youth would also learn handicrafts. Music workshops were created in order to learn to make and play instruments. Like the German youth, the Chilean youth were also taught to play different instruments in their youth group according to their age and gender.

According to Daniela, the idea behind The Permanent Youth Watch was to make them (the local Chilean youngsters) more independent and better human beings: *With more values and to be more honest without lying to anybody. The idea was also to work together, to promote the team spirit, all these values they* (the community) *tried to inculcate into us, teach us, a life without viciousness*. When I asked Daniela how they learned this she told me: *through the way of being of the Germans and their friendship with each other, they were healthy, without swearing and such*.

When I asked Daniela about the most important thing she had learned from the youth movement she said:

In a practical way to knit and that is what I have used most so far. When it comes to the question of values it is to reinforce myself and to be persuasive. That is a value that has helped me a lot. Right now it has helped me much when studying. To be strong when I left for the dormitory because when I went to the youth movement then it prepared me to be away from my family and so it was not so difficult to adjust to the dormitory and such.

Daniela told me that she missed her time in the youth movement very much: *Now that I remember I want it to exist again because sometimes one forgets and puts behind the memories but now I remember. I want to go there again.* Daniela's experiences from her time in the youth movement were good. She had learned some values that she brought with her later in life and that helped her.

All the gatherings connected to The Permanent Youth Watch ceased abruptly in 2001 after Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera decided to end the support movement The Vigil of Pain. Many people from the community told me how much work and resources were used to sustain the support movement. In the end when the movement no longer existed, many of the community inhabitants were relieved because it signified less work for them and that the community expended fewer resources. Furthermore, after 10 years of protests the community leadership may have realised that the Chilean government would not change their decision regarding the loss of charity status or stop the many investigations. After the end of the support movement and The Permanent Youth Watch, Daniela and other local children stopped coming to the community as often. Daniela told me that the first time she went to the community without the traditional plait and clothing she felt that her acquaintances there did not like it. They looked strangely at her and she felt uncomfortable. With time this changed and they got used to her new appearance.

DVD REF 11: VIDEO (BY CD/VB)

6.4 Fascinating fascist aesthetics

Many of the organised gatherings of The Permanent Youth Watch that took place in The Arch of Pain were ritualistic. The stage, metal arch, the use of flame, the carved rock in the background, the banners, marching people, lined up in uniforms and chanting were all elements that contributed to conveying a feeling of ritual. Much of the filmed footage from The Permanent Youth Watch shows large groups of local Chilean and German youth in uniforms, marching, with banners and torches in their hands. What seemed to be the more formal gatherings would often occur during the dark nights, by the light of a big fire. The youths sang and came with proclamations in support of Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera.

The performance part of The Permanent Youth Watch gives associations to what Sontag (1976) describes as a fascist aesthetic. This kind of aesthetic focuses on "situations of control, submissive behaviour, and extravagant effort" (Sontag 1976:40). In much of the filmed footage we see the youth marching and moving in a controlled manner, exhibiting submissive behaviour towards the group and the banner. Every group would have a banner that they had made themselves in addition to the general banner for the youth movement as such. Much emphasis is put on the group's own banner and its relationship to the group. The youth praise their banner and flags, and proclaim that they will defend them from being taken by other groups. The individual is not in focus when the youth are marching; there is a total domination over individuality and an emphasis on the masses of youth producing the same performance. The community is promoted, but this does not imply that there is no search for absolute leadership.

As Sontag (1974:40) further characterises fascist aesthetics, it concerns: "… the turning of people into things, the multiplication of things and grouping of people/things around an all-powerful, hypnotic leader figure or force". The groups of youth were gathered around the banners that became a powerful symbol of an invisible leader or power to follow and who asked for the youths' total submission. Another aspect of fascist aesthetic is the taste for the monumental and for mass obedience. The making of the place The Arch of Pain with the rock with the engraved words and the mass gathering of youth there in respect of the banner and the place also give associations to a fascist aesthetics. Another aspect is the display and idolisation of physical perfection. In the formal performances all the youth's part of The Permanent Youth Watch wore uniform, and the girls' hair was neatly plaited and kept in place with headbands. There was no room for alternative ways of dressing, hairstyles or what or how to perform, as these things were decided by the leader. The aesthetic ideal that

was created in Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera was very specific and did not permit any individuality or room for ambiguity. "Fascist aesthetic depended upon clear and unambiguous statements; This meant that the ideal human type must be clearly distinguished and set off against what the Nazis called the 'countertype', the exact opposite of the normative ideal" (Mosse 1996:249).

The clothing that the local Chileans wore when part of The Permanent Youth Watch carried symbolic value. An essential aspect of fascistic movements is the use of symbols.

> It was the strength of fascism in general that it realized, as other political movements and parties did not, that with the nineteenth century Europe had entered a visual age, the age of political symbols, such as the national flag or the national anthem, which, as instruments of mass politics, in the end proved more effective than any didactic speeches - in fascism, for example, the speech of the leader itself took the form of symbolic action (Mosse 1996: 247).

Uniform dress and particular performances at particular places created a sense of collective identity and reinforced the feeling of a group identity. In this manner the collective identity of the youth movement was empowered. A common uniform and performance with coordinated and choreographed formations where also a banner and flag played a great role gave an impression of internal unity and, as perceived from the outside, of power. By emphasising the youth movement's visual appearance in this manner, Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera's ideology could wield influence not only through spoken and written words but also visually as a way to access people's emotions and thus re-enforce the message of the youth movement. The role the visual dimension of the support culture played in the movement's appeal to and mobilisation of the locals may be thought of as powerful. The role of visual culture in totalitarian communities such as Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera, and the movement's appeal is strong. This is one of the main findings of Lorentzen (1995), who explores the role of the visual dimension during the German National Socialist time.

The aim of The Permanent Youth Watch was to integrate the youth in a community which emphasised that the individual only has value as part of a group. The members were taught to strengthen their loyalty to the community and the leader. In some aspects The Permanent Youth Watch was similar to the Scout association where gymnastics, outdoor activities, and emphasis on strength of character and leadership qualities were important. The uniforms represented an aesthetic that emphasised healthy outdoor values, loyalty and

prudence. One of the main characteristics that differentiate The Permanent Youth Watch from the Scout association is the German community's search for and idolisation of an ideal physical perfection and a cultivation of beauty.

According to Sontag (1976:40) fascist art, "displays a utopian aesthetics — that of physical perfection" and finds expression in a celebration of the primitive and the worship of the powerful. The fascist dramaturgy centers on the orgiastic transactions between mighty forces and their puppets, uniformly garbed and shown in ever swelling numbers. The way Permanent Youth Watch was filmed emphasised the greatness of the youth movement and indirectly of the community. The search for perfection and beauty and the exaltation of community are still ideals that are felt today according to Sontag (1976:43) and expressed in cultural resistance and propaganda for new forms of community. Therefore Sontag (1976:43) is not surprised by how young people who are former anti-authoritarians submit to the most grotesquely autocratic disciplines. People can be seduced by the fascinating aesthetics.

During many of the gatherings of the youth movement part of The Vigil of Pain German youth would carry out performances. The aesthetics of these performances strongly reflected their German heritage through the music, clothing and cultural expressions. These reflected not only a German heritage but a special cultural heritage constructed by the community. This heritage consisted of what many regard as the archetypical German identity closely related to cultural expressions from Bavaria when it comes to clothing and music.

It also reflects an aesthetic that might be associated with the interwar period consisting of the typical German plait for the young girls and the usual short hairstyle for men with a line parting the hair from one side to the other, and the daily manner of women's and men's clothing. The role stereotypes played in all of fascism are of prime importance; they "informed fascism's view of the ideal type, of the 'new fascist man" that embraced the whole human being, body and soul. (Mosse 1996:248). In Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera a stereotype of a "Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera man" was created where aesthetics played a decisive role in stereotyping.

DVD REF 12: VIDEO (BY CD/VB)

For some of the younger community members this emphasis on the archetypical German identity through the Bavarian clothing was rather strange. Jan and others would tell me that as children and youths they hated to be dressed in Lederhosen, the knee-length trousers or short pants. They felt they were being dressed up. This may be linked to them being young and resisting traditional customs. In spite of the resistance among some of the youngsters towards being dressed in traditional German clothing and performing traditional German cultural activities such as dancing, playing and singing, others liked it. In putting emphasis on cultural heritage, the traditional German one, through the performances, the community also contributed to reinforcing the German identity among the people living in the community as well as their group identity. This is also a way of continuing and passing on to newer generations' knowledge about German culture through the different performances.

Community members during some cultural presentations (by CD/VB)

Presenting and recording their own cultural performances are something Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera shares with many other immigrant groups and minorities around the world. Many immigrant groups cultivate the idea of their homeland. This may be a strategy for handling their immigrant status, or it may be out of love for one's roots. This is also a way to create a sense of home, "their" Germany in another county, Chile. Often the native identity is reinforced while abroad, and people tend to be even "more" connected to their values from their homeland than most people in their homeland (Appadurai 1996). The cultivation of a pure archetypical German identity of the community may be related to being an immigrant group in a foreign country.

The emphasis of the community on what might be named an archetypical German identity might also be related to the experiences after the Second World War. As discussed in chapter four, many of the people I got to know during fieldwork expressed that the German identity after the war was in crisis. It was difficult if not impossible to express that you were proud of being a German. This was something that many of them missed during the years after the war. Chile, a land far away from the horrible experiences of the Second World War and a country with good experiences with Germans due to former waves of immigration, proved the right place and the right time to cultivate a particular German identity.

In addition to the emphasis on a typical German identity much effort was put into physical exercises and creating "perfect" living human body. The German community youths, in particular the men, performed difficult physical exercises to a high level of perfection. Physical exercise played a large role in the aesthetics of fascism (Mosse 1996). Fascism worked with living human symbols, "Men of flesh and blood were given a symbolic dimension" (Mosse 1996:248). "The true fascist man must through his looks, body, and comportment, projects the ideal of male beauty" (ibid.). The body expressed both discipline through its conduct, and virility in its flesh and blood. A beautiful male body was an important symbol in all European fascist movements (Mosse 1996). In the community the physical exercises performed by beautiful young boys expressed both order and virility; this was an important element that gathered the community inhabitants and seduced the audience.

6.5 Filming daily life

Since its inception in Germany in the late 50s, Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera has been documenting much of its activities and aspects of daily life through photos and film.[100] This practice was continued when coming to Chile. The community leader Paul Schäfer decided what to film and to what purpose. I understand photographs and other visual products "in the social context of their production and consumption" (Ruby 1981:20). This approach implies understanding photographs and film as objects of culture and the social processes surrounding them as an "ethnographic" situation revealing of culture (Ruby 1981:23; Worth 1976). I am primarily interested in exploring the setting surrounding the production and utilisation of the visual products of the community than analyzing the photos and films. However this does not imply that I will not look more closely at their form and content but "rather to a study of them in their socio-cultural contexts" (Ruby 1981:24).

I was invited to see some of the photos and part of the film material after having spent several years in the field and developing a long-lasting relationship with some of Colonia Dignidad/Villa Bavieras inhabitants. Jan told me that he and others wanted to transfer the film material that was on 16 and 35 mm film to a digital format. The process of transferring the film rolls to digital copies was too costly for the community. Based on this I offered to test if it was possible to make a digital copy by filming the screening with a digital camera and was allowed to make digital copies of the films to use in my research.

Jan arranged for the screening. An elderly man had set up the projector to screen the film rolls. The first rolls dealt with the beginning of the community in Germany (as presented in chapter four). We could see the construction of the former community house in Heide where women and men worked together. Other rolls showed little glimpses of some of the daily activities the first followers were engaged in such as playing instruments and singing, as well as shots of the first days of community in Chile. Jan told me then and there a little about what we saw and named the people we saw. He would often address the old man who would nod in recognition at places, events and names.

Barthes (1980) developed the concept of "stadium" that expresses the obvious symbolic meaning of a photograph. Studium implies a common interest, without any personal involvement, but which will ultimately always be coded by the viewer. This is in contradiction to the concept of "punctum" developed by Barthes (1980) that represents that which is purely personal and dependent on the individual and which create a link between the

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[100] With 16 mm and 35 mm camera and later with digital camera.

photograph and the viewer. The relationship between studium and punctum reflects the complexity of photograph interpretation. In the course of the screening I got the impression that the old man was moved by the images we were watching; to borrow Barthes' (1980) concept, his interest in the images was closer to punctum than studium. Unlike for me, the images evoked personal experiences in him. Although the viewing did not trigger any personal emotional responses in me, I did share his interest in the community, and as such my viewing was closer to studium.

Although dealing here with film images I have chosen to make reference to photo theory. Film images represent a more complex medium for storytelling than photograph. With film images there are more possibilities to manipulate the image and what one wants to transmit to an audience through sound, different ways of conveying information in the film as text and through the editing process itself. In spite of the many differences I argue that both of these visual expressions share many of the same characteristics and challenges because of their double nature when it comes to how they are interpreted by an audience.

Over the years the community invested a lot of time and money in filming. This involved using different types of cameras, different editing units, lighting equipment, tripods, microphones and projectors, to mention some of the resources used. The use of new technology also involved that people had to learn how to use it. A small designated group of the community inhabitants were permitted to develop skills in filming and editing and worked with this over several decades. The process behind the production of films is about more than the resources expended but related to a complex cultural practice consisting of many stages. This includes in the case of the community somebody, probably from the leadership, deciding what the images would look like, what to film, and how to film it. Then somebody taking the still images or recording the film images. This process was inevitably coloured by the person carrying it out and others who were part of the production process. The images, both still and film show a reality that was shaped in every way by the choice of focus, motive and angle. The use of film is in other words a complex cultural practice (Gullestad 2007).

The cultural practice will represent and be part of a way of thinking within a specific social setting. Regarding the image as either exclusively manipulated or a correct representation is therefore not fruitful (Gullestad 2007:13). Rather, one should see images as representations created as part of particular ideas, purposes, and visual expressions within particular social contexts. The beginning of Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera started as a search for commonality and of a community among the first followers.

The filmed material from the start in Germany and later in Chile reflects this search. This utopian vision of a "happy, big German family", working hard, and living close to nature and in harmony with each other may be seen in the filmed material. I am aware that images can be interpreted in several manners. As Gullestad (2007) claims; images generate interpretations rather than determine interpretations. Like other cultural objects, the images may be interpreted and contextualised in several different ways. In spite of this aspect of images it is difficult to have interpretations far removed from a pioneer and settlers' context when watching the images from the beginning of the community.

It is possible to categorise the visual filmed material from the beginning in Germany and later in Chile in the following groups: a) Work process: The majority of the filmed material shows people working on construction of the youth house in Heide, farming, preparing food, cleaning and so on. When coming to Chile the community filmed the beginning on new soil. This implied clearing the land, constructing houses, roads, building a power generator, sowing and harvesting and so on. In Chile the first followers and their families did the work of settlers or colonists since they had to start from scratch and build everything. This visual material makes references to the activities and practices closely associated with settlers, colonists or pioneers. The other category is: b) Cultural performances: Much of the material shows gatherings of the first followers and family members singing, playing instruments, dancing, and performing acrobatic exercises, in particular the youths. Most of the performances were group performances. The performances were mainly for visitors. In Chile the performances would be presented as German through the use of special German traditional clothing and German music and folk dance. The visual expressions of the cultural performances give the impression of an emphasis on commonality since all the performances are in groups. The images to a certain degree reflect order and discipline among the performers. The third and last category is: c) Images of animals and landscape. A few of the images from this period show panorama shots and close-ups of the natural environment surrounding the early followers first in Germany and later in Chile, and of animals. These images may reflect the interest of the founders in developing a close and harmonious relationship to nature.

What characterises much of the filmed material is an emphasis on the collective through work and performances. There are very few, if any images of individuals. The emphasis is on collective tasks and the collective group. This is also linked to the fact that this first period was very much about activities of constructing and working as part of creating the community in every sense.

The experiences of the followers from the first period in Germany and later in Chile have in common a joint task that was connected to the collective aim of constructing a community. All the activities of constructing houses, roads, as well as the spiritual aspect of making the community implied experiences of collectivism. This is in many ways reflected in the filmed material from the first time of the community.

The majority of the filmed material from the 50s and 60s was in colour and without sound and recorded on 35 mm and 16 mm film. Much of the material from the first period was unedited but remained as it had been filmed. This does not mean that the filmed material could provide a "true" version of reality. Rather, this material is an attempt to achieve what Grierson describes as a "creative interpretation of actuality" (in Crawford 2006:301). This implies that the filmed material consists of a combination of a reality and how the filmmakers perceived this reality. Vaughan (1992) makes a distinction between "film as record" and "film as language". The former emphasises the recording capacities of film while the latter implies all the expressive qualities of the image, the film language, the chosen angle, camera movements, editing rhythm and so on. This filmed material of the community reflects this dual aspect of the image between "film as recording" and "film as language". Although most of the filmed material was not edited the filmmakers had in one or another way an idea about what they wanted to film and how this should be done.

The fact that the community leader bought a movie camera when the community commenced in Germany may be a coincidence. A movie camera was considered among many people during that time as a new, fun technological tool, much as modern families do today when they buy video cameras to film their children, trips or other aspects of daily life. One might assume that the leaders were open to new technology and wanted to experiment with it. The 60s was a time for experimentation and also a time when the movie camera became smaller, cheaper and easier to use for non-professionals. Their wish of the community leaders of recording "the beginning" visually might be related to what Mitchell (1994) calls "a pictorial turn". According to Mitchell (1994) the modern mass media have led to an increased presence of visuality in our contemporary culture.

Images, pictures and the realm of the visual have become important aspects of the daily life of people in contemporary culture. Another way of understanding the use of the movie camera might be connected to human nature as creative and unique, searching for new ways of expressing itself. Humans were expressing their unique vision in finding beauty in ordinary things (Sontag 1977). This creative aspect of humans was allowed to develop in the beginning of Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera.

The first followers were searching for an ideal community through treating reality creatively. In this light the use of the movie camera might be seen as a tool in the creative process of human beings. Furthermore, the idea of recording the present for the future may have been important for the leadership of the community in the beginning. You take a photo to capture a present moment, and instantly it becomes a record of the past. People tend to take photos of happy moments, moments that they want to feel and experience in the future. People in the community might have recorded specific moments, happy ones, as a record of the past for the future. For the first pioneers the beginning in Germany and Chile was characterised by hard work but also by happy moments. Maybe there were moments that they wanted to capture for future generations. This is particularly relevant when knowing about their project of constructing their own community in Chile.

Films are also social media and we use them to bring us closer to others, by sharing our experiences and re-living shared experiences. The way the community used the filmed material during some periods is similar to how other social groups have done, for example missionaries. Gullestad (2007) writes about Norwegian missionaries in Cameroon and how they documented their work and meetings with others through, among other things, photography. The missionaries showed the pictures to the congregation back home, friends, to obtain moral and economical support and so on. Furthermore, the pictures also subsequently became part of missionary history and ways of thinking about other people. There is a parallel to how the missionaries used the image and how Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera has approached and used the photos and films.

The community screened the filmed material for future members and followers who were back in Germany during the community's early years in Chile.[101] They wanted to show the films to the members back in Germany so they could follow the work and development of the community in Chile. By portraying the community's life in Chile as a sort of Eden, this was also a way of motivating people to come to Chile. Mina explained it to me as such:

In these films all the things were fine. I saw a choir that was mixed of men and women who sang, both young and old sang. They played football or went for a trip. The things were always done together, eating together; yes… therefore I liked it. They always did activities together, with happiness, with enthusiasm. They worked and in the evening were all gathered to sing or to try to"play", or how to say it… or go on a trip to another city.

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[101] Most of the members left Germany and came to Chile in the beginning of the 60s.

People tend to capture beautiful moments or of something considered beautiful (Sontag 1977). Photography tends to make the subject look aesthetically pleasing (ibid.), and video images I will argue might also have this effect. Photographs that have been altered or given a false caption lies about reality (ibid.). Much of the video images and photos of Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera showed only the happy moments in the community. Through establishing the way things in the community should look the image either as photo or video contributed to change the idea of reality of and in the community. As Sontag claim is photography and filmed images not only recording of scene but interpretations of how somebody saw it (Sontag 1977).

For Mina, as for many others, and in particular in the 60s before the digital age, photos and films were in many ways perceived by most people as a kind of a mirror of reality. Photographs, and film I will argue, are good for carrying an implicit visual rhetoric that shapes the observers ideologically through confirming pre-existing concepts. This can happen because photos are often seen as not carrying any communicative message with arguments or intentions but rather as a direct mirror of reality. To use Sontag's (1977:15) words: "Photographs furnish evidence. Something we hear about, but doubt, seems proven when we are shown a photograph of it." This notion about the photograph that I claim is also valid for film as mirroring reality may have been in the minds of Mina and others when looking at the filmed material from the beginning of the community in Chile. The images would in many ways seduce people. The visual documentation was also presented to friends, representatives of institutions, and powerful people, both in Germany and Chile, in order to obtain moral and economical support for their work. Before coming to Chile the leaders showed the former Chilean ambassador in Germany images from their community life in Germany.

Furthermore, some of the filmed material was used by the community as a pedagogical tool. The German community wanted to teach and educate the closest local Chilean population. During my fieldwork local Chilean neighbours of the community told me that *the Germans* showed film sequences of community work from Germany in the 60s as well as from later on in Chile. This filmed material was without sound and did not tell a story in the traditional storytelling sense; a community member would provide a running, live commentary in Spanish. By screening images of working Germans, the intention was that local Chileans would learn to work better. Womas told me that the community leaders then realised that it was too time-consuming and expensive to teach the local farmers to work better through watching the filmed material.

6.6 Film as propaganda

The use of film by those in power in the community as a medium to communicate specific messages in order to achieve something specific was not only aimed at the local Chilean population. The leadership of the community carefully selected films and screened these for the community's residents so that they would be exposed to the "right" sort of knowledge that would supplement the ideology constructed in the community. Some of the films the community members saw were about the danger of communism exemplified through films about life in DDR. Other films were about the "evil" world outside Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera with emphasis on the problems of youth due to drugs, sexual liberation and so on. The leaders of the community came to understand the power of film as a tool for communicating in order to influence people. This was particularly relevant for how the community used their films after the 90s as propaganda. These types of films rely strongly on information transmitted via the spoken word. The images in this kind of film serve as a supporting role to what is said. The commentary voice will help the audience make sense of the images and represents the argument of the film. An example of this is the commentator's voice in community-produced films telling that the Chilean police attacked the community hospital and -supporters. The footage in the film shows the police taking away a few people and gatherings outside a hospital. The combination of the footage with the commentary voice makes sense to the viewer. The spoken word explains the images that are presented and how to interpret them.

Synchronous sound with the corresponding images was less commonly employed in these films, and usually only when showing specific situations, for example scenes from one of the hunger strikes (during the time of persecution) that was initiated by Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera. The audience was then presented with some of the community people who went on a hunger strike and hear some of their comments. Another example was images of Chileans protesting against the Chilean state which had decided to close down hospital. These sequences were filmed in a documentary observational way that gave the impression of presenting reality – "what we saw was what there was" (Nichols 2001:110). An observational mode implies that we see people engage with each other and ignore the filmmaker. It is "life as it is lived". Nichols (2001) claims that the characters are often caught up in pressing requirements. Much of the footage that is presented in the films was recorded while the filmmaker was not present and shows people who are focused on solving their own problems. Often the camera appeared to be hand-held and move around.

This contributed to the impression that the presence of the camera on the scene works as a testimony thus further legitimating the message. Some of the filming had been done in secret from the police. Difficult filming conditions, like hidden filming, may also have contributed to a rougher filming style. The observational film style used in depicting conflicts between the community, their supporters and representatives of the Chilean state such as the police, human rights organisations and so on stands in strong contrast to the way the community performances were filmed and presented. The film sequences showing performances by community members gave the impression of being filmed in a more formal and planned manner, as a carefully directed spectacle.

In many of the films that might be seen as example of propaganda made by Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera is it used recordings from the Chilean television done by the community. It was often recordings of politicians or others talking about the community. A commentary voice would often make reference to these images and speeches in an official tone that sought to build a sense of credibility among the audience. Another mean that is used in the films is text. The text is often used in the beginning of the films and presented after the title of the film. This text often includes statements about the community and who they are. That is how the text presented the main argument of the film.

The use of close-ups in the films seems to be conscious on the part of the filmmakers in order to create a bigger impact on the audience and as a way to highlight the message in the films. For example, the close-ups of sick children and elders, close-ups of destroyed objects and places after the police raid are examples of how the films wanted to show that Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera was being suppressed by the Chilean state. Some sequences are manipulated with freeze frames and the use of slow motion. These are other ways that the message may be elucidated in the films. Another tool is the way sound is used. The use of supplementary music and sound effects in the films made by the community help build a tone and mood, either as suspense, for example by the use of drum, or of sadness through the use of a melody that conveys this to the audience. In many of the films some of the older material from the 60s and 70s of the community would be used in order to make the message more credible in the eyes of an audience by presenting the beginning of the community in Germany or Chile and in particular the charity aspect. The use of old footage as historical footage gives credibility to the message and was probably seen as enhancing its legitimacy.

DVD REF 13: VIDEO (BY CD/VB)

What characterises the editing of these films might be named *evidentiary* (Nichols 2001). This means that the editing is done in order to maintain the continuity of the spoken word and arguments. This style of editing may forfeit temporal and spatial continuity in favour of images that can help advance the argument. According to Nichols (2001:109), this is an ideal mode for conveying information and mobilising support within a framework that pre-dates the film. This fits well with the way the community has been making and using their films as a way of mobilising support and understanding for their community among Chileans.

The visual language of the films made by the community, and how the films have been used, is very similar to propaganda films. According to Womas, who was central in the making of most of the films as a photographer and editor:

When I see films from then it is painful to see how mistaken I was. Although some are only documentaries. Yes one may call it propaganda although not on a big scale. But I would say today that it is propaganda. Before I thought it was to show the mere reality as it happened. Today one sees everything with different eyes. In the same way, the history of Germany (referring to 2WW) *is written 50 years after the war and the story of 1973 in Chile is maybe written objectively in 20-30 years, much the same happens with us* (Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera)

As Womas confirms, it is possible to see the films made in the 90s as examples of propaganda. I am defining propaganda as the dissemination of information to influence public opinion and to persuade others of the validity of one's own "truth". The word propaganda usually has negative connotations but I will be using the original meaning of the term.

According to Gullestad (2007), the word derives from the name of the *Congregation de Propaganda Fide,* a congregation of Roman Catholic cardinals founded in 1622 to carry out missionary work "propagating" their religious beliefs. My use of the word will be more related to the sincere belief in own truth and the need to persuade others of it, than to the authoritarian and fraudulent connotation that is connected to the term.

The Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera films were made with a specific objective, with a message that was clear about the positive and charitable aspect of the community and to demonstrate the persecution that the community inhabitants felt on behalf of the Chilean democratic government. Propaganda film may be a documentary-style production or a fictional one. This type of film is produced in order to influence the opinions or behaviour of

people or to convince the viewer of a certain political point that might also involve providing misleading information.

One of the "most successfully, most purely propagandistic film ever made" (Sontag 1976:34) is *Triumph of the Will* (1935) by the German filmmaker Leni Riefenstahl. The film was commissioned by Hitler and records the 1934 Nazi Party Congress in Nuremberg. Excerpts of speeches given by several Nazi leaders at the Congress including Hitler and footage of massed Nazi party members is seen in the film. Riefenstahl has denied that any of her work was propaganda and claimed that: "Everything is genuine. And there is no tendentious commentary for the simple reason that there is no commentary at all. It is "history – pure history" (Riefenstahl in Sontag 1976:36).

According to Sontag (1976), the Nuremberg Rally was planned and not only as a fantastic mass meeting for Nazi party members but also as a fascinating propaganda film or as Sontag (1976:36) expresses it: "reality" has been constructed to serve the image". One could claim that the community also planned some of their mass protests as well as encouraged gatherings of the support movement including the youth movement in order to document this with a camera. The community was engaged in both the processes of representing and of participating. This is also much the situation with *Triumph of the Will.* To put it in the words of Nichols (2001:114) "*Triumph of the Will* demonstrates the power of the image to represent the historical world at the same moment as it participates in the construction of aspects of the historical world itself".

When I asked Womas about the idea behind the making of the Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera films he told me that:

First, as documentaries for our own community; when there were feasts the feasts were recorded and on the other hand to show how persecuted Villa Baviera or Colonia Dignidad was. Then to show our Chilean neighbours in a concise way the brutality of the Chilean state against us. Today one knows that yes there were brutalities and that the police forces many times exceeded their limit but when one sees the background much is understandable. Some years ago it seemed to us that as much brutal force was used against us. Today one will say that if we had reacted in a different manner, the reactions of the police forces might not have happened.

Producers of media are part of numberless discursive universes of political, economic, national and historical contexts (Ginsburg, Abu-Lughod and Larkin 2002). The producers of

the community films, namely the leadership of the community and the followers, are through the production of the visual media giving "their" voice. In this way the visual practice of the community share some similarities to visual activism.

6.7 Visual activism

The way Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera has used film as a medium has also common characteristics with what might be named visual activism. This kind of activism implies that groups that often perceive themselves as marginalised use visual means to present their voice. The films produced by the community after 1990 were mainly aimed at cleaning the community name, and changing the loss of charity status and showing the suppression of the community and its supporters by the Chilean state. Through the making of these films and the dissemination of them the community tried to influence the general opinion about the community among Chileans. In this manner the media hoped to enable the workings of power and the potential of activism.

Faye Ginsburg (1997) claims that the appropriation of visual media by indigenous people typically occurs in the context of movements for self-determination and resistance. Although Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera are not an indigenous group as in Ginsburg's example, their appropriation of the visual media has been similar to indigenous groups in the sense that the community during the 90s was in resistance to the Chilean government. Furthermore, one may claim that the community experienced marginalisation in the 90s. At this time the community was questioned about everything, including serious allegations against human rights abuses against Chileans under the military regime, and the Chilean state were inquiring about the community's charity work and its form of life.

The community felt obligated by the new democratic government in Chile to change their way of life from a communal non-monetary system to a monetary one. The loss of charity status, having community land expropriated, experiencing financial and legal problems and so on, were all issues that helped create a situation of insecurity among the inhabitants of the community and an identity crisis that embraced their past, present and future. This crisis also affected the local Chilean neighbours who supported the community but to a lesser extent. Many of the local Chileans who were part of The Vigil of Pain, like the inhabitants of the community, felt that they were in a powerless position within Chilean society. Many of the locals expressed during conversations that they felt that the government in Santiago did not bother about them being in the region since they were *only poor farmers*.

As Ginsburg has pointed out, marginalised people "…have become interested in the social and political possibilities of alternative media practices as means of intervention into the status quo on a number of fronts, initially articulated by film and video activists" (Ginsburg 1997:119). Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera's visual manifestations from this period are an example of self-conscious practice in which cultural material is produced and used as part of a broader project of political empowerment by groups that are not in power. Such visual manifestations create a space for the representation of the community's concerns that can provide what Bhabha (1994) has named "the third space". The third space is a mode of articulation; a way of describing a productive, and not merely reflective, space that may engender new possibilities. In the case of Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera, the community did not get their charity status back, but felt they were active, expressing their voice.

The Kayapo Indians of central Brazil are a good example of how an indigenous group, assisted by their western supporters and an "exotic quality" well suited to visual representations, have received tremendous media attention in connection with their political battle for land rights and control over their natural environment (Crawford 1995). Thus the media have helped the Kayapo to create a space to promote their views. More and more people who consider themselves marginalised such as migrants, exiles, sexual minorities, indigenous groups and others who consider themselves in a difficult position today use the media: "As new vehicles for internal and external communication, cultural and language maintenance, self-determination, and resistance to outside cultural dominations" (Ginsburg 1997:119). Such activist objectification of culture encompasses not only indigenous groups but also media produced by other subjects who have become involved in creating their own representations as a counterweight to dominant systems (Ginsburg, Abu-Lughod and Larkin 2002).

For the community, much of their visual production was a response to the general media representation of them that, particularly after the 90s, revealed the many and serious accusations against the community by the Chilean state and human rights organisations. This aspect of the visual is something that they share with many other groups that feel the media representations of them to be wrong. Many indigenous groups, such as the Kayapo Indians, have responded to the images of them by western media by producing their own self-documentation. However, the films made by the community during the 90s were not understood by Chilean society at large as intended by the community. The aesthetics displayed in the films and the inhabitants' performances were among many Chileans associated with fascism and failed to sway public opinion. In this sense "the third space" was

not articulated (Bhabha 1994). The general Chilean response to the films made by the community and performances were strongly influenced by the public discourse in Chilean society of human right abuses.

CHAPTER SEVEN

IN THE SHADOWS OF A PAST

This chapter deals with Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera after the year 2000, when the idea of being persecuted by the Chilean democratic government (as presented in previous chapter) gradually changed among many of community's members. This was the beginning of a time when many people in the community started to *open their eyes*, albeit in different ways and to varying degrees. In the words of one person, this was the *time for a brutal awakening*. The generation that came as children or were born in Chile experienced this transformation with particular force. Many of them felt deceived by the movement's first followers, their parents that came to Chile, and started to deal with their own painful experiences. For the first generation, the members who came to Chile as adults, this was a difficult time. Many felt deceived by the former leader in a variety of ways. Some repressed, others rejected the violent past. For those who were willing to admit that abuses of the community`s children had taken place, this was a painful realisation. Some felt guilty for having "given" their own children to the leaders of the community and not preventing the abuse and torture of them, others for having participated in the atrocities in one form or another. What most of the younger and older members shared was a loss of pride for the charity work they had been engaged in for decades, and a loss of pride in the community they constructed. People in the community felt ashamed at how they were perceived by the external world. Many of the younger people felt that they were held responsible for the violent acts of the older generation by the outside world.

A great challenge for me in this work has been to avoid becoming a moral judge, and at the same time avoiding being an ethnographer without morals when it comes to human rights. Coming to Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera involved entering a diffuse landscape. Where issues connected to guilt and whom are victim or/and abuser play an important role. In this landscape is the line between who is guilty or not blurred. It is hard to understand how the adult generation of the community could contribute and being "the helping hands" of totalitarianism. However as argued in this thesis, in all its complexity, it is possible to identify some contours of a pattern that have contributed to the process towards becoming a totalitarian community. The nature of my empirical material has made it necessary for me to reflect on some moral issues embedded in the practical life of this community. In order to do this I have been inspired by perspectives from moral philosophy and social sciences.

There were several reasons for *opening their eyes* and the *awakening* among some of the members. Above all, the absence of an all-powerful leader was important in this transformation. The growing participation in Chilean society at large through the emergence of friendships and involvement in studies gave many of the younger members more knowledge about Chilean society. At the same time some of the community members started to open up and talk about issues that had been taboo within the community. These included the torture of the community children in the past. The public revelation in the Chilean media of the discovery of what is believed to be mass graves, weapons and an extended index of left-wing activists (including Chileans who went missing in the '70s), all that made it hard to deny the community's contested past. This was a time where many community members started to gradually talk to each other about the community's past and share their experiences and thoughts with others in the community. In their accounts, many of the members belonging to the older generation expressed issues related to psychosocial processes such as fear, following orders, being deceived, and group dynamics when telling about and explaining their former acts and thinking.

7.1 The challenge of human right abuses

In the years after the return of democracy in 1990, the Chilean state, churches, human right organisations and civil organisations were engaged in investigating human rights abuses committed during the Pinochet's regime. As a result of this, pressure grew to investigate human rights abuses against left-wing Chileans committed in and with the participation of people from the community. In countries emerging from totalitarianism and state repression the same questions are raised in regarding investigating human rights abuses, and what will happen to perpetrators of human right violations and victims (Wilson 2003:368). In addition to this there is the challenge of how to achieve reconciliation. As in Argentina and South Africa, a truth commission was established in Chile. The objective was to gain knowledge about *desaparecidos* (the disappeared) and to reach national reconciliation through the investigation of human rights violence (Wilson 2003). The emphasis was on investigating the abuses committed and sentencing those responsible for them. The work of the Rettig Commission[102] and later the Valech Commission[103] contributed in a positive way to providing

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[102] The National Commission for Truth and Reconciliation Report was published in 1991. The commission was appointed by President Aylwin to address human rights abuses resulting in death or disappearance that occurred in Chile during the years of military rule, 1973 to 1990.

more knowledge about the human right abuses committed in Chile. However, they did little with regard to prosecuting those that had committed atrocities.

As presented in chapter five, The Rettig Commission included `the community among the places that were used as a secret detention and torture centre but the conclusions regarding the community's participation were too weak. This was partly due to issues of timing. When the work of the Rettig Commission was done and concluded, the relationship between the new Chilean democratic government and the community was tense. As explored in chapter six, the beginning of the '90s was a period that was characterised by the community and its followers strongly defending themselves against the many accusations presented by human right organisations and the Chilean authorities.

It is no secret that the community and most of its members were and continue to be great admirers of General Pinochet and the military regime. They would not readily collaborate with the democratic government over night. Many of the people I got acquainted with in the community expressed sympathy for General Pinochet. As Tania told me:

No, I did not know anything (about the military coup). *I am still very sorry for what they* (the Chilean government) *did with Augusto Pinochet* (referring to the way Pinochet was treated in Chile). *I was very fond of him, I am very fond of him. I heard only good things about him and he was also here visiting us. We sang the national hymn then and afterwards: Ich habe eine camarade. Of the other things that they* (the military regime) *did with the people against Pinochet I did not know anything until now when we wrote the public declaration asking for forgiveness.* [104]

Knowing about the former totalitarian leadership of the community, it is not difficult to understand that most members did not know much about what happened when it came to human right abuses in Chile during the military regime of General Pinochet. In addition, most community members saw the military regime as the salvation against communists, and the regime was regarded as having saved Chile and the community from the communism of former president Allende in 1973.

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[103] The National Commission on Political Imprisonment and Torture Report was a study that detailed abuses committed in Chile between 1973 and 1990 by agents of Pinochet's military regime. The first part of the report was published on 29 November 2004 and detailed the results of a six-month investigation. A second part was released on 1 June 2005.

[104] In 2006 Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera issued a public declaration asking the Chilean nation for forgiveness. This issue will be explained later in this chapter.

After living in a closed community where everybody was being watched and where fear had been widespread for decades, trusting the outside world was hard for most people in the community. The re-establishment of trust in a system after years of systematic violence appears to be a major and common problem (Agger and Jensen 1996). This lack of faith in authority partly explains the community's low level of collaboration and weak relationship between with the Chilean authorities' in the first years after 1990.

In 1997, the Chilean police started to search for the community's leader Paul Schäfer on the community's grounds. The police conducted several searches and remained in the community for long periods. Jan told me that the police would enter wherever they wanted in the community, and *rip apart furniture and floors* in order to investigate. The community experienced that anything found by the police - any letter or image - would suddenly be published in the press. *And without it really having any real connection to Paul Schäfer,* as Jan told me.

The community members' distrust of the Chilean democratic government changed gradually, in particular among the younger members. The level of collaboration gradually grew, resulting in different testimonies from a few members, and from some people who had been part of the Chilean secret police.[105] As a result, the Chilean democratic government gained more information about where in the community grounds to search for remains of missing left-wing Chileans. For long periods, extensive areas of the community were searched for human remains, using excavating machines, specially trained dogs and specialists. The situation attracted massive national media interest.

Finally, and after extensive searches, in 2006 a Chilean forensic group led by the forensic anthropologist Kenneth Jensen found one of the places that are believed to be a mass grave[106] on the community premises. Based on these findings it is believed that the location has been used to bury and later dig up remains of missing Chilean prisoners that were brought to Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera during the first years after the military coup (Proyecto Internacional de Derechos Humanos - Londres. Boletín No. 226 15 – 31 Enero 2010). This discovery contributed to a rising awareness in Chilean society of the human right abuses committed by the community in the past against left-wing Chileans.

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[105] It is believed that the most of these testimonies' where motivated by a wish for remuneration or recompense by the Chilean authorities, but this has not been proven (Schwember 2009).

[106] Excavations at Colonia Dignidad /Villa Baviera revealed evidenc ethat human remains, likely belonging to murdered Chilean left-wing prisoners, had been buried in common graves and subsequently removed. However, no human remains or cultural artefacts have been found. Based on a number of testimonies there is evidence that people from the community had exhumed the bodies, cremated them, and dumped the ashes into a nearby river (Schwember 2009).

Mass graves resulting from episodes of extreme violence are important evidence of a violent past. "Digging up mass graves is literally "excavating memory" (Ferrandiz 2006:7). Parallel with the above-mentioned findings, the Chilean police discovered an extensive index in a hidden box. The index had been created by Sigmund in close collaboration with the community's leadership. The index contained information about people and groups that were considered to be part of the political left and were seen as enemies by the community. This index included names and notes from torture interrogations of left-wing Chileans who continue missing today. The index is now classified as secret by Chilean authorities. Furthermore, hidden explosives and weapons have been found on the grounds of the community (Schwember 2009).

In September 2011 a Chilean court for the first time stated that Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera had been used as a torture centre during the military regime of General Pinochet. This happened after one former Chilean left-wing activist that was tortured in the community accused Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera and some of its members of torture under the military regime. In the case of Adriana Alicia Bórquez Adriasola against Colonia Dignidad, a Chilean court decided for the first time to put on trial members of the community for human right abuses against Chileans during the military regime. As a consequence, Hans, Dr. Hopp and some others have been put on trial for human right abuses (La Segunda Online 18 November 2011).

7.2 Distrust and fear

During the period the Chilean authorities were searching for human remains in specific places on the premises of the community, some of the people I got to know shared their knowledge about this topic with me. One of them, Peter, showed me the places where the police were digging and told me about people in the community who supposedly had participated in the torture of left-wing Chileans and later in the removing and burning of the corpses. It was important for him to tell me this, although all this was done secretly and without the knowledge of the rest of the community members. When driving around he would just point with a finger under the window level, indicating the houses and places that had been used for torture of left-wing Chileans. Sometimes Peter asked me to take another route in order to

confuse people as to where we were going. Peter was afraid of the *DINA mafia*[107] as he expressed it, as well as of some of those persons that had been in power in the community. Peter told me that one of the members that had held a powerful position had told him about "a visit" from the former secret Chilean police, and how he had been threatened not to collaborate with the Chilean democratic government. This had happened several years after General Pinochet lost power. It may be true that the former leaders received such a visit; equally, they may have spread such stories in order to scare make people so they would not collaborate with the government.

Although the totalitarian system in Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera ended, it takes time for the community members to feel and think "freely". The same applies to how most Chileans felt after the re-establishment of democracy in 1990. "Terror, the aftermath of torture, once it has burrowed into us, is not conquered in one revelatory flash. It is a slow, zigzag process, just like memory itself" (Dorfman 2004:13). Peter's fear, as well as other members' fear is linked to their lived experiences from the community. Systematic and pervasive violence as experienced by most people in the community, and on a massive scale in many Latin-American and other countries, create extreme fear and anxiety.

The increase in violent acts in the community after the arrival in Chile, especially the '70s and subsequently, was accompanied by a rise in fear and paranoia among most people living in the community. Not only those community members that did not obey the orders of their all-powerful leader suffered. No one could be sure who would be the next person to fall from favour in the eyes of Paul Schäfer. Even those in power were not secure. People lived in constant fear of being reported by other community members to Schäfer or others in power. Everybody was spying on everybody; microphones were hidden in the community. All interpersonal relations were forbidden, and those few that dare to speak with others and develop close relations were haunted by their own distrust and fear. Living under such conditions contributed to a rise in paranoia that took a great psychological hold on people. This feeling of constant fear and what it does with people is expressed clearly in the following words: "Suspicion. Distrust. Gut-twisting terror. Each person clutched his thoughts more tightly to himself. Everyone worked harder. We dared not complain… Like walking dead men, we waited our turns in mute silence. Any person or event out of the ordinary filled us with panic." (Carney 1977:52 quoted in Hinton 2004:156)

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[107] Peter is referring to former agents that worked for the secret Chilean police during the military regime of general Pinochet.

Those in power in Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera controlled and directed all aspects related to the public and private lives of all people living in the community. When and where to work; where, how much and when to eat; when to gather with others in the community, as well as what to think. What knowledge and information the people in the community got from the established world, and more terrifyingly who had to be punished and how. When it came to the younger generation, the leaders of each age group who would inform Schäfer about everything that took place within the group. These leaders were strict and would not hesitate to punish the group's members, or inform Schäfer of any transgressions it they believed this to be necessary.

Though the leaders of the ages groups had power, they were also afraid of Schäfer. If the leaders did not react in a manner Schäfer found appropriate, for example if the punishment given by a leader was considered too weak, this could cause problems for the age group leader, who might then lose power and be punished with violence. The great majority of people in the community felt insecure and were afraid of doing anything that could bring them in trouble. Those in the community in power tried to retain control by damaging individuals and relationships that threatened their power. One of the means of achieving this was through the psychological dynamics of separating people.

One of the repressive strategies of those in power was to create a collective fear among the people living in the community. People experienced a continuous threat, "a stressor that generates "the paradox of chronic fear" (Agger and Jensen 1996). In this way fear became part of a permanent component of everyday personal and social life (ibid.). This fear can lead humans "to denial, mistrust and paranoid tendencies" (Agger and Jensen 1996:216). People in the community, in particular some of the early followers, were probably influenced by living in constant fear. This may have led them to engage passively or actively in inhumane acts, primarily against the younger generation in the community, but also others considered to be wrong-doers such as left-wing Chileans.

7.3 Apology and collective guilt

After Paul Schäfer escaped from the Chilean police and subsequently "left" the community in late '90s a "new" leadership took over in the community. This consisted of the closest collaborators and powerful followers of Schäfer. They continued with the old regime. One of the leading figures was Dr. Hopp. This leadership kept a firm hand on the community

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members. Gradually after the year 2000, the approach shifted towards permitting some family life and some contact with the outside world. As revealed by the account of some of the people I met, some couples got married and had children, started to live together as a family in their own houses, made trips outside the community, got their own salary, and some of the younger ones went to study at the universities, etc.

The detention of Paul Schäfer in 2005 marked a final rupture with the former regime and consolidated the process of change in Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera.[108] One member told me that the day Chilean media announced that Paul Schäfer was found and arrested in Argentina the news about his arrest started to be spread within the community. At a gathering of community members, a decision was reached to organise a collective burning of all items related to their leader Schäfer, such as photos, voice recordings and other items.[109] All would come with whatever materials they had and place it on the fire. This act might be interpreted as an internal way of symbolically handling and "finishing" with a contested and painful past within the community. The act has also a legal dimension since materials that might have been important for the many investigations may have been destroyed.

As a result of the pressure in connection with the human rights abuse investigations, the new, more flexible leadership, and the growing up of a younger generation with more experience from the outside world, more open dialogue with Chilean society, collaboration with the Chilean authorities and with human rights organisations became possible. More importantly, a need among the younger generation to respond as a community to issues concerning the contested past of the community was expressed. Many of the people who came as children or were born in Chile would at this time tell me that they felt that something had to be done if the community was to continue in Chile. Sebastian told me:

The people (in Chile*) need an answer from us. Because many people are suffering* (thinking of relatives to missing left-wing Chileans) *because of us and what happened in our name. We always saw ourselves as attacked by the media and we found it unfair but today we have to recognize that they were right. We have to make a declaration as an answer to what happened.*

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[108] The fact that some of Schäfer's closest collaborators were arrested contributed to the process of change in the community.

[109] However, in connection with fieldwork after the year 2005 I have seen images and videos of Paul Schäfer.

The community decided to make an official declaration to the external world, in particular to the Chilean and German nations. A group, mostly part of the younger generation, decided to write the declaration. In 2006 a public declaration was issued consisting of 17 points (Schwember 2009).

The declaration starts with:

> Since the escape from Chile of Paul Schäfer and the subsequent arrest by the authorities, among the inhabitants of Villa Baviera a difficult and acute process began: finding out the truth of the events that happened in our community over time, determining the cause of such painful events, achieving a peaceful coexistence and mutual forgiveness among the inhabitants of Villa Baviera, and working for insertion into the normality and tolerance that make the life of the Chilean community (Public declaration from Villa Baviera April 2006).[110]

> Today the inhabitants of Villa Baviera (ex Dignity Colony) want to take a stand on our past, acknowledge our present and take charge of our future. What we considered slanderous rumors proved true, we believe it is time to talk honestly with the world around us, mainly in Chile and Germany, and search for ways to fulfill our responsibilities and work for the forgiveness of those who have harmed or offended (Public declaration from Villa Baviera April 2006).

The declaration continued with the 17 points expressed each in one paragraph, among others:

> According to information, after the military coup, Schäfer actively collaborated in the repression of political opponents. He facilitated our community for detention and oppression of people persecuted by the regime. Horrific acts where committed inside the community. Earlier we were convinced that these accusations were calumnies, as the control system developed by Schäfer, kept people with a minimum of information and practically ignorant of the events that happened in the community (Point 12, Public declaration from Villa Baviera April 2006).

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[110] My translation of all the points presented here.

We now realize that serious crimes have been committed. We hope the final clarification will happen with justice, with which we cooperate in as far as our strength and our knowledge permits. We understand and respect the grief and sorrow of all persons who suffered, after September 1973, the loss of close relatives, and especially those who are still in uncertainty about the fate of their loved ones (Point 13, Public declaration from Villa Baviera April 2006).

We regret that our sincere effort to do good through the Hospital, in which we work day and night taking care of sick children and adults, coming from the surroundings and at sites remote from the Cordillera, has also been poorly used by Paul Schäfer. Our Hospital was also the place where our own human rights were abused. We were submitted to all sorts of constraints to dominate the remainder of our autonomy and will (Point 14, Public declaration from Villa Baviera April 2006).

We were deceived and used by Paul Schäfer and in that we did harm to ourselves and our families. We will bear the guilt of not having rebelled against the despotic leader, and the blame that on our community people were illegally detained, some of whose lives have been finalized and whose bodies have disappeared (Point 15, Public declaration from Villa Baviera April 2006).

In this public declaration the community admitted its violent past, in particular its collaboration with the military regime of Pinochet. The community apologised to the Chilean nation for its collaboration with the regime and the terrible acts committed part of this relationship. While the act of apology and saying "sorry" will not change former injustices, it is almost certain that the act of apology is important for those issuing it, and for those who receive the apology. Similar acts such as the apology by the community for past injustices done in their name have taken place in different parts of the world. The act of saying sorry and apologizing for past injustices has become a significant speech act in our era (Mookherjee et al.: 2009).[111]

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[111] In 2008 the Australian government apologised to the "stolen generation": those children of Aboriginal descent who were removed from their parents. The British queen formally apologised to the Maoris in New Zealand for the acts of Crown authorities of dispossession of their lands in New Zealand, and she apologised in India for the massacre of Amritsar in 1919. Tony Blair apologised for the Irish famine. The Pope has apologised on several occasions (Mookherjee et al.: 2009:346).

An apology may be understood as a claim, both a claim to knowledge and/or as a claim to responsibility (Mookherjee et al. 2009:350). As a claim to knowledge, an apology implies that I *know* of a situation which I would wish had not occurred, or I know of a situation which I know you would wish had not occurred (ibid.).

As a claim to responsibility, an apology says that I know of a situation which I *caused* to happen or the group which I claim to speak for caused to happen. An apology is a claim to power, either a personal power or a power deriving from one's position (Mookherjee et al. 2009). It is a claim to connection with an event or with other people, be it in the past or the future. One is connected by being personally responsible for causing something whose consequences I one believe you would wish to have avoided. Sometimes the person issuing the apology is connected by friendship, kinship, membership, to the perpetrator of an act whose consequences I one believe you wish to have avoided (Mookherjee et al. 2009:350).

To make an apology implies a claim to know of a connection between an act and certain harmful consequences upon another. A claim to responsibility is a claim to a relationship both to the perpetrator (that can be the person making the apology, or their fellow) and to the victim. It implies also a claim to knowledge of something to be sorry about and also a claim to a relationship (Mookherjee et al. 2009:351).

For the community the apology was very much related to a need to cope with the many allegations concerning human right abuses of left-wing Chileans by members of and committed in the community. The former participation of some members and the community in the violence related to the military regime was a situation that many people in the community felt had been beyond their control. The act of apology may be seen as a claim to knowledge of a situation – being a secret detention and torture centre – the members wished had not occurred and that the people of Chile wish had not occurred. At the same time the apology is also a claim to responsibility, where the community members admit to knowing about acts (albeit after the fact) and situations that they personally or some of the members and community caused. By asserting their responsibility, as Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera do through the public declaration, a claim to a relationship is made both to the perpetrators and to the victim. Through the public declaration the community claims to have had, in the past, a connection with the military regime and secret Chilean police. The act of apology states that some community members and the community previously had the power to do the acts they are apologizing for.

By asking for forgiveness people in the community state that they have either a personal connection to or are connected to some of their fellow members' guilt. What does being guilty imply? It may be possible to have a clear principle of ethics concerning guilt: "One bears responsibility only to the degree that one has taken part and acted. Where one did not voluntarily consent or approve, there can be no culpability assigned" (Jaspers 1961: ix). However, assessing responsibility will never be simple (Jaspers 1961). To sort out responsibility in communities that are emerging from generations of living in a culture of violence, distrust, or suspicion such as Chile after Pinochet, Cambodia after Pol Pot, post-war Germany or Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera after the end of its totalitarian leadership is complex.

In his study of guilt and responsibility the philosopher Karl Jaspers (ibid.) differentiates between different kinds of guilt. The different kinds of guilt identified by Jaspers are not clear types, and several types of guilt may be present in a single person. Among others, he identifies: *Criminal guilt* that belongs to those that violated the law and have been convicted by a court. The former leader of Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera is an example of such criminal guilt. *Moral guilt* names the personal responsibility one bears before one's own conscience for one's acts. Included here is following orders received from ones superiors. Examples of such types of guilt may be found among Womas and others of the first followers that are asking themselves how they could have permitted what took place in the community. In *metaphysical guilt* Jaspers outlines the feeling of guilt that can embrace "an otherwise innocent person in whose presence or with whose knowledge crimes was committed" (Jaspers 1961:x: x). This kind of guilt implies a human solidarity that will bring some people to feel a kind of co-responsibility for not having done anything to prevent certain acts. Many people in the community feel a mixture of guilts; of feeling co-responsible for former acts, feeling personally responsible and some for having violated the law and been convicted by a court.

Various people, in particular the oldest ones, were initially against writing the public declaration and the apology. I was told by one of the members who participated in the writing, Sigmund, how difficult it was for the persons in the group to decide about the final content. When presenting the declaration to the rest of the community the group was surprised: *When we read it for everybody almost a miracle happened because everybody agreed. Obviously it was the truth with a force. It is a hard declaration, but against that truth nobody could oppose* as Sigmund told me. Knowing about the complexities in writing the public declaration, I believe another issue also contributed to the surprising agreement to the declaration.

After Paul Schäfer was arrested by the Chilean police in 2005, many of the younger generation would speak out in the community about the abuses they had been submitted to. These testimonies probably helped change the minds of some people in the community regarding the past of Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera and thus also their attitude to the public declaration.

The wish of those behind the public declaration was that one representative of the community would hand the declaration officially to the Chilean president. A copy would be sent to the Chilean newspaper *El Mercurio*, while a German version was sent to the German newspaper *Die Welt* and the German authorities. To the great disappointment, in the end the Chilean President at the time, the socialist Michelle Bachelet did not receive the public declaration herself. A representative of her government received it from two young community members at the Presidential Palace La Moneda.

The community expected a reaction from the central government in Chile but this did not happen. After a few days of media headlines with emphasis on the collaboration of the community with the military regime and the issue of apology, silence ensued. The Chilean government did not officially pronounce a statement after receiving the public declaration, except to confirm that it had been received. This lack of response disappointed many people in the community.[112] The governmental delegate in the community, Herman Schwember, appointed by the Chilean government, was also frustrated by the government's silence, and withdrew from his position in protest.[113]

Some voices in the community blamed President Bachelet's refusal to personally receive or comment on the apology on political reasons. These voices, including that of Schwember asserted that the socialist government did not want to dirty their hands by relating to a community that had a relationship with the former military regime. In my view, there was a further matter that influenced the manner in which the declaration was received. The apology was made at the same time the Chilean public debate was dominated by the unveiling of several cases where remnants from disappeared and killed people after the military coup in 1973 had been wrongly identified, i.e. given wrong or mistaken identities and names. The Bachelet administration received much criticism for this in the Chilean media, and thus already had a hot potato on its hands. Having another "sensitive" case to deal with cannot have been seen as the ideal situation for the government.

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[112] For some of the people in Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera I got to know the declaration and the reaction to it were secondary. When asking them about it they seemed not very interested in it and some of them even without much knowledge of the content of it.

[113] Schwember would return to the position after some time.

The act of stating a collective and public apology such as that by the community had different meanings for the community members. Many of the younger members felt a certain tension between their community and established Chilean society. After 1990 the community was perceived in the Chilean media and society at large as a community where left-wing Chileans had been tortured and killed. In this light some of the younger generation felt a need for the community to ask for forgiveness in order to improve the relationship with established Chilean society and how the community was perceived in the Chilean society. Many, especially the younger ones, had a sincere wish to ask for forgiveness for past acts of injustice committed in the name of Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera and by some of its members. Many of the older generation did not agree with the content in the public declaration or wanted to make public what many of them perceived as private issues. These voices were in the end silenced by those in charge of writing and publishing the declaration.

Many members and representing all generations in the community expressed a feeling of frustration that because of the former leader Schäfer's acts, everybody from the community was perceived by Chileans in general as guilty of former injustices. Many drew parallels with the situation of the German nation after 1945, "…the concept of collective guilt as first applied to the German people and its collective past – all of Germany stands accused and the whole of German history from Luther to Hitler…" (Arendt 2003:21). The key is how sharing an identity with a nation or community that is understood as responsible for committing wrong acts implicates one in the community's or nation's guilt, for the simple reason of *belonging* to a group, and not because one's own acts. Sigmund expressed this as follows:

Today I see the persecution of the left wing (in Chile) *after September 1973 as something similar to what happened in Germany after the war. Not what the man did but if the man belonged to a group then that was his guilt. That is not right. I see my index in this light too…..*[114]

For Sigmund as for many others there is a parallel between how many Germans felt after the war and how many of the community members feel today about being from Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera.

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[114] The index Sigmund talks about forms part of what he is charged for by Chilean authorities. On behalf of Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera he made an index with information about all the people and groups that the community considered as enemies. This included writing transcripts of interrogations of political prisoners still missing. The index was found by Chilean police in 2005 but has for the moment not been public.

Jan told me how difficult it was for him to meet a life partner. This was partly because he had other experiences than most of the Chilean girls his age, but even more so because many people in Chile were sceptical to the community and its people. He had experienced how girls he met and also their families were hesitant about him when they learned where he came from. Jan said that because of the fault of one man (the former leader) a whole community was considered guilty. In Jan's opinion, this was not fair. The frustration of Sigmund, Jan and others from the community about how they are looked at raises the question of the relationship between collective responsibility and individual culpability.

According to Arendt, in order to have collective responsibility two conditions are necessary (2003). Firstly, the responsibility must be for something an individual has not done themselves; secondly, that they are held responsible for past actions on account of their being a member of the group, a part of the collective (2003:149). In Arendt's perspective in order to create a socially responsible collective for the future, the past should not be forgotten. Arendt does not believe in collective guilt as a political response. "There is no such thing as collective guilt or collective innocence; guilt and innocence make sense only if applied to individuals." (Arendt 2003:29) She insists on a division between individual personal guilt and collective political responsibility. Arendt's understanding to a certain degree implies that the members of the collective are disposed in one or another way to distance themselves from their (former) social world. In her understanding the way to do this is to create space for reflection on the former system needed for the acceptance of collective responsibility.

For the members distancing themselves from the way of thinking in the community was not permitted during the leadership of Paul Schäfer. Spaces for reflection could only develop gradually after the escape and subsequent capture of Schäfer. As part of this process of reflection the wish to apologize to Chileans who had lost loved ones after the military coup was born among some of the members. The public declaration and apology issued in 2006 by Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera was an act of distancing themselves from their former social world and acts, and admitted what Arendt named a collective political responsibility. For the generation that was too young to have participated personally in the violence against left-wing Chileans, taking collective political responsibility as defined by Arendt was possible.

This was also the case for those belonging to the older generation that were not personally engaged in inhumane acts committed against left-wing Chileans. The situation was different for those members that had personally committed atrocities. These individuals were guilty of their acts, and could not, according to Arendt, be part of a collective political responsibility.

Most of Chilean society did not believe in the collective apology of the community and saw it instead as a way for Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera of "washing their hands". One of the reasons explaining how the apology was understood may be that only one person from the community, Paul Schäfer, is explicitly named in the declaration as guilty. None of the community members that violated Chilean law (Schäfer's collaborators) and were convicted by a court in Chile are not mentioned. They and all other members are portrayed in the public declaration as: *We were deceived and used by Paul Schäfer.*

The way the members are presented in the declaration can be understood as mere passive instruments of Paul Schäfer, and of "doing as told", and therefore not guilty of being part of wrongful acts. The problem with the public declaration and collective apology was that it did not differentiate between those members that had personally violated the law (except Schäfer) by committing human right abuses and those that had not personally been part of this. This aspect with the declaration contributed to: "…in practice turned into a highly effective whitewash of all those who had actually done something, for where all are guilty, no one is" (Arendt 2003:21).

7.4 *Horrific acts*

In its public declaration it is written that *horrific acts* were committed in the community. What do *horrific acts* mean in this context? These are related to acts of violence of kind one or another that were committed and decided by those in power in Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera. These were acts that were committed not only by Paul Schäfer but also by his closest followers, in particular the adult generation that came to Chile. The horrific acts may be called acts of evil. But what do we mean when we define a person or an act as evil? Some will claim that the concept evil does not have an objective relevance. What one person interprets as evil is good for another person and vice versa. Nietzsche argued that an objective definition of the concept of evil is impossible (Nietzsche 2010). The concept evil implies different meanings for each individual, because evil has different interpretations.

Socrates thought that no human is evil only because of being evil (Svendsen 2001). He claimed that there were eternal and unchangeable values and norms for how humans should live. According to Socrates all human beings had knowledge about these values and norms, but this knowledge was sometimes hidden from us. In Socrates view evil is nothing in itself; it is rather an absence of what is good. When somebody commits an evil act this is not because

the person is evil but because the person does not know what is good. Augustine used Socrates' thinking about evil when talking about God and evil (ibid.). If God is such an almighty and noble entity, why is there evil in the world? To this Augustine answered that the world's evil is a result of God's absence. The evil of the world is not caused by an evil power but rather the nonappearance of God (ibid.). In both Socrates' and Augustine's thinking it is possible to find an understanding that evil does not exist.

Strongly affected by living in a world dealing with the horrors of the Nazi regime, Arendt insisted on evil as a reality. She was strongly influenced by Husserl's phenomenology that claimed that reality is the world that appears for us in daily life (Arendt 1977). This implies that evil that appears to us is real. Husserl's central argument is that subject and object, human awareness and the environing world, are intimately connected. One cannot in principle treat the ego as something disconnected from its surroundings. To isolate the ego (or the object) as a separate unit would mean imposing upon human experience the category of "substance" which, borrowed as it is from man's observation of things, distorts the true relationship between self and world (ibid.).

Arendt considered the evil of totalitarianism to be radical, to stand on by itself as an independent principle, because it has not come from any good. What Arendt means by radical evil is making human beings superfluous – destroying the very conditions required for living a human life (Arendt 1973). It is "the transformation of human nature itself" (Arendt 1973:458). She claimed that the radical evilness of totalitarianism is realized through working hands (1973), the hands of those that follow up one useful action with another one. These individuals will only do what they are told to do. It is such individuals that will keep the system going without stopping and reflecting on their own actions. They have a blind belief that there is another power than their own actions that is the driving force (ibid.). In this perspective they consider themselves and their actions as insignificant. It is here we find Arendt's meaning for *radical evil*. Arendt's understanding of the radical nature of evil is later, when confronted with Eichmann's character, changed to seeing *evil as banal*.

> You are quite right: I changed my mind and do no longer speak of 'radical evil'. It is indeed my opinion now that evil is never 'radical', that it is only extreme, and that it possesses neither depth nor any demonic dimension. It can overgrow and lay waste the whole world precisely because it spreads like a fungus on the surface. It is 'thought-defying', as I said, because thought tries to reach some depth, to go to the roots, and the moment it concerns itself with evil, it is frustrated because there is nothing. That is

its 'banality'. Only the good has depth and can be radical (Arendt and Feldman 1978:250-251).

In *A Philosophy of Evil,* the philosopher Svendsen (2001) argues that there is no one definition of evil, it is a broad term. The word evil tends to give associations to an act done out of pure evil wishes. The concept is reduced to a single meaning for use on moral acts. As a way to deal with this, a more flexible understanding and use of the concept of evil would be better. To find a single definition of evil is not fruitful, because it limits our understanding of the phenomenon of evil. Svendsen argues that different kinds of evil exist and that it is not possible to join all these types in one understanding that can be utilized in every situation where evil has been committed (2001).

Svendsen propose four different kinds of evil; the demonic, the instrumental, the idealistic and the ignorant form of evil (2001). The first form, demonic evil, is the form of evil most people think about of first: it is evil for evil's sake. Svendsen rejects the concept in practice because there are always other motives that cause the perpetrator to act. If somebody likes to hassle somebody, it is because the person enjoys it. Then there is a motivation. The second form of evil, the instrumental one, is where evil is used as a means to reach a goal, where "the end justifies the means". The bombing of Hiroshima might be a good example of this form of evil. This form of evil is closely linked to the third kind of evil. This is the idealistic form, which is evil committed in the belief that it is good. Examples of this form of evil can be terrorism, genocide, political and religious persecution. Idealist evil will kill in the name of God, a communist society, a pure "race" and so on. Evil in the name of religion can be a good example of both instrumental and ideological evil. Firstly, it is instrumental because the acts are committed for a higher purpose, which is pleasing to God or acting according to his wishes. Secondly, it is a good example of ideological evil, because the perpetrators act in the belief that they are removing evil from the world, or adding goodness. The last category is the ignorant form of evil; the evil committed because the perpetrator either does not reflect on the consequences of his or hers actions, or fails to realize the consequences. Stanley Milgram's electro shock experiments are a good example of this form of evil.

Stanley Milgram conducted an experiment in 1965 and 1974 aiming at researching human obedience to authorities (Milgram 1974). The subjects of the experiment were told that they were going to be "teachers". On the other side of a one-way mirror was a "pupil". Unbeknown to the subject of the experiment, the "pupil" was an actor. The "teacher" would ask the "pupil" questions. If the "pupil's" answer was wrong, the "teacher" was to give the

"pupil" an electric shock. The degree of the electric shock was increased by the "teacher" each time. A person in a white overcoat would use four different statements to keep the "teacher" going. The experiment showed that between 63-65% of the people in the experiment continued until giving 450 volt, the limit that is considered as fatal. Milgram (1974) explains the result with respect for authorities. It is the situation that people find themselves in rather than their dispositions that best explain their actions (ibid.). He used this experiment to explain why people could commit such horrific actions as during the Nazi regime and reached the understanding that ordinary people can commit terrible acts (Milgram 1974). Many incidents can fall under more than one of the four categories, because often there are intricate reasons for why people act the way they do. Evilness is not only found among sadists and people that are fanatic. Svendsen's main claim in his understanding of evil is that: "evil is found in others", one's own evil is not acknowledged (2001).

Most people that have participated in genocide and situations that involve committing inhumane acts against others are ordinary persons. It is therefore legitimate to say that most people do have latency in them to participate in evil acts (ibid.). What is more important in order to understand evil is to identify the particular conditions and reasons that make some humans commit evil acts. Human endeavour in order to defeat real and unreal evil has created more evil than the effort to do the good (Svendsen 2001). Examples of this are the death camps during the Nazi regime in Germany. Although millions were murdered in these places, for Hitler and the supporters of the Third Reich the extermination of Jews was not evil. The extermination of Jews in the camps was seen as necessary according to Nazi law and ideology so as to get rid of unwanted elements. As such it was perceived as necessary and not as murder. In this context it was the regime of Hitler that defined what was evil and good. The aim in the Third Reich was to reach a world without any Jews. To reach this that which was considered evil – the Jews – had to be exterminated. The reasons given by the aggressor behind evil acts are not related to a pure evil; rather, they are about removing that which is seen as evil. In this setting a clear line between "us" the good and "them" the bad is created (ibid.).

The philosopher Arne Johan Vetlesen (2005) does not agree with Svendsen's notions about evil (2001) or Arendt's banal evil. For Vetlesen, evil acts are connected to organised evil. In his thinking evil is not a result of humans creating a particular society but rather about pure horrible actions committed against other human beings in order to be gruesome. He is particularly preoccupied with organised collective evil acts best exemplified in genocide. When people commit evil acts against other humans because the acts are evil, then we must

call such acts what they are, evil. Using the example of Holocaust, Vetlesen (2005) claims that the idea behind the death camps was not about creating a new world but simply about evil. It was a place made for murder.

It is important to see how conditions in our society can help make strong leaders or authorities create a feeling of being endanered in a community (Vetlesen 2005). When the community feels threatened it will feel the need to react towards that which is threatening them. This thinking will always be based on a two-part world view, "us" who are threatened and "them" who threaten us. By dividing humans into two such groups, one will always be in a more powerful situation than the other group.

The evilness found in Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera were real experiences for many people in the community that suffered injustices. The evilness that was introduced might be understood in Arendt's perspective as radical evil, "as the transformation of human nature itself" (Arendt 1973:458). People in the community were converted into a predictable mass. These humans would not act on their own but as being told. This view on evil was later modified by Arendt to understand evil as banal. Those committing the evil acts where "just following" orders. They were mere instruments. This was the case for many of the first followers of the community.

At the same time the reasons for committing such atrocities were complex. For some the reason was primarily instrumental (Svendsen 2001), where evil was used as a means to reach an end, that of constructing their ideal society in Chile. For others, the evil acts were committed in the belief that they were in fact good, i.e. idealistic evil (ibid.). In the name of constructing their perfect community, evil acts were committed thinking they were the right thing to do. Other community members on the other hand did not reflect on the consequences of their evil actions but simply did their work (ibid.).

This stands in strong contradiction to those members that organised and committed evil acts against others in Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera knowing that they were gruesome acts (Vetlesen 2005). There were in other words many possible and different reasons behind the thinking and acts of the first followers.

The process towards totalitarianism happened gradually upon arrival in Chile. The community felt threatened by the communist forces in Chile of the '60s and the socialist government of President Allende. It is in this context that the community developed a set of thinking according to which humans were divided into two groups; "us" who are threatened and "they" who are threatening us. The creation of such categories to a certain degree led individuals away from their individual histories. The individuals will primarily be associated

with their belonging to or "imagined membership in an abstract, socially constructed grouping" (Hinton 2004:284). This focus on membership in a group rather than the individual is a mark of violent societies (Hinton 2004). This process of generating differences and creating "us" versus "them" involves essentialisation, stigmatisation and the creation of groups for elimination. The victim group is marked as a target group; these "others" are represented as legitimate objectives of violence.

Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera started to organise violent acts against "them" – everybody in the community that did not obey those in power and other external persons that were perceived as enemy such as communists. While the majority of left-wing Chileans brought to the community were tortured, killed and "disappeared", the situation was different for the community members, and in particular those that were seen as "threating" the community by not obeying orders. They were not killed but exposed to physical and psychological violence; "treated" with electroshocks, given forced medical treatment with strong sedatives such as Valium, beaten, isolated for long period of time, denied food and water. Many community children, mainly boys and young men, were sexually molested and abused by the former leader.

7.5 Complex understandings

On a collective level the community issued a public declaration where they apologised to the Chilean nation for past injustices. Internally in the community the understanding of what had happened in former times is a complex and painful process for most members, and, indeed, it is a process that is still ongoing.

In the aftermath of the years of totalitarian rule and violence in the community the process is now moving towards reconciliation. The task of reconciliation is to re-establish functional relationships between opposing groups and reconcile conflicting views of the past. Reconciliation will be particularly difficult in Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera. There is no consensus in the community about what has happened in the past. Some factions, in particular the older generation, still argue that there was no unnecessary violence, while others, in particular the younger generation, claim that injustices have been committed against them.

Many of the younger generation that were subjected to a violent upbringing had the need to talk about this, and ask the older generation why this had happened. This brought them into contradiction with many of the older generation who wanted to preserve silence

regarding the children's torture, and at least ensure that knowledge of this did not spread outside of the community. For some of the people who would rather "forget" the past – or not openly talk about it – memory is a kind of "closed case", that comes with an understanding that "some themes and some remembrances (are) so explosive – conflictive and intractable – that little (can) be gained from a public opening and airing of the contents inside" (Stern 2004:89). This shows how what of the past one remembers or don't want to remember, and how it is interpreted is contentious. In the community "there are different ways of constructing the past, different types of memories, and diverse imaginings of a collective future filtered through individual and socially significant experiences, longings, and fears" (Sanabria 2007:363). As expressed by Albert:

What happened with the torture of the children also has its story. A year or more after Paul Schäfer left the community, two from my age group wanted to go to the media about this. This was because we could never talk about it. Then what happened is that all the people who participated in the torture of the children gathered all of us one day and read a letter and asked for forgiveness. I did not like it. I thought if someone asks for forgiveness it should not happen under pressure. They had 30 years or more to ask for forgiveness. And they didn't think about it for all that time. Thinking about how they came all together against one before, the same jerarcas (leaders)*, or how to call them and others. One was afraid of them throughout a whole life or had some resentment towards them. I forgive them, no problem, but then I will start to talk. Personally almost nobody has asked me for forgiveness. And some of them were so cruel and it can't be that they forgot it. I think about how they gathered us in groups to ask for forgiveness and after they forced us not to talk more about it. They forced us to not talk more about it. It can't be. It is not right. Then later one or two of them that came asked me for forgiveness. I still have a distance to those people although they asked me for forgiveness. I have distance and resentment to them. I can't eliminate that. I have it in me.*

As Albert tells it, a group of people, in particular representatives of the older generation belonging to the community, apologise for the "treatment" (torture) of children in the community. In Albert's view this was not right. He did not feel that it was an honest apology since it only came after he and the others wanted to go public with it. The persons that begged for apology belonged principally to the older generation, and had violated the law and as such were guilty of their acts. It may be that some of these persons had a genuine conviction that their former acts were wrong, but most of the older people had great problems changing their

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worldview overnight. There were many people of the first generation who believed in Paul Schäfer as a heavenly man and felt the presence of God through his preaching. The ideology that was stated by those in power was that nobody should intervene between God and oneself. The first followers believed in their leader and his words. In this view there was no room for children or family, only for God and Schäfer. For many of the older generation, Schäfer continued to be a man of God after he was arrested and convicted.

Albert told me about one conversation he had with his parents after Schäfer's arrest. He told them about the abuses and torture he had experienced during his life in the community. Albert then asked his parents how they could bring him to the system in Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera and to the former leader when he was a little boy. In Albert`s words: *I said to my mother: you delivered us to that criminal man. Then my mother said: be careful, careful. Do not judge, do not judge. That is a matter for God. This she said because I said that Paul Schäfer was a criminal. Like that. It is difficult.* In spite of the torture Albert's mother did not accept that Albert said Schäfer was criminal. For Albert's mother, Schäfer was still very much a man of God. Many of the people who belonged to the younger generation have problems understanding the choices the older generation in the community made.

In spite of his painful past Albert at this time wanted to continue to live in the community.[115] He felt that he ought to, *well it is also a problem of consciousness that I have. I feel obligations when it comes to the others that live here.* Albert felt that he had to continue working for the community. He thought especially about the old people who needed financial support and care. His painful experiences from his childhood had not changed his feelings of commitment towards the community.

On the other hand he was not seen as loyal, among other things because of his wish to speak out about his life experiences from the community. "Social conflict emerges when personal memories begin to contest collective understandings, public representations, and social practices" (George 1996:59). Albert told me on different occasions how he had been in trouble with other members, in particular the older generation that had been in power, because of his will to speak out. He had experienced being forced off the road while in his car by former leaders; he received complaints about his work and people criticised his family. Albert interpreted these events as ways of communicating to him the unwillingness of many community members towards his openness. In the act of telling me his memories or "bringing out a memory" Albert tried to legitimate and redefine the collective public memory of the

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[115] Years later Albert and his family would move from Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera and settled further south in Chile.

community to include experiences of torture (George 1996:52). Through his performative testimonial act Albert became potentially "difficult" in the eyes of the others, in particular the older ones in the community who did not want the internal "dark" side of the community to be exposed.

It was particularly difficult for the first generation that came as adults to Chile to understand what had failed in their search for meaning, as they had constructed their own community but ended up making it a totalitarian one. This does not imply that all of the older generation admitted the abuses against the community children. Many denied and repressed what had happened and wanted to leave the past behind in silence. Many of the younger inhabitants would blame the older generations that they claimed had knowledge about the established society outside the community. They had given everything, including their own children, to the community. They had knowledge about what was morally right and wrong when they came to Chile to construct their ideal society.

In spite of this the older generation would be part of making their utopian dream a totalitarian community, with a total domination of the people through terror and indoctrination. The first followers became what Arendt called "the working hands" of totalitarianism. How could this happen? Womas uttered it like this:

To be deceived one always has to be two parts. One part that deceives and another part that is permitting to be deceived and then the question is as I said why was it possible that I was deceived as much and that is a question that one almost asks oneself every day. How was it possible to deceive as much, tremendously, and profoundly? One is always trying to find a response that so far has not been given 100 per cent. It is a pity to see that I have failed in many things, therefore it is of no help to try to find all the guilt in Paul Schäfer; it is better to search for where I failed to avoid that something similar happens and that is much more important. Where did we fail? Where Schäfer failed maybe the legal system will say something about but much more important is that we are clear about what happened with us in the past, why was it possible to deceive us as much? Why did we tolerate that others were punished?

Many people, in particular the first followers were deceived by Paul Schäfer among others through speeches, and a claimed closeness to God. But as Womas asked, why did people in the community tolerate that others were punished?

There were many good things, good ones but also bad things that one today thinks, how could that happen? We ask ourselves and we also think about a certain collective guilt. But to define where one has guilt is rather difficult. If one lives in a totalitarian system the decisions one takes oneself are quite difficult until one doesn't see where the correct path is. In this manner the totalitarian life has the effect that today many people don't have the criteria to make their decisions, they don't have the ways to do it, it is difficult (Womas).

Womas' words reflect how difficult it is for human beings to make decisions in totalitarian systems. One of the steps to reach a total domination is through destroying the human as a moral person (Arendt 1973). It became hard for people in the community to differentiate between what was right and wrong. The world that was created in the community was twisted; it was a fantasy world.

The great majority of inhabitants I met explained that Schäfer presented those that did not want to follow the rules or his orders as *wrong and sick people who were possessed by the Devil* and therefore needed treatment. The metaphors of contamination and purity are often used by violent regimes as a way to mark difference (Hinton 2004). In the community those individuals that did not agree in the saying of those in power and the ideology were perceived and presented for the collective as mentally ill and possessed by the devil. These persons were in one or another way "contaminated" in their head or soul, and could "infect" others in the community with their "illness". These persons would need "special treatment". In the case of the Nazi regime those perceived as enemy of the Third Reich were in the end sent to concentrations camp with a view to eliminating them. The same happened with the "enemies" of Khmer Rouge that were killed. The internal (community members) and external (non-members) "opponents" of Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera would be isolated from the rest of the community, and exposed for different kinds of physical and psychical torture, while most of the external opponents (basically left-wing Chileans) were ultimately killed. The way the internal opponents were treated was part of an imagery of perceiving "them" as mentally and spiritually sick – and in need of being "cleaned up". Although the participation of community members in the torture and killing of left-wing Chileans was decided by those in power and General Pinochet, many of the people in the community perceive this group as dangerous and necessary to kill.

People that were perceived as "mentally ill" and that needed treatment in order to become "mentally well", were placed in specific places in the community. This was a way those in power in Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera created differences among those that were

not "sick" and those that were perceived as "needing treatment". By placing the victims in established contexts possible uncertainty was dealt with, and the space became a space that defined and supported the supposed identities as "ill " "by "their" very location in a space" (Hinton 2004:286).

There were certain spaces in the community where people viewed as "mentally ill" were given harsher treatment, less food, given forced medication, beaten, tortured with electricity, and kept in isolation and so on. In this context the majority of the people shared this understanding of who was ill and needed treatment, and thus reinforced the system and idea that a person was mentally "ill" if the person did not follow the rules in the community. In this way the power of group dynamics that developed in the community somehow contributed to totalitarian thinking and acts.

Herr Paul Schäfer had a politics or how to say it, when one did not follow the path that was desired, he knew how to disqualify the person as too lazy. Or almost as mentally ill, or obsessed by the bad spirits; when one saw somebody who did not show normal reactions or was more slow then one thought that that is someone who is out of the faith, out of all that is normal. Life was like that, someone who was marginalised the community would accept because what Schäfer did or ordered was correct. Because everybody thought that he was almost a man without defects. A man who had a direct connection to God and everybody accepted what he did because nobody could imagine that he could do something bad, because he justified everything with texts from the bible...and those were his tools (Womas).

Womas' words resemble what Arendt (1973) discussed as a kind of evil that allows no room for individuality and critical thinking. The human being is no longer seen as a responsible individual but rather as someone who is subordinated to an ideology or all-powerful leader. Humans were here seen as "raw material" that could be shaped and made to fit a particular thinking. Those that did not submit to the ideology or the words of Schäfer were perceived as sick and in need of treatment.

Most people were afraid for their leader. When I asked Womas if he did not see other people in the community suffering he told me: *Yes, I saw sometimes when people were not well but one would never dare to ask anything. One would then start something that was not good*. Womas belonged to the former elite in the community. His explanation for not doing anything was that he was afraid of the former leader. He responded out of fear of the authority. Many of the people I got to know confirmed that they could see that people were in pain and

suffered, as well as observing acts of violence against others. The reason for not doing anything was often fear but also because many thought they were doing the right thing by remaining silent. People had been subjected to a particular way of looking at the world through indoctrination and terror that coloured every aspects of social life.

Many of the members closed their eyes to the violent acts and thinking in Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera. This was particularly relevant for the older generation that had experiences and knew German society, and should had learned what was morally right and wrong. This act of "closing their eyes" may have been a way of dealing with unpleasant feelings and conflicts that can create tension for the subject. This can be seen as a kind of defence mechanism. Freud developed the theory of repression to describe the psychological process of memory repression (Freud and Breuer 1995). Repression means that the person will forget what is repressed but rather that the memory will exist in their unconscious mind. This mechanism may have been present among some of the members in the process of constructing their community, particularly in the totalitarian phase and probably continues present today. To talk about the story of the community was not easy, in particular among the older generation. The wish to "forget" and remain silent was strong among many of the older inhabitants. To "forget" is a way of defending oneself. "Forgetting" is a way of keeping order in our soul, mind and spirit (Nietzsche 2010). Furthermore it was not only difficult to realize what had happened for most of the older members but also to understand and articulate this understanding in words.

For those who belonged to the elite of the former leadership, such as Sigmund, facing their past was complex. He expressed pain through words and body language when trying to talk about the past. During one filmed conversation with Sigmund he told me: *He* (Paul Schäfer) *abused all of us. He abused our faith, and our God, but I don't know how to explain it. Truly we can still not explain to ourselves what happened and when we don't know how to explain it then how can we explain to others?* In this transcription I have taken away all the pauses Sigmund needed in order to tell me this. In the filmed material this aspect is visible. During our conversations Sigmund would say a word or two and stop, and just look out the window without finding words to express his feelings and thinking, before he continued again. All his body language expressed that this was both a difficult topic to express and through words. Realising the complexities in making representations of people's pain, the filmed interview serves as an example of how film as a medium can capture sensory experiences, because it is a "language" closer to the multidimensionality of the subject itself – that is, a

language operating in visual, aural, verbal, temporal, and even …tactile domains"
(MacDougall 2006:116).

Film is particularly well suited for mediating the experiences that are near and particular. It can allow us to see the postures, facial expressions, tone of voice and gestures and so on (MacDougall 2006:269). Many filmed conversations I had with community members reflected how hard it is for people to tell about their experiences of living in the community.

DVD REF 14: VIDEO (BY MD)

Many of the former generation still do not accept that violence and torture were used against many of the people who grew up in the community. Both Sigmund, and his wife who was one of two doctors in the community hospital, now face legal charges. When I asked Sigmund to tell me why he is charged he told me:

Once obviously I was part of the system and as such I can't separate my person from any of the very cruel things that happened here. Whether I knew or did not know, or did not want to know is not important. That is a thing for the law. My guilt in front of God is a completely different dimension. What I get now as penitentiary guilt is because of the index card made in collaboration with (the former) *security forces of the country. To be trapped in politics is something rather theoretical. Personally I have not damaged anybody but justice is human and not always justice and there are people that do not want to forgive. They heat up the atmosphere, there is thus only revenge and punishment left. There is no – in some groups – no wish to forgive. That makes it more difficult to have justice. Paul Schäfer had the idea of organising an archive of all the people belonging to the left. That was the aim at the beginning of the index card. But such a thing grows by its own force.*

For Sigmund it is not important if he knew that the acts he committed and system he was part of were wrong or not. Although he is convicted by a court the legal dimension is not as important for him as his guilt before God. Sigmund interprets his sentence and the way the Chilean juridical system treats him (and others from the community) as being part of a

political play and of revenge of the political left against Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera for being part of the political right and supporting Pinochet.

Sigmund belonged to the elite in the community and was allowed to marry and have children. He was one of the very few with academic skills and a doctoral degree from Germany when coming to Chile. In former times he used to be the one who once a week told the members about the established world. Together with the other leaders he decided what to tell and as such created an image of a distorted world that was not real. He would also help in the control of the members through dictating letters sent to family in Europe. Furthermore he worked with the secret Chilean police and wrote the index that included interrogations from torture sequences from missing left-wing Chileans. Sigmund has contributed to acts that are part of a totalitarian community. He was part of "the hands" that follow up one useful action with another useful action. These individuals will only do what they are told to do. It is such individuals that will keep the system going without pause or reflecting on their own actions. They have a blind belief that there is another power than their own actions that are the driving force. For Sigmund this other power was the feeling of proximity to God through Schäfer. In this perspective Sigmund considers himself and his actions as insignificant, and as he said: *Personally I have not damaged anybody.*

Like Sigmund, many community members portrayed themselves as mislead and used - as passive instruments of Paul Schäfer. They were just following Schäfer's orders. In this light, the reason for the violent acts was the result of obedience to Paul Schäfer and not to people's volition. When asked why they committed brutal acts, genocidal perpetrators all over the world have claimed that they were "Just following orders" (Hinton 2004:277). One of the main reasons according to Hinton why many former Khmer Rouge cadres participated in genocide was that they were just "following orders" (2004). As one of his main informants named Lor, a former Khmer Rouge cadre told him: "I had to obey the orders of my superiors. If they ordered me to do something, I would do it. If we didn't obey, we would have been killed" (Hinton 2004:276).

In *Eichmann in Jerusalem* (Arendt 2006) Arendt argues for how Eichmann, who organised the transportation of millions of Jews to the death camps, was not an "evil man". In Arendt's view Eichmann was only a hard working bureaucrat, "only obeying orders". He was just a devoted worker, doing his work as told by his superior as best he could. Eichmann was following the moral and juridical norms that he was obligated to follow in his position during the Third Reich. He did not reflect over the consequences of what the actual events implied. For Arendt, Eichmann was an example of "banal evil". This implies that genocide is not

always necessarily born out of evil wishes but rather out of devoted agents' loyalty to some superior norms. These agents have a genuine absence when it comes to the ability to reflect and think over their acts. Arendt's words reflect an understanding of evil that is not connected to a wish to act out evil that motivates the aggressors. To take this one step further, this evil is not associated with any personal motivations, it is "empty". For Arendt's understanding of evil, it is incomprehensible because it is so "empty"; it is superficial, and therefore banal. Evil cannot be understood because it cannot be seen in relation to anything else. As it is without relation to anything, there is nothing by which it could be justified.

The examples of Adolf Eichman, of the perpetrators of the Cambodian genocide, and that of the "teachers" in the Milgram experiment demonstrate that people can commit terrible acts simply by following orders and being obedient to an authority. This psychosocial process where people come to view themselves as "a vehicle" for doing as told by authorities occurs in diverse contexts (Milgram 1974). In particular "in contexts of strong situational constraint, extremely evil acts may be perpetrated in a "banal" manner (Hinton 2004:278). This is very much how many of the first followers in Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera, such as Sigmund and Womas wants to explain their role in the cruel acts that occurred in their community. They were following the orders of Paul Schäfer, and were passive subjects, that could and did not dare to do otherwise.

There is no doubt that "obedience to authority" is a fundamental aspect of acts and thinking that form part of genocidal and totalitarian systems. What this explanation does not explore much is the subjectivity that is involved in such acts. There may be many motivations behind people's violent acts. These can be related to wanting more power, showing loyalty to a leader/community, group dynamics, fear, and so on. Hinton (2004) describes an episode where some cadres are send to kill a man but end up not only killing him but also eating the victim's liver. The soldiers first open the stomach of the man with a knife, and take out the liver which is sliced and then fried, and finally consumed among the soldier group. How to understand that they not only kill him but decided also to eat his liver? Through this example Hinton (ibid.) suggests that when perpetrators kill "much more is going on than simple obedience or ideological fanaticism" (Hinton 2004:295). The grotesque example of human cannibalism presented by Hinton (ibid.) reflects very well how humans are creators of meaning that will act not only out of obedience to authority but are active subjects constructing meaning through their violent practices. Perpetrators and others committing passive or active violent acts against others, are active meaning-creators "suffused with meaning" (Hinton 2004:289). Humans engage in a meaning-making process roughly similar

to what Lèvi-Strauss (1996) called "bricolage". This bricolage refers to a process of instances in which something is constructed from a diverse range of resources that are at hand. When it comes to many of the perpetrators participating in the Cambodian genocide or the first followers of Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera, they "draw upon a toolkit of personal and cultural knowledge to overcome their hesitations" in order to make sense of their violent acts (Hinton 2004:30). Often they will take the meanings suggested by the ideology of those in power that constructs "enemies" and legitimates why they should be killed or "treated" in a specific manner.

To better understand the local motivations of those behind cruel acts (passive or active) it is necessary to look at how those in power construct an ideology that "they make sense, are compelling, and "take" among its followers" (Hinton 2004:287). The leaders of Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera localised their ideology in order to make them appeal to their followers. The emphasis on the threat of communism, hard work in order to construct a German charitable community in Chile were all issues that appealed to the first followers. This ideology blended the new and the old.

Violent regimes facilitate the process of killing and committing violent acts against other humans by making structural changes that undermine moral restrains, create an identifiable target group, endorsing a particular ideology that dehumanise people, and creating specific contexts where violence was legitimated as the right thing to do. In spite of those in power trying to legitimate the harming of other humans this is not necessarily experienced as an easy process by those committing the violent acts. This might be particularly relevant the first time one kills or harms others. As shown by the Milgram experiments, overcoming moral prohibitions against the killing or harming of other humans may create vast tensions. The person that was the teacher and administered electric shocks to their "students," started to feel uncomfortable, sweat, and complain during the experiment. In order to handle this tension many of the teachers started relocating their responsibility and legitimating the shocks as part of scientific advancement which it was assumed would constitute a positive achievement for society at large.

The first generation of community members who were involved passively or actively in vicious acts against other human beings in their community engaged in similar moves to those of the teachers in Milgram's experiment. Most of them most likely also had to overcome moral prohibitions against harming others, by transferring responsibility to an ideology and to those in powers, and justifying their acts as the right thing to do according to an ideology – in order to construct their community. Over the years most of the first adult followers almost

certainly experienced psychosocial dissonance after coming to Chile and gradually became desensitised as they continued to participate actively or passively in inhumane acts, "the continuum of destructiveness" (Staub 1989).

Milgram's experiment has been criticised on ethical grounds but also for the validation of the results. Some claimed that the significance for the result if the "pupil" was out of sight and ears of the "teacher" should be considered. More "teachers" administered what they believed to be fatal electric shocks if they could not see or hear the "pupil". People tend to distance themselves from humans that are submitted to violence (Myers 1990). Although the first followers did see and hear their "pupils", there was another kind of distance involved, the one created by differences; those perceived as mentally ill and those seen as not. In Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera the difference was manufactured through factors such as structural changes, ideology, propaganda and terror, and a distance was created among "us", represented by those that followed blindly their leader, and between "them", represented by those that were seen as "sick" and needed treatment.

Most of the first community members in time became part of a system in Chile where they acted according to an ideology and all-powerful leader. This generation became captured in a web, and somehow eventually they were unable to find a way out of this. Nevertheless, Sigmund and many others in the community are personally responsible for having being the helping hands that engaged and permitted a totalitarian thinking to develop and be established. "…The question of personal responsibility under dictatorship cannot permit the shifting of responsibility from man to system, the system cannot be left out of account altogether" (Arendt 203:32).

During much of the time when I got to know Sigmund his wife was in jail in Santiago. Throughout this time the testimony of his wife was published in the Chilean newspapers; she admitted to having treated community children with electric shock and administering forced medication. Sigmund explained to me why his wife was in jail:

She used, applied medical practices on people who did not need the medical treatment. Obviously she depended on Paul Schäfer, like all of us. He was so smart that he always gave false diagnoses and said: help me, help the children, they need your help, and so she did things that she should not have done.

Sigmund says that his wife "applied medical practices" instead of saying that she gave children electric shocks and tortured them, as revealed by Albert's account. From the accounts

I have heard, the use of electric shock on the community children was clearly not part of any medical treatment. Sigmund's choice of words is in reality a subtle control of language and a way to mask the truth. Through this subtle use of language, the reality is kept beyond the reach of consciousness. This is in accordance with Arendt that noticed that the Nazis realized that by changing the words used to signify a certain reality, the truth could be masked or evaded.

Although the first followers were those who introduced and established a culture of terror where it was primarily the younger generation in the community that was submitted to violence, most of the members have been marked by living in this totalitarian community. Womas belonged to the elite and was allowed to travel in and out of Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera. He was allowed to learn to drive and worked among other things making films for the community. In spite of his status, Womas and Davida were not allowed to marry when they wanted. They hid their love for years. On the other hand, Womas was not submitted to such experiences of torture as Albert was during his childhood in the community. Albert was never allowed to drive[116] any car and he was put to work in the woods far away from the main gate. At the time of my fieldwork, Albert was still being directed by the older generation, for example being told how to deal with his former experiences of torture, and how to live his life.

In spite of their painful past, most of the younger generations that remain feel a commitment to the older generation to contribute to the development of the community. The situation of having victims living together with perpetrators with the wish to reconstruct their community out of commitment is complex, to say the least. The majority of people living in Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera felt a loss of their dignity after all the public revelations and internal painful experiences, and a loss of faith in one powerful man. The world-view that had been constructed was destroyed and most people needed to learn about life again. As Sebastian told me: *Life today is better but more difficult because we don't know the life...the normal one. One can compare it with being in a cage...they took away the cage but we don't know how to fly*.

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[116] After 2000 and the ensuing changes in Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera, Albert was allowed to learn to drive.

CHAPTER EIGHT:

FINAL WORDS – AN ETHNOGRAPHERS CONFESSION

8.1 *Being There*

Ending this thesis has made me reflect on my journey into Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera and how this thesis came about. I started this project with a specific doctoral project plan. I wanted to explore what kind of community this was, and the different self-representations of the community, and how the surrounding world had received and responded to these representations. I was interested in the social communication of this community with the outer world, and how this communication was expressed through material and aesthetic symbols. My original focus was motivated by my background as a visual anthropologist, and out of a naive belief that this topic might facilitate access to the community with a view to conducting fieldwork. On a more personal level I believe I was curious about Chile, and my Chilean identity. This, I believe, was much how my initial project started. In the end I have written a thesis about how the dream of constructing a utopian community was transformed into a nightmare, and the community instead transformed itself into a totalitarian community.

What led me to change my topic, and write this thesis? My experiences from working with my text have made me realize that the practice of doing ethnography has its own logic. Fieldwork is both a time of exploration and of closure. As ethnographers doing fieldwork, we aim to explore specific topics. The process is characterised by having a specific plan that will be realised in a specific way. At the same time the process is an exploration of social life as it plays out in front of us. This dialectic makes fieldwork an unpredictable process. My experiences and encounters during fieldwork led me towards a field of human suffering, and made it necessary for me to change course. This change implied not only a change of topic but also of my understanding. Entering this landscape of human pain, victims and assailant challenged my established perspectives and thinking.

Trained as an anthropologist and in the tradition of "I was not only there, I was one of them, I speak with their voice" tradition (Geertz 1988:76), I wanted to understand Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera. This ideal for anthropological fieldwork, set out by Bronislaw Malinowski, implies long periods of fieldwork, fluent knowledge of local language and is based on a method of participant observation. Underlying this approach was the principle that the anthropologist should "immerse" himself or herself as deeply as possible into the foreign culture. As Malinowski wrote in the introduction to *Argonauts of the Western Pacific*: *An*

account of native enterprise and adventure in the Archipelagoes of Melanesian New Guinea: "It is good for the ethnographer to put aside camera, notebook and pencil, and join in himself in what is going on…." (1922: introduction). For Malinowski one grasps the exotic by "losing oneself, one`s soul maybe, in those immediacies" (Geertz 1988:77). The aim of total immersion advocated by Malinowski should lead to an understanding from what was perceived as the native`s point of view. "Out of such plunges into the life of the natives…I have carried away a distinct feeling that…their manner of being became more transparent and easily understandable than it had been before" (Malinowski 1922:21). As I have detailed in this work, "immersing" myself into Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera with a view to understanding this community and grasp the native`s point of view turned out to be both complex and difficult.

To work with this doctoral project has also involved facing and "immersing" into my own background as a child of Chileans in exile. Through learning about this community I have learned more about Chile`s painful past. I have acquired more knowledge about the political right and milieux in Chile that supported the military coup and regime. This has given me a better understanding of the complexities of the military coup in 1973 and the military regime that followed. I have realised that many Chileans and others in Chile supported the military coup. Furthermore, I gained a deeper understanding of what it is like to live in a totalitarian system and how this can dealt with by individuals.

To work with my thesis became for me "the comprehension of the self by the detour of the other" (Ricoeur quoted in Rabinow 1977:5). This aspect made the work with this thesis a personal journey in many ways and rich in emotions. In *Never in Anger: Portrait of an Eskimo Family* (1970), Jean Briggs writes of her experiences of doing fieldwork in a particular context with a focus on emotions and personhood as important in ethnography. "Knowing involves the whole self not just the intellect…"(Kondo 1986:85). The inclusion of one`s personal reactions in scholarly anthropological work as found in Briggs work can be seen as an early example of self-reflexivity in ethnographic writing. My own experiences from fieldwork support Briggs` thinking about how knowing involves the whole self and how "Experience, as we know, has ways of boiling over, and making us correct our present formulas" (James 1978: 106).

The point that ethnography is also a personal journey became evident when Malinowski's private diary from fieldwork was published posthumously under the title, *A Diary In The Strict Sense Of The Term* (1967). The diary revealed a world quite different from that described in his work on the Western Pacific. In the diary it is obvious that Malinowski

was frustrated with the population he was studying and felt homesick. "He had rude things to say about the natives he was living with and rude words to say it in. He spent great deal of his time wishing he were elsewhere" (Geertz 1979: 226). Further, the diary also reports Malinowski's sexual fantasies. The diary set off a storm of controversy. Many anthropologists felt that the publication was harmful to the memory of one of the greatest men in the history of anthropology. The diary was probably not written to be published, and was written in a deeply personal and brutally honest style. In the introduction to the published diary the reader is prepared and forewarned by Raymond Firth:

> Certain passages…may even nowadays offend or shock the reader, and some readers may be impressed…by the revelation of elements of brutality, even degradation, which the record shows on occasion. My own reflection on this is to advise anyone who wishes to sneer at passages in this diary to be first equally frank in his own thoughts and writings, and then judge again (1967: xix).

For Geertz, the diary is disturbing not because of what is says about Malinowski but because of what it says about "Being There" (1988:76). A total immersion approach to ethnography implies that there is a lot more than native life to "immerse" into. For ethnographers there is the isolation, the memory of home and the landscape, to mention some of the factors shaping his or her experience, but above all there is the self (ibid.). "…there is the capriciousness of one`s passions, the weakness of one`s constitution, and the vagrancies of one`s thoughts: that nigrescent thing, the self" (Geertz 1988:77). Our own experiences influence our understanding of the field. We do fieldwork as whole persons. This understanding means that we cannot fulfill the requirement of Margaret Mead, who suggests that: "…field work is a very difficult thing to do: To do it well, one has to sweep one`s mind clear of every presupposition, even those about other cultures in the same part of the worl in which one is working" (Mead 1972:143). As Nergård claim "The one doing fieldwork can`t get rid of its experience (2001:160).[117]

To do fieldwork is not only about getting to know another culture, and of being frustrated as a fieldworker, it also about hypocrisy, and of power. These dark aspects of fieldwork are called "Symbolic violence" by Rabinow. In his work about Morocco, *Reflections on Fieldwork* (1977), Paul Rabinow sets several of his informants off against one

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[117] My translation to English.

another in order to uncover some village conflicts they did not want to uncover. Rabinow writes:

> My response was essentially an act of violence; it was carried out on a symbolic level, but it was violence nonetheless. I was transgressing the integrity of my informants…I knew (what I was doing) would coerce, almost blackmail, (them) into explaining aspects of their lives which they had thus far passionately shielded from me…To those who claim that some form of symbolic violence was not part of their own field experience, I reply simply that I do not believe them. It is inherent in the structure of the situation (Rabinow 1977: 129).

Rabinows` reflections from his fieldwork experiences confirm Geertz words of "Being There": "There is something corrupting about it all together" (1988:97).

My experiences from fieldwork in Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera implied that I was meddling with people's agony. Several times I experienced how people found it hard and painful to talk about their life experiences. However, pain was not limited to when they talked, but also appeared when they read about their past. As one of my informants and friends from the community Jan told me after reading an early final version of my thesis, *it is painful to read, I had to put it away*. Reading about his community and about people he knew personally was distressing for Jan. Although many people wanted to tell me about their experiences, I tried during fieldwork and subsequently to be gentle and allow for people`s emotional reactions. I made efforts not to be pushy, to take care and not to ask questions if people did not want to respond. Despite this, fully aware of the discomfort it created among people when they talked about their life in the community I continued with my doctoral project in order to better understand Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera. This can be seen as a kind of symbolic violence. Like Rabinow, I also occasionally set some of my informants off against one another in order to uncover some conflicts they did not want to uncover. In this light, my experiences from fieldwork and later have taught me how "Being There" is - as Geertz claims corrupt.

As I have hopefully managed to reflect in this thesis, the practice of doing ethnography can be extremely personal. How to deal with these aspects of doing ethnography, a journey that is both personal and a professional one at the same time, when aiming for an authentic account of an unfamiliar way of life? Ethnographers have to negotiate what one has been through "out there" to what one says "back here", and Geertz describes this journey literary in character (Geertz 1988:78). Malinowski deals with this matter in his writing by

creating two fundamentally opposing images, named respectively; ""the competent and experienced ethnographer" and the "chronicler and spokesman of …a few thousand "savages," practically naked"" (Geertz 1988:79). The use of excerpts from fieldwork diaries in ethnographic writing – in the manner of Malinowski - has been common among some ethnographers. Roland Barthes had his doubt about the value of the use of journals:

> I guess I could diagnose this diary disease: an insoluble doubt as to the value of what one writes in it…I note with discouragement the artifice of "sincerity," the artistic mediocrity of the "spontaneous"; worse still: I am disgusted and irritated to find a "pose" I certainly hadn`t intended: in a journal situation, and precisely because it doesn't "work" – doesn't get transformed by the action of work- *I* is a *poseur:* a matter of effect, not of intention, the whole difficulty of literature is here (Barthes 1989: 359).

What we can say about the use of fieldwork diaries among ethnographers is that it makes us aware how difficult representing the research process in the product of research is.

Moreover, doing fieldwork implies a meeting between two cultures, represented by the subject of study – the people, and the researcher. Being an outsider to a culture (as the researcher is, especially at the beginning of the process), not knowing the codes, the cultural context she or he is entering into, can contribute to misunderstandings and, for the researcher, to the drawing of mistaken conclusions. In many ways, doing fieldwork is characterised by making mistakes. These mistakes happen because the fieldworkers' experiences and concepts do not match with ones encountered in the field (Nergård 2001). Fieldwork is a process where objects and acts change context – from the fieldworkers to the informants – from arrangements that are brought to the field to the arrangements that already exist there (Nergård 2001:162). [118] Prior to exploring a different culture, the researcher needs to understand the cultural context.

I asked the wrong questions when I started my fieldwork. I wanted to know about the self-presentations of Villa Baviera/Colonia Dignidad, and asked community members - including some who later became my informants - questions about their experiences from performances. I experienced how many of the people I met had problems understanding my interest in this topic. It seemed that my questions did not make sense to them. In time, Albert, who became my friend and informant replied to this question with a smile, saying: "…yes we

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[118] My translation.

used to perform but this is not all of it". Early on, but without understanding why at the time, I sensed that my questions generated tension among the people I got to know in the community. The anthropologist Mary Douglas explained this in her book *Purity and Danger* (1966) in terms she calls "matter out of place". In her thinking, all societies have an order of classification which gives a sustaining sense of order to a culture. What disturbs is what Douglas calls "matter out of place"; those things that are found outside their order, for example dirt in the bedroom, because it doesn't belong there. I experienced how my questions were seen as not belonging; - among the people I meet in the community, they were "matter out of place".

8.2 The becoming of this thesis

Reading about Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera before I went to do fieldwork coloured my perception of this particular community. Most of what I read was related to human rights abuses committed by members of the community against leftwing Chileans and the community`s own members. This made me curious, and I asked myself, was this such a dark community? I found it hard to believe that this was the only truth behind this German community in Chile.

Although I was curious, I was also afraid at this time. In the period before I left for fieldwork I had nightmares. I dreamt that I was being shot. In my dreams I could feel the bullet hitting me. This sense of fear became stronger when one of the professors from Universidad de Chile told me that the university could not appoint a supervisor for my project since they could not secure my security while in the community. My family tried to talk me out of this project, arguing that is was dangerous.

In spite of being afraid I thought that behind the darkness of Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera there had to be something else, connected to being human and to createing meaning in life. In *The Interpretation of Cultures*, Geertz wrote "man is an animal suspended in webs of significance he himself has spun, I take culture to be those webs, and the analysis of it to be therefore not an experimental science in search of law but an interpretative one in search of meaning."(1973:5). Humans are trying to make sense of their experiences and lives although in different ways and sometimes in ways hard for others to understand. Through my doctoral project I wanted to explore what lay behind this community, and contribute to making the community become more intelligible for Chilean society.

Coming to Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera was like coming to a world of its own. With a particular rhythm in daily life, particular sounds and ways of socialising. It was a place that consisted of multiple layers that were difficult to get to know and understand. I was not allowed to enter the community when I started my fieldwork. I was told that the leaders had to decide whether I would be allowed to enter. Therefore, while waiting for an answer, I sat outside the main entrance where the reception house is located. Here I could follow the social life that developed at this place. Aiming at exploring the social communication of this community through material and aesthetic symbols to the outer world, I found sitting outside the main gate interesting in the beginning.

At the same time, sitting there day after day, with sun and rain, knowing that I was not welcome, and feeling the lack of trust in my person, was not a good feeling. I started to question whether I had any right to impose my project and presence onto this particular community. The unwillingness among the few people from the community that I meet to socialise with me made me feel socially invisible and I became low-spirited. Like Malinowski I felt great frustration during fieldwork, and at one point I started to dislike the community and the people living there. At that moment I did not understand why I was not allowed to enter the place. In my view I was only a doctoral student doing fieldwork with a sincere wish to gain more knowledge about Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera, with a view to making Chilean society at large understand their particular way of life. This was how I experienced this phase during fieldwork. Long after finishing fieldwork, this situation appeared different to me. People had very good reasons for not approaching me while I sat outside the community entrance. After a long life in the community most people were afraid, and would certainly be very careful with a person that was visibly not permitted to enter inside. Furthermore, I understood why I was not allowed to enter the community for a long time. I was perceived as a potential danger by the leadership. They were afraid that I would learn of the abuses many people in the community had been submitted to. At the same time the leadership was afraid that I would get information about what had happened with leftwing Chileans after the military coup.

Years after I started my fieldwork I gradually came to understand the community and my fieldwork experiences in a different light. This process was aided by the course of time; the years created distance to the people I met and to the community. To a certain extent this made it easier for me to deal with the complexities involved in my project. Another aspect that may have contributed in my change of understanding is that since I started this doctoral work I have acquired more life experiences. When I first started I was a rather naive young

girl, curious about the world, without much reflection about the complex field I was entering into. I had a naïve idea that any challenges would be sorted out because I was simply a researcher doing scientific work and not a politician or human right activist. The process of finishing this thesis has made it clear to me that fieldwork and the time after fieldwork represent different scenes. While the scene during fieldwork is coloured by "Being There" as a whole person, the phase after fieldwork is shaped by the process of academic reflection and perspectives.

I believe I was "seduced", in a manner of speaking, for a long time while doing fieldwork. The process of getting to know this particular German community, living in a remote part of Chile and in a particular way made Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera exotic in my eyes. An emphasis on order expressed through nature, and a particular German aesthetics, added to this seduction. In "The Anthropologist as hero" Susan Sontag writes about Levi-Strauss and his perspective of "Let`s go and study the primitive before they disappear" (Sontag 2009:73). I think Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera became that "primitive" other that - in its purest presentation - is rare in our time as ethnographers. It was a community that had constructed a totally separate world with a particular way of thinking at the time when I started my fieldwork, a community that during this time was very much detached from the outer world.

Growing up with a father that never became familiar with life in exile and that lived in Norway in a constant tunnel of a past, I have learned much about melancholy and living with lost dreams. Coming to the community I sensed feelings of melancholy and lost dreams among many of the members. The motivations of the first generation for constructing this community were my first personal glimpse into this community. I heard stories of dreams among many of the first generation that had motivated them to emigrate to Chile, and about the hard work of establishing a charitable community in Chile. Feelings of empathy for many of the people I got to know started to develop in me. I felt the community was not fully understood by Chilean society.

With time, my gaze and understanding of this community would expand and become more complex. This happened gradually as I started to get to know more people in the community, in particular the younger generation, and heard stories of violence and abuse. I felt strong empathy for the persons I met that shared their pain and wounds with me. At the same time I felt terribly helpless and unable to find the right words. What to say to ease their pain? How to repay them for their words and acts of giving me their testimony, given that this meant meddling with their own pain? How to understand their experiences of violence? And

how to express this in my doctoral work? The complexity in my empirical field were further enhanced when I realised that the community consisted of people that had been both subject of violence and been in charge of committing violence against others. I became not only an ethnographer with a particular doctoral project but I believe I also became an eye-witness to the drama of "awakening" among many of the people I got to know.

As noted above, working with this thesis has also meant facing my own background as a child of exiled Chileans. Coming to Chile in 2003, 30 years after the military coup, in order to start my research, I entered a landscape of testimonies and debate about human rights. I believe that this created a particular atmosphere in Chile that probably colour my thinking and the development of my doctoral project.

The encounters I had with people from the community and the stories I heard during fieldwork have eft traces in me. These are traces that the eye cannot see but that are present in my thinking and ways of perceiving the world. For Levi-Strauss, anthropology is an intensely personal kind of intellectual discipline, like psychoanalysis. The purpose of field work, Levi-Strauss writes is to "create that psychological revolution which marks the decisive turning point in the training of the anthropologist…And has a result of field work, accomplished that inner revolution that will really make him into a new man." (Sontag 2009:75). I belive my fieldwork has contributed to making me more mature both as human being and researcher. It has made me realise the complexities involved in the understanding and representation of human experiences.

I have come to understand that "It is sheer illusion that anthropology can be taught purely theoretically" (Sontag 2009: 75). Being in Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera and getting to know the people living there, in particular being a witness to their drama as a community and the individual testimonies of abuse, contributed to give me a deeper insight into the community and the experiences of people that I meet. This was reinforced by acquainting myself with the rhythm of the community, and experiences of moving around in the same landscape, listening to the sounds and smells of this particular place. I believe my experiences of working with this doctoral work would have been very different if I had not experienced the community in flesh and blood. I believe it would have been a thinner understanding, one poor in blood. To do fieldwork is an extreme bodily experience. As researcher we need to go out there and become dirty. This makes fieldwork as "Being There" an intense process.

In this work I have tried to understand how Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera started among the first generation as a dream that turned into a nightmare for most of the people in the community. I have done this through doing ethnographic fieldwork aiming to grasp the

native's point of view, and giving "thick description" (Geertz 1993). Specifically, I have attempted to explain how these represent "webs of meaning" the cultural constructions in which we live (ibid.). In this manner I have tried to understand what lies behind the thinking and acts of the people I got to know from the community. In concluding this thesis I have reached an understanding that this is complex. The first followers of Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera were meaning-making beings with complex motivations. To explain their acts and thinking merely as a result of obedience to authority or part of ideological fanaticism or fear does not led us to an understanding of the complexity of human action. In order to achieve a better understanding of how this community became a totalitarian community and how the first followers could actively or passively participate in inhumane acts against other humans, we need to take a processual approach that weaves together various levels of analysis.

My empirical material comprises the experiences of people that were the "working hands" of a totalitarian system and people that were submitted to terrible acts and oppressed. This posed challenges to my descriptions, making them inadequate, making it necessary to shift my perspective along from "thick description," and moving towards philosophy. I was introduced to a field where social theory intersects with philosophy. The thinking of the philosopher Hannah Arendt in particular helped me to make sense of how the dream of constructing an own community was transformed into a nightmare. Through her thinking I could identify aspects of the community that were part of totalitarianism, and understand what totalitarianism does with humans.

Above all, on the banality of evil, Arendt demanded a rethink of established ideas about moral responsibility. Her concern with moral questions was connected to how ordinary people could be part of the genocide of Jews, investigating examples such as that of Adolf Eichman. The fact that he confessed to having sent people to their death, but had not personally killed or himself ordered anybody to kill, in his own eyes exonerated him from guilt, and in the eyes of Arendt made him a representative of banal perpetrator of evil. Arendt criticised Eichmann and his failure to reject the requirements that the Nazi laws and policies imposed upon him. In other words, Arendt faults him for his obedience, and his failure to think. For Arendt, thinking is always an exercise of judgment of some kind. Arendt concludes that no thinking being should have been able to commit genocide, and inspired by her thinking - the first generation of Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera failed to think when they became the working hands of totalitarianism.

8.3 Ethnography and violence – A no man`s land of understanding?

The many testimonies I heard during fieldwork led me towards the field of human rights. In this work I have explored the culture of violence and abuse that developed in Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera, through looking at the first generation that became "the helping hands" of totalitarianism and individual suffering, and explained these in terms of larger structures.

Doing fieldwork in a community where characteristics of totalitarianism developed has made me reflect a great deal about the role of the ethnographer, especially as this relates to engagement. In this context, engagement is about politics and power, and related to ideas of social justice. This concept does not simply refer to being embedded in a contradictory and complex social system (Low and Merry 2010). The point here is that anthropology as a discipline should work for social justice.

There is a rich literature on processes of violence and conflict whom I am not going to go further into such as genocide (Hinton 2002a, 2002b; Hinton 2004; Hinton and O'Neill 2009), human rights violations (Sanford 2004; Cowan, Dembour, and Wilson 2001; Goodale 2008, 2009; Tate 2007), transitional justice and the aftermath of war (Clarke 2009; Nelson 2009; Wilson 2001), gender violence (Merry 2008), and violence more generally (Scheper-Hughes and Bourgois 2004; Starn 1995). Mass violence and terror have become research topics within anthropology (Sanabria 2007); however "…anthropology is a late arrival to the field" (Scheper-Hughes and Bourgois 2004:5). The study of terror and violence among anthropologists has been complicated by the discipline's dedication to cultural relativism and its commitment to studying culture on its own terms. Cultural relativism has not managed to adequately address concerns regarding human right abuses. This situation has led to the understanding of a new form of cultural relativism named critical cultural relativism. This new approach poses questions about cultural practices and whom they might be helping or harming, as well as looking into oppressors and victims (Sanabria 2007:7). This perspective allows anthropologists and other researchers to move from being mere observers of culture to actually critically examining cultural and social practices and constructions. Through studying the consequences of this violence on the lives of those affected, anthropologists may come to understand better the origins and social and cultural consequences of systematic violence and how communities can move past it (Sanabria 2007:384).

Nancy Scheper-Hughes propose a militant anthropology and suggests that "cultural relativism, read as moral relativism, is no longer appropriate to the world in which we live

and that anthropology, if it is to be worth anything at all must be ethically grounded" (1995:410). With this moral claim, she argues that anthropological writing can be a site of resistance.

Some voices argue that anthropology has always been engaged, from its inception, since early anthropological knowledge was developed to resolve those of colonial administration and human problems (Low and Merry 2010). Others argue for engagement as a politically conscious critical perspective that prospered from the 1930s through the 1970s with a focus on political economic critique and social inequality (ibid). That said, many anthropologists fought to state their status as scientists, seeking to stand outside moral debates during the twentieth century, a position clearly articulated in the 1947 statement of the executive board of the American Anthropological Association condemning the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Goodale 2006a, 2006b). Throughout the 1990s and early 2000s, though, an increasing number of anthropologists have been pushing for increased activism both within and outside the academy (Low and Merry 2010). Several forms of anthropological engagement have been proposed (ibid.). Some are concerned with social critique by uncovering the bases of injustice and inequality; and some concern the collaborative approach to research by working with research subjects through collaborative and equal relationships. Others are more radical forms of engagement centred on activism and advocacy, while others focus on different forms of teaching, support and communication with the subject of study (ibid.). All these represent a diversity of critical and engaged anthropology.

Today there are anthropologists who question the moral acceptability and possibility of a non-activist stance. This group argues that the implications of ethnographic objectivity in a world characterised by political violence, and resource inequalities are problematic (ibid.). Under these conditions, ethnography cannot be apolitical, and the absence of public action is not neutral. According to Jackson we have ignored the ambiguous relationship between anthropology and activism in the ethnographic encounter (Jackson 2010). We might say that a critical and engaged anthropology is changing the manner anthropologists do fieldwork and the work they do with those they study.

My experiences from doing fieldwork and the writing of this thesis have showed me that engagement as ethnographer may be problematic, in particular, when the people studied or worked with hold values that differ fundamentally from those of the anthropologist. All the more so in cases in which these values have contributed to people`s acts and thinking that are against the law and contravene universal human rights.

To "uncovering" bases of injustice and inequality in the community has been a long and time-consuming process. Furthermore, the collaborative approach with research subjects has been hard since I have dealt with people with radically different experiences and positions. Another aspect that has made this problematic is the distinction between the inherent conflicts of objectivity and ethical commitment in anthropological work. Listening to the personal accounts of the people in Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera has made it hard not to be affected or ethically committed. How to be untouched or objective when listening to the many painful accounts people told me?

My experiences from working with this doctoral thesis are that an anthropological undertaking has the potential of moving beyond documentation and towards the recognition of culpability and reparation. This involves complex histories and social relationships and is deeply political. Documenting social conditions in a manner that also includes exposing and addressing abuse is problematic. This anthropology of trouble can generate an array of personal, professional, and societal risks (Johnston 2001a, 2001b).

June Nash (2007) writes that as an inexperienced anthropologist working with unionised villagers in Guatemala, she witnessed the 1954 CIA-triggered coup against President Arbenz and underwent a subsequent visit from a CIA agent on her arrival to the States. She points to Max Gluckman's (2002) warning about the inherent hazards in not analysing and instead ignoring or denying the political context of fieldwork, and she questions the limitations resulting from anthropological naivete (Nash 2007:105).

As mentioned earlier I was rather naïve when I started out with this doctoral thesis, despite the warnings I received about the dangers and the political context of Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera. I was a young and inexperienced fieldworker "going back home" to Chile. I did not think about the fact that my subject of study was not politically correct in post-Pinochet Chile. Coming to Chile, as neither a true "Chilean" nor a complete outsider I encountered a Chilean reality that focused on human rights abuses. In this context Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera and the members living there were perceived as responsible for human right abuses against leftwing Chileans during the military regime. For many people in Chile, in particular those belonging to the political left, my interest in the community was difficult to grasp. In some of the meetings with certain representatives of human right organisations I experienced their skepticism to my person and project and they did not want to give me access to their archive. I believe I was seen as supporting the community, lending them legitimacy through my research to their acts and thinking.

While working with this doctoral thesis, I searched to find a counter balance to the violent past of the community. It was hard to believe in Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera being a community of *horrific acts* only. I wanted to hear stories of dreams, love and hope from the community members. Many of the testimonies, particularly of the first generation, were about their search for an alternative way of living in post-war Europe. They told me about how the beginning in Germany and upon their arrival in Chile was experienced as a joyful time in spite of the hard work. The members told me that they greatly enjoyed the communal life in the community, and the first followers felt great pride in the work they, specifically the construction of a German charity community in Chile.

Many of the traits associated with the early days of the community were expressed through a particular aesthetics. This was accomplished through the community`s leadership putting great emphasis on their German roots, their charity work, and the closeness to nature. Perfect theatrical performances of different kinds including song and dance by good-looking community youth in a stunning and beautiful setting were presented in films, photos and real life. In concluding this work I have realised that I may at some point during my fieldwork have become fascinated by the "beauty" of the community, a "beauty" I was demonstrated in the early stages of my fieldwork. Maybe this fascination was an unconscious way of dealing with the community`s unpleasantness of the community? The presentation of a "perfect" community through aesthetics and a cultivation of beauty in the way practiced by Colonia Dignidad/Villa Baviera may have been a way to manipulating reality.

Several times during fieldwork I heard from people in the community *this is how life is*. Totalitarian thinking and acts develop and happen for different reasons in many parts of the world. As I write the last words of this thesis I continue to ask myself; why do such things happen? What I do know is that we have to continue living, and try to prevent such destructive thinking from developing and harmful acts from being committed. We need to have in-depth knowledge about the community and people we study. At the same time the ethnographer is also obliged to think, in Arendt's understanding of the word, to do moral judgement. Thinking ethnographers are required in order to render representations of people's experiences of violence and terror - representations that can lead to understanding.

DVD INDEX

DVD REF 1: VIDEO (BY MD) Walterio is watching some of the films made by CD/VB and singing

DVD REF 2: VIDEO (BY CD/VB) This clip shows the first 12 minutes of one propaganda film made by CD/VB that lasted in total 19 minutes and was made in 1989

DVD REF 3: VIDEO (BY CD/VB) Working on the construction of the youth home Heide. The youth home in Heide is completed. The community orchestra.

DVD REF 4: VIDEO (BY CD/VB) Members working with the land

DVD REF 5: VIDEO (BY CD/VB) The community members have games and competitions with their guest, and community youth perform acrobatic exercises for guest

DVD REF 6: VIDEO (BY MD) Albert explains how the alarm system worked by the use of sensors, and how a camera was hidden in a tree in order to watch the community members

DVD REF 7: VIDEO (BY MD) Albert tells me his life story

DVD REF 8: VIDEO (BY CD/VB) *Lecheton* a gathering were the community gave milk to needy local Chileans, and candle gathering where local Chileans showed support to the community

DVD REF 9: AUDIO (BY CD/VB) The local Chileans sing hymns to the community and praise the hospital

DVD REF 10: AUDIO (BY CD/VB) The choir of the community sing a German song

DVD REF 11: VIDEO (BY CD/VB) Permanent Youth Watch. The banner. After a year of preparation the youth feast is celebrated

DVD REF 12: VIDEO (BY CD/VB) Cultural performances: Community boys dancing and singing and choir

DVD REF 13: VIDEO (BY CD/VB) The use of voice over, old filmed material, and use of close-ups in the propaganda films made by CD/VB

DVD REF 14: VIDEO (BY MD Part of my filmed conversation with Sigmund

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