(Re)reading the boundaries and bodies of femicide : exploring articulations within the discursive economy of gendered violence in 'post war' Guatemala

(Re)Reading the Boundaries and Bodies of Femicide: Exploring Articulations within the Discursive Economy of Gendered Violence in 'Post War' Guatemala

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I declare that the work presented in this thesis is my genuine and original work.

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Abstract

This thesis explores gendered violence in 'post war' Guatemala and critically examines the responses to this phenomenon. I argue that the discourses that respond to, and attempt to account for, the paradox of 'peacetime' violence, and, more specifically, for the bodies of that violence, represent key sites through which ideological struggles get articulated. One such expression of this 'post war' violence in Guatemala is femicide. Starting from the position that femicide is a discursively-constituted object, in the Foucauldian and Butlerian sense, this thesis approaches violence at the level of representation. The empirical chapters examine the political terrain of gendered violence during the Patriot Party administration (2012 – 2015). Drawing on fieldwork conducted in Guatemala, and which included interviews and analysis of speeches, policy documents, and visual and textual materials from mainstream media sources, I identify three frameworks; through an examination of the performative staging of femicide cases that emerge across a range of contextual (temporal, spatial, and subjectivity) 'coordinates', I consider how those frameworks help to regulate the terms of femicide's contemporary visibility and recognition. The first framework pertains to the ostensibly 'private' forms of 'domestic' and 'family violence', while the second pertains to so-called new forms of 'public insecurity'. Within these frameworks, femicide (and at times specific victims) mobilises political and societal responses, but these responses, I argue, constitute misrecognised and instrumentalised approaches to gendered violence. The final empirical chapter considers recent trials pertaining to state-sponsored genocide and sexual violence. Here, the significance of the framework that I identify lies in the practices of denial and occlusion that disarticulate historical gendered violence from the discursive economy of contemporary femicidal visibility and recognition. This thesis thus offers a 'rereading' of the discursive economy of gendered violence— highlighting the racialised, classed, and gendered boundaries that stratify life and death in 'post war' Guatemala.

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Chapter 1 – Introduction

"Violence cannot be allowed to speak for itself, for violence is not its own meaning."
(Mamdani 2001: 228-9)

Reflecting upon the ending of Guatemala's peace process period in 2005, cultural anthropologist Diane Nelson noted that the country was in a state of "the in-between… an end (the postwar) that is not quite a beginning (of peace)…" (2009: xiv). Several years later, Nelson, alongside Carlota McAllister, asked, "[w]hy does war persist in Guatemala's postwar?" (2013: 9). Indeed, whether referred to as post-war, post-conflict, post-genocide, or post-transition, the focus of much of the scholarship and activism around Guatemala is precisely on the on-going violence that has held the country's 'peacetime' hostage in the realm of abstraction. In the aftermath of a 36-year civil war (1960 – 1996) that took a genocidal turn against the country's indigenous majority in the 1980s, the "ever more frequent appearance of new cadavers" (McAllister and Nelson 2013: 7), whose scars lay bare a deeply gendered and racialised violence, gives an all-too-literal material form to the paradox of the 'post war' label. Certainly, accounting for Guatemala's contemporary violence, and, more specifically, for the bodies of that violence, is a crucial terrain for the (re)production of meaning, as discourses emerging from political, social, and cultural sites of power attempt to regulate the spectrum of visibility and recognition for violence in the 'post war' milieu. Put simply, the country's 'post war' violence is a key site through which ideological struggles get articulated.

One such expression of 'post war' violence in Guatemala is *femicide*; it is this phenomenon that occupies the central object of critical interrogation in this thesis. Recognising the gendered lacuna in the literature exploring the dialectics between 'peacetime' violences, bodies, and "the discourses that attempt to account for" them (McAllister and Nelson 2013: 4), my research strives to identify and explore hegemonic articulations of femicide within a wider discursive economy of 'post war' violence. Importantly, I situate femicide as a discursively-constituted object and thus, as most productively approached at the level of representation. By focusing on the discursive fields that produce and regulate knowledge about Guatemala's violence, I aim to trace the ideological imperatives that govern whether or not, and how, femicide

emerges as an object of political, social, or cultural significance. To this end, I explore the context and conditions under which particular forms of femicidal and gendered violence come to matter as objects or 'events' of government political rhetoric, state policies, or media representations. This analysis draws out the way in which femicide is a crucial site through which boundaries—between gendered violences and its bodies— are (re)produced in Guatemala. An exploration of the discursive-material dynamics of sociopolitical performances linked to femicide invites an interrogation of the on-going productive force of gendered violence in the context of 'peacetime'. Specifically, such an analysis provides much needed insight into how discursive representations of violence help organise life—and death—in ways that consolidate or rework the racist, classist, and sexist exclusions that continue to colonise the imaginary of Guatemala's 'post war' body politic. This study therefore offers a wider reflection on the complex relationship between violence and (mis)recognition, or violence and (in)visibility, gesturing at the performative role of political citations and cultural representations of femicide, for (re)producing stratifications in Guatemala.

This thesis seeks to move beyond an analysis that focuses exclusively on the lack of visibility for, or representation of, femicidal violence in Guatemala, *per se*. Instead, it leans upon an analysis of the partial contexts, historical and otherwise, "that make possible the appearance" of particular articulations of femicide, and which render some victims/bodies more or less visible and recognisable as subjects of violence (Foucault 1972: 32). As the philosopher Judith Butler has remarked, violence is not so much passively 'seen' as it is productively 'read', and, relatedly, the bodies of violence are not so much 'visible' or 'invisible', as they are ideologically coded and performatively brought into (and affect) regimes of recognition, differentiation, or occlusion (1993a, 1993b). Therefore, when moving into the domain of hegemonic representations of femicide, the critical task is not only to "read… for the "event" of violence", but also to *re-read* "for the … schema that orchestrates and interprets" it (1993b: 20).

This introductory chapter sets the scene and makes the intellectual case for this thesis by identifying the key analytical entry points into the discursive economy of femicide and violence in 'post war' Guatemala. In particular, I lay out some basic definitional contours of the central objects of this study, such as femicide and gendered violence,

situating these within the Guatemala-specific context, as well as within wider debates around this violence in Latin America and globally. I begin, in the first section, by looking at a recent attempt to create a global framework for "femicide". I examine how femicide emerges as a nebulous concept, one that invokes notions of extreme acts of violence against women or gendered violence, but which, as a discursively-constituted object, does not necessarily contain any limit points. I discuss how the struggle to tie down a definition of femicide (or "feminicide") precisely gestures at the analytical value of approaching this violence at the level of representation, and, furthermore, suggests that identifying the boundaries and reference points for femicidal violence is necessarily an empirical undertaking. The proceeding section reviews the core literature on femicide/feminicide as it has been developed by feminist scholars and activists. As the contributions reveal, the majority of this literature focuses on the Latin American context, and, particularly, on femicides in Ciudad Juárez, Mexico. Surveying the contours of this literature highlights the geographic imbalance, as well as the saturation of political economy grounded analyses (many of them landmark studies), and the relative absence of analyses that approach femicide at the level of discursive economy. This section ends with a discussion of why my own research opts for a representational approach to femicide in Guatemala— namely, one that is distinct from (exclusively) political economy, legal, or quantitative analyses. I then turn to a discussion of the particular temporal and geographic context under consideration in this thesis: not only 'post war' Guatemala, but also, more specifically, the administration of Otto Perez Molina's Patriot Party (2012 – 2015). Moreover, through this introduction to urban Guatemala City, I offer further qualifications for the terms I choose to invoke in this thesis, which draw upon my fieldwork and encounters with interlocutors. The final section offers a brief overview of the chapters that make up this thesis.

"Femicide": Tying Down a Nebulous Concept
In 2013, the Academic Council on the United Nations System (ACUNS) held a one-day symposium at the United Nations (UN) Office in Vienna on the subject of *femicide*. Noting that "[f]emicides take place in every country of the world [and] continue to be accepted, tolerated, or justified", ACUNS organised the event in an effort to address the absence of an explicit UN resolution on gender-related killings. In turn, representatives from across government, civil-society, and academic sites

participated in the production of a follow-up report entitled, *Femicide: A Global Issue that Demands Action* (ACUNS 2013). The report's "Vienna Declaration on Femicide" provides the "most widely accepted definition" of the concept of femicide, and lays out a typology of "at least 11 forms" that were agreed upon by participants:

> "Recognizing that femicide is the killing of women and girls because of their gender, which can take the form of, inter alia: 1) the murder of women as a result of domestic violence/intimate partner violence; 2) the torture and misogynist slaying of women; 3) killing of women and girls in the name of "honour"; 4) targeted killing of women and girls in the context of armed conflict; 5) dowry-related killings of women and girls; 6) killing of women and girls because of their sexual orientation and gender identity; 7) the killing of aboriginal and indigenous women and girls because of their gender; 8) female infanticide and gender-based sex selection foeticide; 9) genital mutilation related femicide; 10) accusations of witchcraft; 11) other femicide connected with gangs, organized crime, drug dealers, human trafficking, and the proliferation of small arms." (4)

Despite this opening attempt at delineating certain boundaries of the concept, the contributions in the report underscore its nebulous contours— at different moments, femicide is articulated as a legal, criminal, sociological, or political term. Such a designation, in turn, mobilises various sets of spatial, subject/body, and temporal coordinates through which the object of femicide is discursively brought into being in the report. For example, some sections deploy the concept of *femicidio* or *feminicidio*, and emerge from feminist contributors discussing the political climate of impunity for gender-based violences and killings in Latin America (and especially, Mexico) (42); whereas sections focused on sexual violence in conflict and post-conflict contexts emerge from European (particularly United Kingdom) representatives who highlight the need "to protect women from [sexual and] other forms of violence, such as forced marriage and honour killings" (8); and, singling out Australia, Canada, Guatemala, and South Africa, "aboriginal", "indigenous", and "Black" women are cited for their particular vulnerability to femicide on account of the intersectional oppression they face based on each country's legacy of violence (110-3). Notwithstanding its initial definitional framework, the report's central object—femicide— seems to occupy the space between any contextual, conceptual, or ideological limit points, moving between statistics (by numbers, El Salvador, Jamaica, Guatemala, and South Africa

are said to have the highest rates), criminal codes (Latin America is noted for leading the way in legal codification), cultural practices (the Middle East, South Asia, and diaspora communities in the West are marked out as particularly problematic), spatialities (distinctions are made between public and private domains), and histories (countries with past or on-going conflicts are differentiated from those "at peace"). The term's capaciousness is its strength, the report suggests, for it provides an "open definition" that "will help women all over the world to identify new forms of direct and indirect physical, psychological, social, and cultural annihilation of women 'because they are women'" (46).

ACUNS' report is certainly not the only attempt that has been made to tie down a definition of femicide, but it is the first attempt at an international or global "consensus" of its terms. Indeed, the necessity of clarifying what it is exactly that I mean or am referring to when I invoke femicide, underscores the lack of consistency in its use. Is femicide *one* form of *violence against women*, or does it connote *multiple* forms of *gendered violences*? Is the 'proof' of femicide in the murder, or does the survivor of torture and rape 'pass' the litmus test? Is femicide a *single event* or criminal act, or does it constitute a *continuum* in which all forms of inequality and oppression that might make particular subjects more or less vulnerable to violent death, are also included? Where might gendered poverty and racial discrimination, for example, sit within a femicide typology? Does femicide refer to the *victim*, whose destruction was realized through extreme acts of misogyny, or is femicide revealed in the scars and blood on her *body*? Are sexual violence and torture 'more' femicidal than a bullet, even if the outcome in both scenarios is death? Indeed, how do the (contextual) 'coordinates' of femicide mark its (ideological) boundaries?— how do regional or spatial designations, victim or perpetrator profiles, war or post-war statuses, for example, delimit whether and how (a victim of) femicide emerges as an object of social, political, or cultural relevance?

These are not rhetorical questions. On the contrary, it is precisely the open-ended nature of the possible answers to them, that hints at the analytical direction of my research. This thesis is not concerned with evaluating the relative merits of different definitions of femicide or *feminicide* (more on this below). Such discussions are often articulated through debates about the causal reasons for, or contributing factors to,

femicide's statistical rates[1] (or 'increases', depending on the source); or, these discussions are channelled into developing 'best practices' for 'acting on', curbing, or eradicating femicide and other forms of gender-based violences. This is not to suggest that these considerations are unimportant, or that we should not strive to locate approaches to violence which reduce its prevalence or which challenge impunity. However, in situating femicide as a *discursively-constituted object*, this thesis carves out a space for approaching this violence(s) at the level of representation.

Starting from the position that femicide is a discursive formation, in the Foucauldian and Butlerian sense[2], should in no way be read as a denial of its materiality; instead, I propose that this framework opens a conceptual passageway to critically interrogate what a discursive economy inflected with citations of femicidal and gendered violences *does*, beyond what *femicide* most manifestly does 'do'. The implication of this approach is (at least) two-fold: first, it means that femicide is a productive force, in that it helps (re)constitute the very bodies that are brought into being as subjects of its violence, and second, it means that discourses of femicide are "performative" (Butler 1997), in the sense that the meanings that emerge from this violence work to articulate boundaries in relation to what is visible or recognisable as (a body of) violence. In other words, because "femicide" does not, as we saw at the beginning of this section, refer to a clearly identifiable singular object, event, or even discourse, its terms of reference are necessarily an empirical question— one that is, in my view, most productively approached by exploring how meanings and knowledges about femicide, and the bodies that are "undone" by its violences, are actively produced and regulated, rather than merely "discovered" (Butler 1993b; Foucault 1972, 1978).

[1] This thesis does not lean upon, or aim to contribute to, studies that chart violence/femicide "by numbers" (Fukada-Parr et al. 2013)— a notoriously difficult task, especially where violence is normalized, hidden, and/or politically insignificant. As I discuss more in chapter 2, at their more insidious, political imperatives calling for measuring violence, or statements about its prevalence (especially against racialised women), can provide material for the kinds of knowledge claims that are cited to justify political and policy interventions that lean upon racist, classist, and sexist tropes that situate particular bodies and spaces as more vulnerable to, or prone to commit, violence (Ferreira da Silva 2012; Spivak 1998).
[2] These theoretical tropes, and their relationship to my data and analysis, are explained in depth in chapter 3.

Femicide/Feminicide in the Literature

It is important to qualify at the outset that this thesis is in conversation with several, at times seemingly disparate, bodies of literature— ones that do not necessarily intersect with the specific debates around femicide in Latin America. Indeed, one of the wider points that I endeavour to make in this thesis is that articulations of femicide and gendered violence can emerge within a range of discursive (and policy) frameworks that are not always explicitly (or, if they are, not always benignly) about "violence against women" or "women's rights". Therefore, the proceeding section should be read as a general entry point into an analysis of femicide, rather than as a comprehensive literature review.

In 1976, the South African feminist sociologist Diane Russell coined the term "femicide" "to denote the gendered terror practices that culminate in socially tolerated murder" (Carey and Torres 2010: 143). Alongside British feminist Jill Radford (Radford and Russell 1992), Russell later defined femicide as "the killing of females by males *because* they are female" (Russell 2001: 3), and argued that the phenomenon is sustained by a range of normalised social "practices that promote gendered violence" (Carey and Torres 2010: 143). As acknowledged in the ACUNS report on femicide (2013), despite the genealogy of the term, some of the most prominent scholarly and activist engagements with the concept of femicide since Russell and Radford's landmark studies, have emerged through the works of feminists addressing extreme forms of gendered violence in Latin America— more specifically still, in Mexico. Indeed, the literature on femicide largely reads like a response to an "alarm sounded to bring attention to the crime against girls and women in Ciudad Juárez [Mexico]" since the early 1990's, when overkilled cadavers started to be discovered on "*la frontera*" between Mexico and the United States (Lagarde y de los Ríos 2010: xi).

Most notably, Mexican feminist Marcela Lagarde y de los Ríos elaborated a "theoretical, political, and legal construction" of femicide as *feminicide*, or *feminicidio*, in Spanish (2010). In Lagarde's view, the translation of Russell's concept of "femicide" into the Spanish "*femicidio*", failed to encompass the "ensemble of violations of women's human rights" and thus, the range of violences that were the

reference point of Mexico's gendered violence (xv). Notably, Lagarde's framework emerged specifically in relation to the investigation (or lack thereof) into the events in Ciudad Juárez:

> "the women murdered… were poor and young… many of them worked in the maquilas… they were dark-skinned and had long hair… they had been kidnapped, humiliated, tortured, mutilated, and raped before they were killed in cold blood and their bodies were left in the street, in the desert, or in open spaces." (xv)

According to Lagarde, using the term *feminicidio* further politicises the violence encapsulated by *femicidio*, highlighting the role of the state in authorising, through normalised impunity, the killing of vulnerable women and girls. These systemic murders are, in her view, a type of genocide because they promote the destruction of women as a social group (2010). As the ACUNS report states, the majority of Mexican feminists have followed Lagarde's example and use the term feminicide (2013: 42). However, beyond the question of the different semantics between femicide and feminicide, it is helpful to explore the analytical contours of studies focused on Ciudad Juárez. Doing so highlights the value of approaching femicide as a discursive object that emerges distinctly within empirically specific parameters— indeed, even as there might be important parallels across the geographic sites contemplated in the literature on femicide, and of course, on gendered violence more generally, deductive analytical transfers assume that the processes charted in one context (such as Mexico) are already in place in another (such as Guatemala) (Carey and Torres 2010: 143).

Most of the notable scholarly interventions into femicides in Ciudad Juárez are concentrated in socioeconomic lines of analysis (Arriola 2010; Gaspar de Alba 2010; Olivera 2006; Wright 2006); and their emphasis on putting femicides in so-called "context" (Weissman 2010) is— up to a point— persuasive. Using the springboard of feminist political economy critiques of development and globalisation and, more specifically, of neoliberal modes of capital accumulation and labour organisation (Nagar et al. 2002; Rai 2002; Sassen 1997; True 2012), a rich body of the literature on Mexico's femicide takes as its starting point the observation that the cadavers started appearing in "alarming statistics" in conjunction with the socioeconomic

transformation of the border between the U.S. and Mexico after the signing of the North America Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) (Cabrera 2010: 20; Gaspar de Alba and Guzman 2010). Feminist scholars working within the terms of political economy analyses highlight the functional relationship between gendered violence and exploitation, and neoliberal projects such as the *maquiladoras* (factories) that have been set up along the border (Gaspar de Alba 2010: 11). In this view, the extreme expressions of violence against marginalised women who also serve as the core labour in these factories cannot be explained (away) as peripheral events to an otherwise progressive model of development and empowerment. Instead, as Weissman argues, Mexico's femicides need to be theorised as "the social consequences" of economic liberalisation (2010), irrespective of whether or not each victim can be determined as having worked in one of the country's maquiladoras (Pearson 2007).

In several of these accounts, the "link between capital and death" in Mexico's free-trade economy is emphasised through Marxist-feminist analyses (Segato 2010: 70; Wright 2006). Arriola, for example, interrogates the "fatal indifference" of the government and corporations towards the multiple violences along the border: she suggests that the indifference which allows marginalised women's labouring bodies to be exploited on the factory floors, is inextricably linked to the indifference shown towards their murdered bodies off of them (2010). In a standout ethnography also drawing from research in the north of Mexico, Wright frames a critique of global capitalism through an identification of a "myth of disposability" that circulates in relation to women's labour— and, crucially, in relation to their bodies (2006). Combining a Marxist critique of value with a feminist-poststructuralist account of the materialisation of embodied subjects, Wright explores how the reduction of the gendered subjects of Ciudad Juárez to "disposable… form[s] of waste" is entirely consistent with the logic of the political economy within which these bodies are rendered insignificant in life and in death (14).

One enduring contribution resulting from feminist analyses in the sphere of the global economy is the observation that its terrain is inherently gendered (Rai 2002). Similarly, in tracing the connections between the socioeconomic transformation of Mexico's border town of Ciudad Juárez, and the noted increases in extreme forms of

violence against women, this field of feminist scholarship helps shatter "the imaginary divide" between political economy, on the one hand, and gender/ed (and) violence, on the other (True 2012; Weissman 2010: 23). Furthermore, by identifying the relationship between the economic context and the social ideologies that circulate within that context, this literature brings into view the limitations of theorisations (both academic and popular) that suggest that these violent crimes are merely "cultural". As Wright correctly observes, such "death by culture" narratives lean upon essentialist, if not explicitly racist, notions of (Mexican) men as inherently prone to commit misogynistic violence, and, in turn, sanction interpretations in which the murders are read as unavoidable (2006: 77). Certainly, while "culturalist perspectives" (Lagarde y de los Ríos 2010) range in terms of the extent that they engage with questions of political economy, the criminological and psychological analyses of femicide in Ciudad Juárez display a tendency to dislocate any structural roots (whether historical or economic) from their accounts, instead situating "dysfunctional men" from a *machista* (misogynist) culture[3] as causal factors for the raping and killing of women and girls (eg., Prieto-Carron et al. 2007; Skrapec 2010).

However, despite the insight provided by political economy driven accounts, these readings of the so-called "maquiladora murders" (Arriola 2010), or, more recently, "narco"-related murders (Wright 2011), risk collapsing into reductive readings of "poor brown females" as necessarily "disposable women"— with the implication that women who do not meet the identity criteria of racialised poverty are not victimised by femicidal violence. In other words, such formulations (perhaps inadvertently) obscure the productive nature of gendered violence in actually (re)constituting the exclusions that render particular subjects more/less vulnerable, visible, or recognisable as subjects of violence at different historical moments. Even within a conceptually siphoned site in the Ciudad Juárez context, where we might identify a somewhat coherent demographic of marginalised women (Pearson 2007) who are situated as *maquiladora* workers, "prostitutes", or a host of powerfully stigmatising markers linked to the so-called "public woman" (Wright 2006), "dehumanization's

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[3] Theories that lean on *machista* culture to *explain* femicide often claim that "empowered women" are facing a "backlash" from men who sense that their jobs and masculinities are being threatened. As Weissman persuasively argues, however, these theories not only obscure that "women have long worked outside the home", but, more problematically still, they "reflect the type of totalizing thinking about gender violence that stereotypes men as universal perpetrators of violence and women as universal victims without agency" (2010: 231-2).

relation to discourse is complex" (Butler 2004a: 37). We can both attend to the structural inequalities and constraints that operate through political economic nodes, *and* examine the subtleties involved in how "disposability", to take one example, is actually produced through historically-informed, and yet still temporally specific, ideological imperatives that work through discourses of violence to (re)inscribe forms of exclusion (see chapter 3). Indeed, the subjects/bodies/cases of femicide contemplated across the empirical chapters of this thesis intentionally draw from contextually differentiated sites of femicidal and gendered violence, precisely to illuminate the nuanced ways in which inequalities and exclusions get reconstituted through interpretations of this violence. Rather than starting from the assumption that all poor, racialised, or "public" women in Guatemala fit the ostensible template of the "poor brown female" or "disposable woman" of Ciudad Juárez (Gaspar de Alba 2010; Wright 2006), my study strives to understand how ideological struggles are waged through the medium of femicidal violence in Guatemala—therefore, the performative effects of these discourses require their own empirically grounded account, one that explores how discourses (whether or not they are explicitly about femicide or not) might refuse, constrain, or mobilise forms of visibility and recognition.

But what does the literature on femicide in Guatemala have to say? Interestingly, because the Ciudad Juárez murders have occupied so much of the academic and popular space on the subject, the first comprehensive anthology on femicide in Latin America contains only two contributions that focus on Guatemala[4] (one of these by a Guatemalan feminist) (Chazaro et al. 2010; Trujillo 2010). Although I distance my work from the types of claims that assume that the qualitative importance of violence is best ascertained through quantitative indicators, if one were to lean on a "femicide by numbers" approach, the relative lack of (international) attention on the Guatemalan phenomenon becomes all the more curious. Certainly, a now often cited claim is that the figures of women and girls murdered since the 'post war' period began are "reaching the … levels of female mortality in the early 1980s at the height of the genocidal war" (Sanford 2008: 105). Still, as it becomes clear in proceeding chapters, there is a rich corpus of feminist scholarship on the theme of gendered violences in

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[4] The two pieces on Guatemala are accompanied by one essay each focused on Argentina and Costa Rica; however, in a volume that purports to cover femicide across the Americas, the remaining 13 essays only address the situation in Ciudad Juárez, Mexico (Fregoso and Bejarano 2010).

Guatemala—femicidal, sexual, historical, and contemporary—that follows the object of *femicidio* according to wider, and more complex, coordinates than is the case for the literature on Ciudad Juárez. Rather than leaning on (predominantly) political economy analyses (eg., Blanco and Hayes 2007), here the literature ranges between historical and legal studies of the impunity for conflict-related sexual violence and contemporary femicidal violence (eg., Chazaro et al. 2010; Musalo et al. 2010; Sanford 2003; Trujillo 2010), structural approaches to institutionalised gender inequalities (eg., Costantino 2006; Drysdale Walsh 2008; Godoy-Paiz 2008; Menjivar 2011; Torres 2008), and some especially notable accounts that offer political and media discourse analyses of how femicidal and gendered violences have been represented in different historical periods (Carey and Torres 2010; Sanford 2008).

Because I will be engaging with the prominent scholarly accounts of femicide *and* sexual and gendered violence in Guatemala throughout this thesis, I have offered only a brief introduction to the literature here. At this point, I wish to make two observations regarding the extant literature and how my research relates to this field. The first pertains to the language most commonly used to frame the violence(s) forming the central object of inquiry: *femicidio* is preferred over *feminicidio* (an approach that I adopt, in keeping with the field as I encountered it, as explained in the next section). The second, a more general observation, pertains to where my research departs from, and I would argue adds to, the literature. Briefly stated, my work offers contributions that emerge from my *theoretical* approach to femicide as a discursively-constituted object that is produced, productive, and regulated (introduced in chapter 3), through my *methodological* approach that explores the performative staging of femicide in relation to a wider discursive economy of violence (introduced in chapter 2), and, finally, from the particular context and temporality under consideration, to which I now turn.

Contextualising 'Post War' Guatemala 2012 – 2015

Efforts at "contextualising" the setting within which social-scientific inquiries are located are inevitably partial (Posocco 2014a). This thesis acknowledges (indeed emphasises) the fluidity of temporal and spatial (amongst other) coordinates. Nevertheless, contextualising the site of inquiry is a necessary task; in this section,

therefore, I provide a brief overview of the 'particular' Guatemala (2012 – 2015) under consideration in this thesis.

Guatemala has a population of approximately 16 million people, forming over 20 ethno-linguistic groups. The country shares its northern borders with Mexico and Belize, and sits above Honduras and El Salvador, to complete what is known as the "Northern Triangle" of Central America. Despite being the wealthiest country in this region on a per capita basis, more than fifty per cent of the people live in conditions of poverty, with two-thirds working in the informal economy (World Bank 2015). While often portrayed as a "success story" of 'post war' development by the U.S. Embassy and international financial institutions, the country's "success" has been achieved through histories of violence and dispossession of arable land from the country's largely Mayan-rural poor (Grandin 2013), the "stripping" of protections to workers and the environment through the neoliberalisation of the economy (Oglesby 2013), and, under political pressure from "the usual small and pale elite" who control the country's fortunes, through "the lowest rate of taxes paid in Latin America" (McAllister and Nelson 2013: 26-7). Indeed, often buried in the background of discussions of the more explicitly violent "aftermaths" of the armed conflict, are the neoliberal orthodoxy-inspired structural "adjustments" which have closed off "legal and ethical routes out of poverty" for the most vulnerable (ibid.).

Officially, Guatemala has been in a state of peace since the Guatemalan Army and the Guatemalan National Revolutionary Union (URNG) signed Peace Accords in 1996. The civil war lasted 36 years and claimed the lives of approximately 250,000 people of mostly indigenous-Mayan descent, displacing a further 1.4 million (Sanford 2008: 105). A UN commission found that the military-state had committed 93 per cent of the human rights violations, and, furthermore, that those acts amounted to genocide (CEH 1999). According to two Truth Commissions set up in the aftermath of the war, rape and sexual violence were deployed as integral parts of the state's counterinsurgency campaign (ODHAG 1998). Without oversimplifying the complexities of the conflict (the historical antecedents are discussed in further depth in later chapters), the war constituted an armed struggle "of leftist factions to bring economic and political justice for the oppressed" (Offit and Cook 2010). The state's genocidal turn, a period often described as *la violencia*, transpired between 1978 and

1983, during which "large-scale massacres, mass rapes and scorched-earth campaigns targeted Mayan civilians" mostly in the rural western highlands of Guatemala (Rosser 2007: 392).

As I discuss in later chapters, impunity for these genocidal *and femicidal* crimes of the past has, for the most part, been the rule in 'post war' Guatemala (Consorcio Actoras de Cambio 2009). And, indeed, the *de facto* normalisation of contemporary urban femicide and gendered violence highlights the entrenched nature of this impunity (Carey and Torres 2010). As Amnesty International notes, today's "murders are concentrated in urban areas", with the highest rates in Guatemala City (the site of my fieldwork- see chapter 2) (2005: 12). According to a recent feminist-led investigation of femicide in the Northern Triangle (Ramirez et al. 2014), between January 2009 and June 2014 more than 4000 women were murdered due to femicidal violence in Guatemala; this figure translates to at least two women being killed per day. Despite my reticence at re-citing statistics, it is noteworthy that these figures place Guatemala ahead of the two other countries with notoriously high rates of (gendered) violence in the "Northern Triangle": Honduras and El Salvador. The authors of this study caution that the figures are likely much higher due to the poor data collection methods (owing largely to a lack of political will), as well as definitional inconsistencies, in relation to "*femicidios*". As many feminists and social justice activists in Guatemala expressed during my fieldwork, to call this situation 'peacetime' obscures how the brutal patterns of violence and persistent state indifference to these crimes represent historical continuums with conflict periods. Indeed, it is for this reason that I have elected to use quotations around the 'post war' label throughout this thesis.

Otto Perez Molina's Patriot Party (PP) administration serves as a particularly interesting node for exploring contemporary formations of 'post war' violences within a wider historical and ideological context. President Molina was the head of the Guatemalan army's Joint Chiefs of Staff during the 1980s, when the war turned genocidal— yet, Molina, along with the alliance of military, oligarchy, and political elite that brought him to power, denies that the state's actions were genocidal (a theme taken up in detail in chapter 7). While contemporary discourses around

gendered violence and femicide have, as I will show, important antecedents in other historical periods and under other administrations, "it is equally important to identify what is novel about the present constellation" (Gregory 2013: 155). The PP period has been characterised by prominent political citations of 'post war' violence within government rhetoric, public policy, and cultural representations; interestingly, this same government has been at the forefront of efforts to derail the emergence of trials pertaining to wartime state violence. The Molina years have been the subject of extensive attention—and indeed, critique— amongst parts of civil-society (eg., CMI 2014; El Observador 2012) and have also been the subject of recent academic reflections (eg., Burt 2015). The fortuitous timing of the research for this thesis leaves me in a position to offer a contribution to the nascent body of literature that addresses this fascinating nexus— one in which the (ostensible) borders between historical periods, military-political-economic interests, and the expressions, as well as representations of, the country's violence, become increasingly nebulous.

My final reflection on the Guatemalan context ties into the question of why I use the concepts of "femicide" (rather than "feminicide"), and "gendered violence/s" (rather than "violence against women", or VAW). As already explained, this thesis is not concerned with evaluating the relative merits of these terms; therefore, any choices made between the concepts and their deployment in the text were motivated by my desire to remain consistent with feminist, indigenous, and social justice interlocutors in Guatemala (see chapter 2), who overwhelmingly used the term "femicidio"[5].

As noted by Cabrera, VAW and gendered violence "are not synonymous and the UN Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women (1993) approaches VAW as a "sub-category" of [gender-based] violence" (Cabrera 2010: 14). In what is referred to as the "3rd [unofficial] historical memory report" (see chapter 7), the Guatemalan feminist and indigenous women's movement(s) establish that racialised, sexual, historical, and contemporary gendered violences are constitutive of *femicidal violence.* In other words, gendered violences all exist on a *femicidio* "continuum" (Consorcio Actoras de Cambio 2009). Among critical feminists, it is generally

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[5] Relatedly, the Guatemalan feminist movement successfully lobbied Guatemala's Congress to pass a Law Against *Femicide* (LAF) in 2008 (Musalo et al. 2010). As this thesis is not grounded in legal studies, the LAF is not a central object of analysis.

acknowledged that "gender operates through all forms of violence" (Scheper-Hughes and Bourgois 2004: 22); yet, as Wilding reminds us, it is important to clarify the contours of the gendered violence we are studying, otherwise the term becomes "unwieldy and lacking in focus" (2012: 1-2). In Wilding's discussion, one approach is to study "the gendered nature of all forms of violence… in order to highlight their gendered dynamics, uncover their interlinkages… and explore how they reinforce and mitigate one another" (ibid.). From this perspective, using the notion of "gendered violences", often in tandem with my use of "femicide", connotes my attempt to capture, even if only momentarily, the productive, relational, and intersectional dynamics that work through the violences, and representational processes, that I track in this thesis.

Chapter Synopses

In this final section, I outline the chapters that make up this thesis. Chapter 2 introduces the feminist epistemological framework that guided my research design, fieldwork, and writing process. I provide an account of how I went about accessing the Guatemalan field and (potential) interlocutors for my data collection. Drawing upon feminist critiques concerning the impossibility of neutrality and objectivity, I explore the ethical dilemmas that researchers (should) struggle through when undertaking research on gendered violences— a notoriously silenced/obscured field, or object, of social inquiry. In particular, I discuss how methodological tools associated with critical epistemic approaches within intersectional, postcolonial, and queer feminisms help inform the political possibilities, as well as the ethical and contextual limits of, feminist studies on violence, within a frame of "partiality" and "positionality" (Haraway 1991).

Building on the ideas introduced in my methodological framework, in chapter 3 I outline the conceptual scaffolding within which my core research questions are examined. Starting with a Foucauldian and Butlerian analytics of power and discursive economies, I subsequently address a range of theoretical nodes that draw from feminist, postcolonial, and queer theorisations of violence, bodies, and representation. This discussion explores concepts such as: regulatory power, performativity, embodiment, necropolitics, normative violence, and, finally, examines the literature on structural and "new violence". Recent discussions of the role of

critical gender and development studies argue for modes of theorization and social enquiry that chart the processes through which (gendered, racialised, and classed) exclusions re-emerge in the context of seemingly benign discourses and policies linked to 'protection', 'security', and 'peace and reconciliation', for example. I therefore end this chapter by explaining how my analysis of the discursive economy of femicide and gendered violence in 'post war' Guatemala holds relevance to a broader and burgeoning field of critical-theory inflected gender and development studies.

Having set the theoretical and methodological backdrop for the thesis, the remaining chapters turn to the Guatemalan context, offering a 'rereading' of the discursive economy of 'post war' gendered violence in the country. Central to this rereading is my contention that femicide is a productive force in the contemporary stratifications of life and death and, more specifically, in regimes of racial, class, and gender exclusion in Guatemala. This argument is developed through an examination of the performative staging of cases of femicide and gendered violence that emerge across a range of what I refer to as 'contextual coordinates' linked to temporal, spatial, and subjectivity meanings. Through a critical interrogation of the discursive-material dynamics by which particular violences, and particular bodies of that violence, emerge as politically and culturally (in)significant, I argue that these 'contextual coordinates' are actually ideological and, furthermore, hierarchical.

Each of the empirical chapters identifies a particular framework through which the PP, and its ideological and institutional support networks, regulates the boundaries of visibility and recognition for gendered violence. Chapters 4 and 5 draw upon the disappearance and presumed femicide of Cristina Siekavizza for their analysis: chapter 4 situates the femicide case within a broader analysis of the Patriot Party's *violencia intrafamiliar* or domestic/interfamilial violence framework (what I refer to as the 'VIF' framework, or formation). I identify important links with, on the one hand, the efforts to mobilise and consolidate this 'private/ising' and depoliticising approach to gendered violence, and, on the other hand, the emergence of "El Caso Siekavizza" as a politically 'recognisable' and socially 'emblematic' femicide in Guatemala. The hierarchal nature of the VIF formation becomes a point of focus in chapter 5 when I explore how those subjects who fail to meet the identity-criteria

within the VIF formation are obscured and/or differentiated. Chapter 6 departs from the sphere of the 'private' and identifies the centrality of an 'insecurity' framework for how the PP has approached the domain of 'public' gendered violence. Here, the hierarchical nature of the framework can be discerned through the discursive and visual coding of the 'public' bodies of femicidal violence. I argue that these narratives—within which subjects of public insecurity emerge through criminalising and victim-blaming tropes—are instrumental to the legitimation of the government's claims surrounding the necessity of militarised politics in an ostensibly 'post war' country.

Chapter 7 addresses the recent emergence of legal cases linked to the Guatemalan state's genocide and racialised sexual violence. I show how, in a political terrain regulated by frameworks of gendered violence in terms of 'public (in)security' (chapter 6) or, within notions of 'domestic' or 'family violence' (chapters 4 and 5), these historical trials and the victims/survivors/bodies at their centre constitute challenges to the discursive limits within the PP's spectrum of visibility and recognition of gendered violence. These limits keep discussions of violence securely within a 'post war' frame of reference. I argue that the efforts to deny and delegitimise the objects/subjects of the trials highlight the potential disruptions that historical articulations of gendered violence constitute to the government's 'disarticulated' formations.

Finally, the concluding chapter highlights the key observations that emerge from this study, and discusses some of the wider implications of my research. I also indicate possible future directions for research that might expand upon the lines of analyses developed in this thesis.

Cumulatively, these chapters produce an account that furthers our understanding of how ideological struggles are waged through the medium of femicidal violence. In critically unpacking hegemonic articulations of femicide in Guatemala within a wider discursive economy of the country's 'post war' violence, this thesis builds off of a central research question that asks: what are the dialectics between 'peacetime' femicide and the discourses that interpret, and thus organise the boundaries of, its meanings? This thesis thus seeks to identify and understand the ideological

imperatives that govern whether or not femicide emerges as an object of political, social, or cultural significance. More specifically, it considers how and why certain spatial descriptions (such as 'public' and 'private'), subject markings (given to those identified as victims and perpetrators), and temporal designations (such as 'war' and 'post war' statuses) help mobilise or constrain sociopolitical responses towards particular bodies, and cases, of femicidal violence. To paraphrase the thesis' title, it critically '(re)reads' for the ways in which these 'contextual coordinates' of femicide work performatively to delimit its ideological boundaries. In working through these research questions, this study will therefore shed light on how discursive representations of violence help organise gendered life—and death—in 'post war' Guatemala.

Chapter 2 – Methodological Framework

Introduction

In my endeavour to understand the dynamics of the on-going productive force of gendered violence in (re)constituting meaning(s), I refer with varying degrees of detail and emphasis to a series of contemporary cases of femicide, the majority of which emerged inductively during the research process (that is to say, the victims in these cases were actually killed or went missing while I was collecting data for this thesis)[6]. However, I also draw upon cases of historical sexual violence linked to Guatemala's genocidal internal armed conflict. This decision is part of my wider effort to approach femicidal violences as phenomena that are linked to, and encompass, a range of gendered violences—ones that are historically and structurally articulated. While no researcher should be immune to the questions demanded of her by methodological considerations such as epistemology (how does the 'knowledge' presented in our research come into being, as knowledge?) (Haraway 1991), studies of violence—especially within post conflict contexts marked by tense struggles to narrate histories of violence, and by the "open wounds" disclosed in on-going 'peacetime' violence (Boesten 2014; Nelson 1999; Sanford 2003; Scheper-Hughes and Bourgois 2004), raise particularly important issues about how, why, and for whom knowledge is produced (Blacklock and Crosby 2004; Hume 2009; Posocco 2014a).

What follows in this chapter is a descriptive account of, as well as reflective engagement upon, what my research process entailed. I outline the feminist epistemological framework that informed (and indeed, interrupted) my research questions, project design, fieldwork, analysis, and writing along the way. Significantly, and relatedly, I offer a candid reflection on my own positionality in relation to this research, which involves rendering visible my personal and political

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[6] A select few of these cases were already objects of analysis within the literature on gendered violence in Guatemala—owing, at least in part, to the fact that they occurred in earlier periods. In the analytical chapters, for example, I refer to the "war time" case of Rogelia Cruz Martinez, a young woman who was brutally murdered in 1968 during the early years of the civil war (Gonzales Molina 2011). For comparative analytical purposes, I also look at several femicide cases that occurred during the tenure of other 'post war' administrations (such as Claudina Isabel Velásquez Paiz, Mindy Rodas, Adela Chacon-Tax, and Cristina Siekavizza).

investment in the subject matter that gets "conjured up" (Posocco 2014: 6). This connotes a rejection of the premise, or the assumed desirability if it were possible, of neutrality or objectivity when undertaking research, not least on the subjects of violence, bodies, and representation. Such candour is a necessary move in all critical research informed by feminist, as well as postcolonial, intersectional, and queer epistemologies (Ahmed 2000; Crenshaw 1995; Mohanty 1984; Spivak 1988); it is equally motivated by a desire to produce meaningful "partial" accounts (Haraway 1991; Posocco 2014: 19-21), and to be fully *accountable* for/to ones' work (Blacklock and Crosby 2004).

In keeping with the theoretical emphasis on "performativity" (Butler 1997), I also explain how my methodological practices necessarily required me to make choices about what to include or exclude as objects of inquiry, of analysis, or of (re)presentation within this text. This discussion is intimately related to questions of ethics, and to what I may have enabled or occluded in electing to "say her name"[7] (those of the femicide victims) where this information was available, while deciding to exclude photographic images (which I nonetheless describe and analyse). The point is essentially to locate myself (Fortier 1998: 52) as a researcher who is actively "doing" (Posocco 2014: 6-8): acting upon and being acted upon by her material as well as by field interlocutors in ways that, while impossible to appreciate fully, should be clearly delineated where such methodological moves can be explicitly identified. Finally, I address how despite, or perhaps *owing to* (Harding 1993), each of these latter reflections on the inherent subjectivity/ies, limitations, and lacunas within the research process (Haraway 1991; Wilson 1997), there are still grounds for the descriptions, arguments, and knowledge claims presented in this thesis.

Feminist Epistemological Framework: Situated, Embodied, and Contingent Subjectivities and Knowledges

In addition to leaning on a broad field of literature, policy documents, government representatives' speeches, newspapers, and different forms of art (such as graffiti and documentary film), this thesis draws on empirical work conducted in Guatemala

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[7] The call to "Say Her Name" was (most recently) born out of a movement to increase visibility for, and attention to, cases of police violence against Black women in the United States (African American Policy Forum 2015).

(discussed in further detail below). Following feminist epistemologies' and intersectionality's (Crenshaw 1995) emphasis on the in-depth interview, critical observation, and embodied, participatory experiences (Letherby 2003), I articulate connections between the former materials and my field encounters with interlocutors. The data herein was therefore collected and analysed as a way of putting together a (necessarily partial) country case study of femicide—crucially, however, located at the level of discursive representations. In particular, I thread various "fragments" (Posocco 2014: 18) of data together as part of a wider aim to explore the productive power of gendered violence in generating the norms and practices that actually render that violence possible, normalised, and/or (less) (in)visible.

By focusing on matters of violence, bodies, and representation, and the complex nexus through which knowledge about such matters is produced (for, amongst others, political and policy purposes), I situate my research (process) within diverse critical traditions of feminist epistemology (Anzaldua 2003; Butler 1993a, 1997; Haraway 1991; Harding 1993; Hill Collins 2003; Mohanty 1984; Smith 1974; Spivak 1988). Taking the domain of discourse and bodies ("undone" by violence (Butler 2004b)) as a starting point for analysis is inherently a feminist project, as it foregrounds both the relationship between knowledge and power (relations) (Letherby 2003; Wilson 2015), as well as gesturing at the embodied, and thus "partial" and "situated" nature of research accounts and the knowledge claims that emerge from these (Haraway 1991; Posocco 2014). As Letherby notes (2003: 4-5), despite the plurality of feminist *methods*, a central tenet of all critical feminist research *practice* is the explicit "political commitment to produce useful knowledge" in the quest to challenge oppressive silences and hegemonic relations of power. Furthermore, following the approach within feminist critical development studies, research must demonstrate "a willingness to challenge hegemonic paradigms" and "patterns of knowledge production" through which exclusions (re)emerge in the context of policy interventions, processes of transition and democratisation, and mainstream (neoliberal) approaches to gender relations and inequalities (Radcliffe 2015: 855-6; Wilson 2015). I therefore understand my choices in relation to the objects of inquiry and methods of analysis as both intellectually and politically motivated acts firmly embedded in traditions of critical feminist research practices (Letherby 2003: 7).

Considering the rich field of feminist thought on the problem of how 'we' as researchers might produce meaningful accounts of gendered (and other forms of) oppression while also remaining attuned to our own exercises of power within the research process (Spivak 1988), I follow in the tradition of feminist- postcolonial (Lorde 2007; Mohanty 1984) and intersectional (Crenshaw 1995; Davis 1982; hooks 1982) epistemologies of positionality and location (Harding 1993; Smith 1974). Deeply influenced by, yet also departing somewhat from, deconstructionist and postmodern debates on knowledge production/construction, these critical feminist epistemic approaches foreground the "standpoint" (Hartsock 2003) of the researcher in relation to her empirical research (process). In this sense, it becomes the responsibility of the feminist researcher to disclose, insofar as it is possible, her relationship to the material, and thus to claim "responsibility for [the] enabling practices" that facilitate (and constrain) the descriptions, findings, or "partial realities" that emerge (Haraway 1991: 190, 193).

In her well-known essay on "Situated Knowledges" (1991), Haraway outlined the epistemological scaffolding for a feminist empiricism grounded in the "radical historical contingency", and thus "partiality", of knowledge production. But rather than eliminate the possibility for so-called "truthful" accounts of "reality", Haraway's claim is precisely that by rejecting claims to objectivity, universality, or transcendence, we can produce "situated knowledges" (1991: 185- 90)— she thus leaves the politically-transformative potential of feminist research open. Similarly, Smith (1974, 1999) has articulated a framework for "writing the social" through the figure of the "situated knower": the latter invokes the feminist researcher as an activate *participant*, not merely in the empirical field with her interlocutors, but a participant in knowledge production—since all interlocution is distilled through the researcher. This latter transference, or "translation", is therefore "always interpretive, critical, and partial" (Haraway 1991: 195). A feminist epistemology of location is heavily indebted to the currents across postcolonial, Black, and queer feminist debates which suggest that "subjugated standpoints" provide a greater *potential* for critical accounts of the world (Llewelyn 2007: 30). This is not, however, an essentialist argument for "identity-based" formulations of "women's experiences" (Haraway 1991: 191); on the contrary, this framework is informed by the nuance of intersectional accounts of how race, class, and sexuality-based inequalities (amongst

others), complicate and inform women's positionality and subjectivities (Crenshaw 1995; Hill Collins 2003).

For the purposes of outlining my own research process, what has been most influential about these strands of feminist epistemological thought is the emphasis placed on the partial, yet still meaningful, nature of knowledge accounts that emerge from empirical research that is "fully saturated with [contingent] history and social life rather than abstracted from it" (Harding 1993: 57). Consistent with the theoretical framework that has helped guide my analysis, the methodological framework likewise hinges on the assumption that knowledges are actively *produced* rather than merely "discovered" (Foucault 1972, 1978, 1980)— a process inescapably saturated by the subjectivity/ies of the "knower", and thus, by relations of power (Butler 1997, 2004b).

Another central component of feminist empiricism is its rejection of the possibility, or even desirability, of research neutrality (Letherby 2003; Llewelyn 2007). As Boesten explains in relation to her research on sexual violence in Peru, where the subject matter is so inescapably political, and where there is a clear investment in producing knowledge that may propel positive changes in the lives of marginalised subjects, the "starting point is in no matter neutral" (2014: 14). Similarly, when discussing the epistemological and ontological framework that guided her research on violence against women in El Salvador, Hume explains that "the very decision about the location of the research, who to talk to and what questions to ask betrays normative ideas about violence" (2009: 23). As my own research has been undertaken from the premise that dominant representational practices linked to femicide in Guatemala help reconstitute regimes of differential (in)visibility and disposability, I likewise locate neutrality as an impossible horizon for research on violence (Evans and Giroux 2015: 8). However, as already discussed, such candour about the political and embodied nature of the research endeavour does not undermine the grounds for meaningful partial descriptions, accounts, and knowledge claims (Haraway 1991; Harding 1993).

The feminist notion of non-neutrality also encourages researchers to speak in their own voices; or, at least, to be aware of their own voice as they write through their research "findings"— what Fortier calls "reflexivity" (1998: 49). While also motivated by my personal location in this research project (see below), I am likewise inspired by feminist and critical research practices that, where appropriate, write in

the first person (Letherby 2003: 6-7). As Letherby notes, such a practice follows the feminist imperative of accountability in research, for in "[w]riting as 'I' we take responsibility for what we write" (2003:7). Of course, there are also drawbacks to adopting this practice. Particularly, Letherby cautions that we risk accusations "of 'un-academic' indulgence", charges that already tend to be disproportionately directed at critical research that focuses on oppressive forms of power and the production of vulnerable subjects (ibid.). Nonetheless, I have elected to maintain a commitment to rendering my "self" (Letherby 2003: 7) visible as the researcher behind this thesis, and therefore make allowances to write in the first person where appropriate. In this regard, I am also remaining consistent with "situated" feminism's "splitting" of the subject and object dyad (Haraway 1991: 190), as well as with postcolonial and intersectional feminism's insistence on the complex plurality of subjectivities that seep into the knowledge construction process (Crenshaw 1995; hooks 2003).

Perhaps more relevant, still, is that researchers producing empirical accounts of 'post war' Guatemala have been some of the most important proponents of underwriting the "partiality and partialness" (Nelson 1999: 41-2; Posocco 2014), as well as the necessarily political (and thus, ideally, accountable) nature of their research interventions (Benson et al. 2008; Blacklock and Crosby 2005; McAllister and Nelson 2013). As pointed out by Wilson, for example, our subjectivities as interested and invested researchers of problems of violence, oppression, and inequality, invariably mark our memories and interpretations of fieldwork (1997). Echoing the sentiments of a feminist and intersectional episteme of location (Haraway 1991; Harding 1993; Llewelyn 2007), Wilson suggests that:

> "[o]nce it is recognised that all narratives are the result of
> artifice and design, then rather than hide any reference to this
> process, it might be preferable to place the interpretive filler in
> the foreground of the account, to convey something of the
> conditions in which knowledge is formulated and
> represented." (1997: 151)

Fittingly then, the feminist epistemological framework is "an argument for situated and embodied knowledges and against various forms of unlocatable, and so irresponsible, knowledge claims. Irresponsible means unable to be called into account" (Haraway 1991: 191). It furthermore lays bare the performative dimensions

of fieldwork, analysis, and writing (Posocco 2014: 8-9), and is therefore a condition for making knowledge claims— ones that avoid making the kinds of "erasures" of the subjectivities, socialities, and histories that saturate the "production process" (Haraway 1991; Harding 1993).

Research Design and Data Collection

In this section I outline my qualitative research design and describe the forms of data I collected and analysed during the course of fieldwork, as well as accounting for other components of my investigation. Part of the purpose of this overview is to demonstrate the appropriateness of my methods to both the research questions, and "the topic and scale" of my subject matter (Letherby 2003: 87).

At the most basic level, my research aims for a qualitative analysis: leaning on various methods, materials, and sources in order to quote, describe, (re)tell, and analyse, rather than "count" (Letherby 2003: 80). In trying to avoid "counting" I am referring both to the absence of any quantitative analysis (beyond my skills and scope as a researcher trained in qualitative social science), and, furthermore, to my limited citation of statistics (on violence or femicide) to corroborate or unsettle claims (made by interlocutors or made by me). The latter is underpinned by both practical and ethical reasons. In relation to the former, the discrepancies between state, non-government organisations' (NGOs), and international agencies' data on femicide in Guatemala points, especially, to the on-going inadequacies of the government's monitoring and its failure to collect effective gender-disaggregated data on femicide, despite legal requirements to do so, as well as to definitional inconsistencies and contestations between homicides/femicides/ or "violent deaths of women" (Fregoso and Bejarano 2010; Musalo et al. 2010). Therefore, and carrying me to the second point about the ethical angle, to cite the femicide statistics as documented by Guatemala's National Civil Police (PNC) for the year 2014, for example, can problematically sanction the absences of those victims who were not officially "counted". Given the global context in which measuring or quantifying everything from violence, to poverty, to human rights abuses is increasingly a discursive and policy imperative of mainstream (neoliberal) development agenda-setting (Wilson 2015), this challenge to the omnipotent "power of numbers" is an especially important

caveat (Fukada-Parr et al. 2013). Certainly, the fact that quantitative "indicators are a technology of [global] governance", suggests that social research into nuanced phenomena such as gendered violence needs to be all the more rigorous about problematising "the reductionism inherent in quantification" (Fukada-Parr et al. 2013: 5). In this vein, I am following the imperative of feminist, indigenous, and social justice interlocutors in the Guatemalan field who explained that, increasingly, they are careful about when, and to whom, they rehearse statistics around violence and femicide, so as to not allow victims to "fall into mere numbers" (eg., Interviewee 7, 23.01.14). Relatedly, drawing from Spivak's (1988) and other postcolonial feminists' (Bulbeck 1998; Mohanty 1984) pertinent critiques of how appeals to violence (especially against racialised women) can slip into "civilizing" interventionist narratives (Nelson 1999: 62), thus becoming vessels for the maintenance of colonial-imperial relations, I suggest that richer, and potentially more useful meanings (Haraway 1991) emerge by way of collecting, listening to, and (re)reading representations and narratives of violence (Boesten 2014; Hume 2009; Menjivar 2011; Sanford 2003; Theidon 2013). In relation to this latter point, it is worth highlighting the decision I made, quite early on, to not *intentionally* pursue interviews with victims-survivors of gendered violence, or with family or kin of victims of femicide. However, a crucial caveat here is that several of the most important social justice and human rights movements that emerged during the Guatemalan civil war, and which continue to have an impact today, were precisely spearheaded by the family members (often the wives, mothers, and daughters) of individuals directly victimized by the military state's violence (Blacklock and Crosby 2004; Consorcio Actoras de Cambio 2009; Wilkinson 2002). Therefore, the idea that these family members are not victims/survivors of violence in their own right is deeply problematic, and is certainly not the position I would take. However, as I discuss in further detail below, while many of the feminist and indigenous rights or social justice activists I interviewed did disclose personal histories that tied them to victims of violence, I precisely sought out interlocutors who chose to be publicly involved in activities, movements, or lines of work that thematically linked to my research. I suggest that this somewhat parallels Boesten's thoughtful reflection on what prompted her to limit the catchment of narrative sources for her research on sexual violence in Peru, and, furthermore, her consideration of "the complexity of a

discursively constructed common sense" (2014: 14-5) that surrounds the meanings and conditions of possibility for this violence:

> "After conversations with lawyers and social workers involved in this work with survivors of wartime rape, I decided not to pursue additional testimonies from or interviews with victim-survivors as the situation was precarious enough without me asking questions. In addition, the more I learned about the theme, the more I became convinced that the focus of critical research should not lie with the suffering of individual women, but with the processes and structures that make their suffering possible." (Boesten 2014: 15).

Similarly, because I was more interested in articulating the hegemonic contours of discursive representations of femicidal violence, it made empirical sense to examine political and cultural practices that help constitute the boundaries of femicide's meaning(s) (in government rhetoric, policy frameworks, and media accounts, for example), and then to explore the dialectics between these discursive formations and various interlocutors' narratives, cases of femicidal violence, and existing testimonials and literature.

By locating Guatemala, and the object of femicide, as/within "a space overdetermined by violence" (Nelson 1999: 47), my claim is that there are multiple forms and/or sources of data from which meanings are made, and, indeed, "endlessly deferred" (Nelson 1999: 69). Therefore, although at the outset of my research design and proposal I imagined (as most researchers do) (Llewelyn 2007), a somewhat straightforward and concentrated process of data collection (in my case, I anticipated that the better part of my data or findings would emerge in the context of first-person interviews), I realised in the course of my field experience that my analytical eye was being (re)cast in a myriad of directions that extended beyond the one-on-one interview, towards newspapers, graffiti, and documentary film, for example (more on this below). While I would certainly avoid situating this research project in the domain of ethnography, due to the fact that I am neither trained as an anthropologist, nor did I spend a sufficient stretch of time "in the field" to warrant such a label (Letherby 2003: 94), I take epistemological inspiration from a rich field of anthropological studies on violence, especially, though of course not exclusively, in Guatemala (Fischer and Benson 2006; Grandin 2000; Hume 2009; McAllister and

Nelson 2013; Snodgrass Godoy 2005; Velasquez Nimatuj 2013; Wilson 1997). More specifically, however, I suggest that my empirical design overlays with a burgeoning literature focused on the urban spatialities of Guatemala City, and upon the way in which knowledge about violence is generated and contested therein (Benson et al. 2008; Godoy-Paiz 2008; Levenson 2011, 2013; McIlwaine and Moser 2004, 2006; Thomas et al. 2011). Rather than situate my "fieldwork" as a synonym for "ethnography" (Fortier 1998), I frame my empirical research as drawing from feminist social scientific and ethnographic *methods* (Letherby 2003), including participant-observation, in-depth and semi-structured interviews, conversational analysis (Fortier 1998), as well as examining political speeches, government and state policy documents, and newspaper and other media and art forms.

As I relied on a vast range of sources and methods to enable the collection of data, I frame my research design and process as a form of "triangulation" (Boesten 2014: 15): leaning on and deploying multiple sources to "add layers" to my analysis, as well as to explore how different articulations of data "validate or refine" others in a process that is dialectically open (Letherby 2003: 96). Within the feminist epistemological framework, the notion of triangulation gestures at both the use of diverse sources to help generate understanding of complex social issues, while being furthermore suggestive of a critical, reflexive, and adaptive form of research which acknowledges that meaningful content can emerge out of distinctive materials, experiences, and exchanges or encounters (Nelson 1999: 41-69).

My fieldwork[8] took place predominantly in the urban metropolitan area of Guatemala City, with occasional brief trips to outside departments of Chimaltenango, Quetzaltenango, and Sololá. Empirical research was undertaken in two core stages. The first stretch of fieldwork occurred between October 2013 and February 2014, with an additional trip for follow-up data collection between January 2015 and February 2015, after additional funding was awarded[9]. During this period, I conducted a total of thirty in-depth and semi-structured interviews[10] (Letherby 2003:

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[8] My access to "the field"— such as to interlocutors, meetings, forums, and events— in Guatemala City was heavily indebted to my positionality, or personal biography (Fortier 1998), in (relation to) Guatemala. Therefore, I discuss the "how" of my engagement in the field in a later section.
[9] This funding was a travel bursary from the Society for Latin American Studies.
[10] A list of anonymised interviewees, and general information about affiliation, can be found in the Appendix.

88), which lasted between two and four hours each. Four interviews were conducted with two different interlocutors in the United States: in New York City and Pasadena, California. These interviews were organised through my network of contacts in Guatemala, who, upon learning that I would be traveling to both of these cities to visit family (indeed, both cities count with some of the country's largest populations of Guatemalans living outside of Guatemala), encouraged me to reach out to them (both of these U.S.-based interlocutors work in documentary film making, with a specialized focus on Guatemala, histories of violence, and contemporary violence against women). With the two exceptions of the interviews held in the United States (which were conducted in English), all other interviews were conducted in Spanish (a language I am fully proficient in), and later transcribed and translated by me. I therefore take full responsibility for any mistakes in this regard.

While in my initial research design I developed a relatively detailed questionnaire, upon my emergence in fieldwork, I swiftly adapted to a much more open-ended style of interlocution with interviewees, aiming for stories, narratives, and accounts that were loosely guided— rather than constrained— by the thematic focus of my study (Fortier 1998; Letherby 2003). Four interviews were conducted in groups of between two and five people (for example, when I convened meetings with women's rights/feminist organisations), and I also interviewed several individuals more than once (four interviewees agreed to meet a second time when I returned to Guatemala for the second stage of field research, and one U.S.-based interviewee was interviewed multiple times). In total, I spoke with thirty individuals over the course of thirty interviews in formal settings (again, recalling that some interlocutors were interviewed twice, and four interviews were conducted in groups). In the text of my thesis, interlocutor's quotes, or any observations they directly provided but which I rephrased, are cited as "Interviewee", followed by a coded number, followed by the date of the interview (for example: "Interviewee X, day/month/year"). Most interviews were recorded where such permission was granted; however, in certain contexts where the interview took place in more public spaces, I reached agreements with the interviewee to merely take notes (which I also did when interviews were being recorded). In several occasions where the individuals I was meeting did not possess an office, for example, we would meet at a café and bookstore in zone 10 of Guatemala City—this café is considered a relatively safe space to discuss politically

sensitive issues, and many members of progressive strands of civil society are frequent patrons. I also spent a significant period of time at the Universidad Rafael Landívar, which is located close to the residence where I stayed during my fieldwork; a family member working in the university's Department of Economics facilitated my access to this site. Having access to this university's library and various departments was not only instrumental to providing me with the space to work and, where appropriate, conduct interviews, but I was also able to access resources that were not otherwise available online or at the libraries in London where I studied full time. Following the guidelines I had approved by the Birkbeck College Ethics Committee prior to fieldwork, at the outset of each interview I ensured that interlocutors were clear about:

i) the research topic, which I also made sure to communicate was somewhat 'open', and therefore ensure that I was not closing off potentially rich accounts that might not otherwise emerge;

ii) my intention to record and/or take notes during the interview;

iii) the content and purpose of the consent form, which each participant signed/gave their consent in an oral recording (a sample copy of the "Information Sheet / Informed Consent" form can be found in the Appendix), and finally;

iv) that she/he was free to end the conversation, refuse to answer certain questions, and/or retract her/his comments afterwards. Relatedly, I agreed to keep the names of all interlocutors confidential in this thesis; however, it is worth noting that many individuals expressed their openness to being identified, referring to the fact that they already sustain a level of visibility for their activism/work in Guatemala, and beyond. Nonetheless, I felt that consistency in relation to interviewee confidentiality was preferable, as I could not identify any analytical benefits to naming interlocutors, whereas I could identify potential ethical risks and/or drawbacks.

In addition to first-person in-depth interviews, I attended eight forums, meetings, and events organised by various sectors of civil society—all of these either focused specifically on themes of violence against women and femicide, or addressed topics

that I felt were inextricably linked to the latter (such as election-related violence or historical memory), and which I therefore also saw as opportunities for meeting new interlocutors. I also attended rallies such as "1 Billion Women Rising Against Violence" (in Zone 10 of Guatemala City) with interlocutors who I formed solidarity connections with (Nelson 1999, chapter 2), as well as photographic exhibitions commemorating victims of sexual violence and genocide, musical events, and a documentary film presentation on the same subject matter. I also attended three relevant human rights and solidarity events for Guatemala in London, England (in March and May 2014) and New York City (in May 2015).

It is crucial to note that I also had many informal conversations—over coffee, dinner, in taxis, or at social and political events, which I draw from extensively to enrich the meanings that emerged in other forms of interlocution and data collection. For the purpose of methodological candour, however, I do not cite such conversations/encounters or the insights that emerged from them as "interviews/interviewees" (instead, where possible, I reference these by way of "Author Field Notes, date"). Nelson, noticeably inspired by feminist epistemological thinking on the situated-embodied (Haraway 1991) and highly contingent nature of knowledge production (Harding 1993; Smith 1974), corroborates the importance of allowing for such accounts to emerge in a context such as Guatemala—without, of course, essentialising such "unofficial" encounters as mediums for accessing "truth":

> "… much of our understanding of Guatemala, our documentation, participant-observation, guided interviews, surveys, and so on is based on hearsay and rumor, on partial stories—both interested and incomplete. Meaning is endlessly deferred through the multiple and on-going decodings of news stores, official pronouncements, leaks, long discussions over drinks, and rumor… This is always a condition of knowledge, especially in the space of death that Guatemala continues to inhabit… [this] forces us to question our hold on truth and problematizes our understandings and identifications."
> (Nelson 1999: 69)

Furthermore, I have maintained solidarity ties and even friendships with some interlocutors, and thus there have been on-going discussions via the mediums of email and Skype up to the point of writing. As suggested by my emphasis on "triangulation" and, relatedly, the fluid practices guiding my empirical research process, a relatively

wide catchment of potential interlocutors guided my "sampling frame" (Small 2009): in other words, once my initial stages of research led me to think of my object of study ("femicidio") as most productively analysed at the level of discursive-representations, I quickly appreciated that a surplus of articulations regarding this violence circulated in domains outside of the 'official' women's, feminist, and social justice movements that I had originally envisioned as key sources of data in my research design (indeed, at the research proposal stage for this thesis, I set my analytical horizon towards a particular group of interlocutors whom I identified as the Guatemalan women's or feminist movements, but ultimately went/was taken in a wider direction that, while still within the social justice and civil society field, extended beyond the women's/feminist movements- see pages 45-6 and Appendix for more detail on interlocutors' backgrounds, professions, and positionalities). Thus, in addition to relying on a "snowballing technique", whereby an initial pool of interlocutors with whom I had contact led me to other interlocutors (Small 2009), I understand my openness to these methodological moves (from, say, leaning most heavily on first-person interviews, to splitting the focus between the latter, and other experiences and materials), as facilitated by the feminist episteme that guides my understanding of knowledge production.

Such an approach allows for the inherent 'messiness' of the feminist research process, encouraging us to be adaptive to our interlocutors, and thereby leaving us open to the very interruptions that may lead us to analytical domains that would have otherwise remained obscured by our initial research questions and design (Letherby 2003: 6; Llewelyn 2007). Because triangulation assumes that the researcher must remain reasonably open to sources of data and interlocution that may not have been planned at the point of research design, it strongly resonates with feminist epistemological imperatives. Specifically, Haraway's notion of "diffraction" (1997) deploys the metaphor of a beam of light unpredictably splitting, or diffracting, in various directions, to highlight that each material we engage with, or interlocutor we speak with in the field, (potentially) changes the course of our investigation (Llewelyn 2007: 301).

One especially poignant example of how this process impacted my fieldwork is the case of Cristina Siekavizza, which ended up being a central event and point of

analytical interlocution for the account offered in this thesis. While "El Caso Siekavizza" (as it was tagged in Guatemala) first emerged in July 2011 when the young wife and mother disappeared, it was during the course of my first stage of fieldwork that her husband (a fugitive and prime suspect in her presumed femicide) was captured. Despite my reticence at examining a case that fell outside the initial purview of my research inquiry (as I had not initially wanted to look at cases of femicide linked to domestic violence, nor cases where victims *were* visibilised in mainstream media domains and were acknowledged by government interlocutors, as was the case with Cristina), I soon realised that ignoring the discursive concentration of the case across media, state, and interlocutors' accounts (in no way unified) would be a profoundly dishonest act on my part as a feminist researcher. And, in fact, it was by allowing myself to be taken, at least partially, in the direction of this (and related) cases of femicide in Guatemala, that I believe I was able to develop some of the comparative lines of description, analysis, and claims that I develop in this thesis.

Ethics and Accountability: A Reflection on Methodological Choices

While I cannot proclaim to know exactly how many cases of femicide I learned of/heard or read about/re-viewed in media accounts, political speeches, or during interviews and meetings (especially given the near daily reporting of such incidences in the newspapers (CERIGUA 2006, 2013; Smith and Offit 2010), I purposefully analysed thirty-six femicide cases[11] for this thesis. Each case was analysed with varying degrees of emphasis and detail, owing precisely to the dearth of information for so many cases, and to the significant, and thus conceptually very relevant, discrepancies in terms of political, social, and cultural emphasis that victims were given. I have included a list of the names (where possible), and other details of the victims in the Appendix of this document. The decision about how to re-present the dead or the missing weighed heavily upon me throughout the course of research; this reached its apogee as I began writing about/through a series of victims whose cases, or rather, whose lives/deaths and images/names (or absence of images/names), for lack of a better word, "haunted" me (Scheper-Hughes 2004). As researchers of violence (Das et al. 2000; Scheper-Hughes and Bourgois 2004) note, trying to work

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[11] See Appendix.

through issues of representation and ethics seems condemned to produce inadequate solutions. Ultimately, however, a decision must be made by the researcher/writer on what to (knowingly) include or exclude from re-citation, and therefore, to risk forms of occlusion and revelation that cannot necessarily be known. Stanley (2011) writes about the "impossible necessity" of re-presenting violence for the purposes of analytical interlocution; a thoughtful reflection that I also lean upon in order to communicate my own ambivalence on how to write through the femicide cases addressed in this thesis:

> "The question, then, of signifying the dead, of rewriting violence and of representation itself must be raised. Writing death tends to reproduce a pornography of violence through which the fleshiness of those we are in conversation with, their material lives, and the politics of their ends are decomposed into tropes of speculative pain and sensational disappearance." (2011: 5)

Here I thus wish to foreground the deliberate decision I have made to exclude photographic images[12] of the femicide victims whose cases form the central corpus of my analytical chapters (4-7, but particularly chapters 5 and 6). This is especially motivated by my ethical objection to the ways in which mainstream daily newspapers and other media forums in Guatemala print images of the cadavers of women; however, even where facial images of the victims (in life) were available, the unevenness of the distribution of availability for such photos (as most victims discussed are not only nameless, but therefore, no 'living' photos of them could be accessed) made such a move seem like a reproduction of the very regimes of differentiation, hierarchy, and disposability which I aim to trace and, ideally, disrupt (Butler 2010). Of course, I am not suggesting that by refusing to reproduce the photos as these were printed in media accounts (for my Appendix), that I have successfully eluded the problems inherent to issues of representation, violence, and gendered bodies. Indeed, any ethical commitment to not leave victims nameless also fails on account of the widespread absence of this seemingly simple detail for most victims. I would still insist, however, that listing *any* available detail of the victim's life and/or death—such as where the victim was when her body was found, whether she left any children behind—is still a small, but important, act of political significance. I suggest

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[12] However, all of these photographic images, in either their original or scanned and archived copies, are stored with my other field data, such as the audio recordings and transcripts of interviews.

that such a move at least momentarily interrupts the emphasis on statistics (much maligned by feminists and social justice interlocutors I spoke with in Guatemala), as well as counters the dominant frames of representation that circulate for femicide victims (Fregoso and Bejarano 2010; Gaspar de Alba and Guzman 2010), so often seen as disposable, when they are 'seen' at all. In this regard, the imperative to "say her name", or, at least, to say *something* about the victim that is otherwise absent from hegemonic accounts, is one form of responding to (though certainly not resolving) the problems that weigh upon visual representation (Mirzoeff 1999) and numbers (Fukada-Parr et al. 2013). As Nelson has eloquently noted on the perpetual failure of trying to "account for"/ "count" violence in Guatemala, as invested researchers, we must always strive for an ethical horizon that offers *more*, even if that "more" is realized through showing less:

> "… the Spanish *contar* means both to count and to tell.
> Counting offers the soothing objectivity of the facts, ma'am,
> just the facts. But then why is it that one death is a tragedy,
> but two hundred thousand are just a statistic? One counts, but
> it is insufficient. It is telling—context, milieu, identi-ties—that
> makes that one (death) count. It is connections that articulate
> us, love that makes that life grievable." (Nelson 2009: 291).

Locating the Person(al) Behind the Research(er): Positionality and (Partial) Disclosure

In Fortier's discussion of the different subjectivities and nodes through which a feminist researcher enters and inhabits the field, she notes that we all bring a "personal biography" with us—it necessarily shapes the research process from the moment we develop an interest in a subject and vaguely formulate a set of questions, to when we try to bring those questions to life, or "test" them, in the course of fieldwork, all the way through to our struggle to translate "findings" into written word (1998: 49). Gender, ethnicity, and language are only some of the nodes through which fieldwork is negotiated; our subjectivities are always multiple, and split, and no singular identity or experience guides us unilaterally in the field (Letherby 2003; Nelson 1999). Of course, these are insights emphasized not only in Fortier's notion of "personal biography", but rather, they emerge across a rich corpus of feminist, postcolonial, intersectional, and queer literature (Crenshaw 1995; Haritaworn et al.

2013; Hill Collins 2003; Smith 1974). This discussion dovetails, once again, back to the question of situated, partial, and "fleshy" subjectivities, or "positionalities" (Haraway 1991): in this view, our embodiment—the body we "carry" with us into the field—is an inescapable vessel through which the research and data collection process is both constrained and/or facilitated (Ahmed 2000; Nelson 1999, 2009; Posocco 2014).

As I hope to have made clear above, a feminist standpoint epistemology rejects neutrality or objectivity as neither possible nor desirable starting points for empiricism (Haraway 1991; Harding 1993; Smith 1974). However, it is important to note that the "partiality" of my field research process, and of the account I produce herein, is further compounded by the fact that my family history is steeped in particular strands of the very violence(s) and country-specific narratives I chart. I was born in Costa Rica to a Guatemalan mother and later raised in Canada for the majority of my adolescent life. A member of my family was killed at the height of Guatemala's armed conflict by state and counterinsurgency forces, as a consequence of his prominent role in the country's political-Left movement.

While there are limits to the personal disclosures I believe are pertinent to foreground in a methodological account (Letherby 2002), I am certain that the background identity (my last name) that 'fixes' me (perhaps for others, though not myself) to a particular strand of individuals, movements, and moments in Guatemala, served as both a catalyser and, indeed, inhibitor (Fortier 1998) during my fieldwork. For example, due to the strong visibility of my family in what might be called 'progressive' or Left-wing elements of civil society (those deceased and those still living and working in Guatemala), I discovered that accessing interlocutors for interviews, or inquiring about relevant forums, was a surprisingly smooth process which usually only required sending an email or making a phone call before individuals (often enthusiastically) agreed to meet with me or forward information about where I should go (events or closed assemblages of groups).

Although I would not claim status as a Guatemalan, I am also not an "outsider" in the way that some researchers have described their experiences trying to navigate research relationships and build trust and access in the context of 'post war'

Guatemala (Blacklock and Crosby 2004). As Blacklock and Crosby (2004) have described, building trust, even as "well-intentioned" outsiders, is an on-going struggle in countries marked by histories of violence and complex social relations (Nelson 1999). Indeed, it is no coincidence that most studies of Guatemala employ terminology like 'silence', 'terror', 'forgetting', 'fear' and 'betrayal' when framing discussions of the histories and contemporary formations of violence—words invoked in other countries marked by war, violence, and (fragile) transition (Nelson 2009; Blacklock and Crosby 2004; Wilkinson 2002; North and Simmons 1999; Sanford 2003). On the one hand, the openness with which my kin relations and political leanings were disclosed to interlocutors (by way of a family member, friend, or ex-colleague facilitating contact, or when interlocutors learned about the nature of my research project) allowed me to build rapport (Nelson 1999: 63) with a range of individuals and organisations. On the other hand, the fact that it was relatively easy for me to be identified as feminist and politically-Left, or even just related to political figures that are reviled by political, economic, and military factions of the Guatemalan Right-wing and elite, proved almost completely obstructive to accessing interlocutors within these groups for interviews or meetings (any such encounters that did take place were purely serendipitous). For example, when I did try and reach out to particular politicians, legal professionals, or policy makers that identified (or were identified) with these latter groups, most of the time I would not even receive an email response.

Inevitably, then, my "personal biography" (Fortier 1996, 1998) impacted the data I was able to collect, particularly insofar as the in-depth interviews are concerned. Indeed, because the distribution of my field interlocutors was weighted so decidedly on the side of those sympathetic to social justice concerns in general, and violence and femicide, in particular (such as feminist lawyers, journalists, advocates working in domestic violence shelters, activists providing support and accompaniment to victims/survivors of wartime sexual violence, or women's human rights and land defenders, for example- see Appendix for full list and description of interviewees), this necessarily meant that I had to look to other sources to access the discourses of the Patriot Party government, certain state institutions, and the mainstream media, for example. Such an admission regarding my field interlocutors, however, does not undermine the authority upon which the claims in this thesis are based. This is

especially true since, as I discussed earlier in this chapter, in addition to interviews, my empirical research involved extensive analysis of government and state policy documents, political speeches (via video and transcripts), and newspaper coverage relating to Guatemala's gendered violence, and, more specifically to the coverage of a series of femicide cases. Each of these latter data sources were used in triangulation with my interviewees' accounts in order to supplement, refine, or, indeed, to contest my hypothesis that discourses of violence are formative of the bodies of femicide victims, and, furthermore, that these discursive representations draw upon norms that are contextually fluid, yet articulated through historically entrenched notions of gendered and racialised disposability.

The family history that forced my mother to leave Guatemala is one that indelibly marked my life and upbringing— both contouring my perception of my family's home country, as well as providing the kindling for my return later in life (not only as a researcher, but in earlier stages, to work and travel across Guatemala and Central America). My "positionality" (Haraway 1991) was thus not only relevant in shaping the pool of interlocutors, meetings, and events I had access to, but it also shaped the style and narrative content of the interviews, encounters, and other interactions I had— and, accordingly, deeply influenced this thesis.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have laid out the feminist epistemological framework that guided my research process—from the initial project design, to the data collection, through to writing this thesis. In particular, I discussed how the methodological tools associated with critical epistemic approaches within intersectional, postcolonial and queer feminisms help inform the political possibilities, as well as the ethical and contextual limits of, feminist research and knowledge production within a frame of "partiality" and "positionality" (Haraway 1991). Such an approach, I emphasised, is especially relevant to analytically engaging with themes of violence in general, and femicide and gendered violence, in particular, for it foregrounds the feminist imperative to critique hegemonic paradigms, and to disrupt and challenge oppressive omissions and silences (Hume 2009)— all of which work to reinstall conditions of exclusion and marginalisation (Radcliffe 2015; Wilson 2015). When outlining my methods of data

collection, and the diversity of materials consulted, I suggested that my feminist strategy of remaining open to the inherent messiness and subjectivity of the research process helped lead me to some of my richest field encounters and empirical materials—all of which, in turn, were integral to my ability to analytically approach femicide as a discursively-constituted object with multiple articulations. Finally, I explored the ethical dilemmas I faced in working through subject matter that is deeply marked by the absences of victims, and, where possible, accounted for the decisions I made in relation to how to present my material. Relatedly, I offered a reflection on how my own positionality vis-à-vis the empirical context of Guatemala, and with (potential) interlocutors, both enabled and constrained the research endeavour. Cumulatively, each of the latter methodological reflections are underpinned by traditions in critical feminist research: they establish how despite the tensions, subjectivity/ies, limitations, and lacunas inherent to the feminist research process, there are still grounds for the descriptions, arguments, and knowledge claims presented in this thesis.

Chapter 3 – Theoretical Framework

Introduction

This chapter outlines the conceptual scaffolding within which the wider research questions of this thesis are analytically approached. The aim is to map out the theoretical materials and analytical lines of enquiry that provide the tools for examining the objects/subjects of this study (namely, violence, bodies, discourse, and representation), whilst likewise opening a conceptual passageway for articulating meaningful linkages between those objects/subjects. In taking the domain of discourse and bodies "undone" (Butler 2004b) by gendered violence as a starting point for analysis, I situate femicide as a discursively-constituted object (Haraway 1991) and thus, as most productively approached at the level of representation. The emphasis on femicidal violence and its discursive and visual representation across a range of meaning-making sites marked by power relations, gestures at the processes through which knowledge about violence is actively produced and regulated, rather than merely "discovered" (Foucault 1972, 1978, 1980).

This thesis leans heavily on several strands of feminist, postmodern, postcolonial, and queer theorisations, particularly owing to their contributions towards rethinking the relationship between power (relations), discourse, and subjects/subjectivities. This literature is also critical because of its role in extending, if not transforming, dominant vocabularies of violence. In analysing my empirical materials in relation to the wider literature, however, the fundamental theoretical entry points are Judith Butler's thinking about embodiment (1990, 1993a, 2004b), normative violence (2004a, 2004b, 2010), and performativity (1993a, 1997), and Michel Foucault's analytics of power and regulative discourses (1970, 1972, 1978, 1979, 1980). Butler's contributions, which are deeply influenced by Foucault's work, have undeniably marked feminist understandings of the relationship between discursive fields (such as political rhetoric, policy frameworks, and media representations) and (the) materiality (of bodies) (Butler 1997, 2004a, 2010). Most notably, Butler's work "troubles" our assumptions about the processes that help constitute the boundaries of/between bodies and/or subjects that (fail to) matter (1993a, 2004b), drawing critical attention to the hegemonic practices that render violent differentiations normal(ised) and/or invisible.

In putting the bodies of femicide and "the discourses that attempt to account for" those bodies and that violence (McAllister and Nelson 2013: 4) at the forefront of my analysis, I find that Butler's theoretical offerings provide an essential foundation for working through this complex dialectic. I therefore thread Butler's work together with a range of critical scholarship that offers an especially rich conceptual passageway for exploring the discursive-material dynamics of sociopolitical performances linked to femicide, and, more generally, of regimes of gendered violence and exclusion. But while a Butlerian and Foucauldian framework engenders an emphasis on the relations of power that constrain whether or not, and how, bodies/subjects of violence emerge within a discursive field of recognition, such a theoretical platform is likewise ineluctably shaped by the understanding that power-laden practices are dynamic and open and thus, subject to re-readings (Butler 1993b; Moussa and Scapp 1996). Therefore, because "power is polyvalent", the political and cultural frames that regulate understandings of femicidal violence can be subverted (McAllister and Nelson 2013: 19). Significantly then, the theoretical framework deployed herein draws out a space for articulating modes of resistance to the dominant frames of intelligibly for gendered violence and exclusion.

Later in the chapter, I draw on a nascent body of specialised "new violence" (Benson et al. 2008; Smith and Offit 2008) literature, which explores the rise in (fears of) violence, crime, and insecurity in democratic transition countries across Latin America, as well as in other regions like South Africa (Koonings and Kruijt 2004). The concept of "new violence" builds off of theories of "structural violence" (Galtung 1969; Winton 2004), which is best understood as a framework for articulating historical, institutional, and symbolic oppression, as well as inequality and affliction, through the trope of violence (Farmer 2001; Scheper-Hughes and Bourgois 2004; Dilts 2012). Rather than situate the empirical site of this account as a 'given' setting through which one then, in turn, analytically approaches the subjects/objects of femicide, bodies, and discourses of violence, the "new violence" literature establishes the need for thinking theoretically about *Guatemala* as a conceptual "space of death" (Taussig 2004: 39), and thus, as a context marked by far more than its geographic boundaries. However, following recent feminist scholarship on the "new violence"

framework (Hume 2009; Wilding 2010), this section also foregrounds the need to gender the focus on these ostensibly "new" forms of urban violence and insecurity.

Finally, the chapter concludes with a brief discussion of how this thesis can be situated, both conceptually and empirically, within the field of critical gender and development studies— particularly within feminist critiques of the discourses and practices associated with dominant (neoliberal) development, democratisation, and post-war/ conflict/ transition processes (Berger 2006; Cornwall et al. 2008; Radcliffe 2015; Wilson 2015).

Butler and Foucault: A Framework for Discursive Economies of Violence and Femicide in Guatemala

While Butler's thinking is certainly not reducible to Foucauldian influences, as her work is conspicuously inspired by Hegelian dialectics (Butler 1987) and Derridean deconstructionist propositions pertaining to language (Derrida 1970, 1974), Boesten notes that Butler's emphasis on the diffuse workings of power and the transitory nature of discourse "strongly builds on Foucault", thus providing a "tangible entry into [her] analysis of power and the boundaries of being" (2010a: 3). In order to keep the focus on the key theoretical tools deployed throughout the empirical chapters of this thesis, here I concentrate especially on the works of Butler and Foucault that contribute most directly to an analysis of the discursive fields that produce and regulate the boundaries and bodies of/between femicide and gendered violences in 'post war' Guatemala.

Before arriving at feminist theorisations of discourse and embodiment, and of the dialectical relationship between "bodies of violence" (Wilcox 2015) and the field of discourse, we need to trace the genealogy of some of the theoretical propositions implied herein back to Foucault, who memorably posited that "it is in discourse that power and knowledge are joined together" (1978: 100). Indeed, it is within the classic texts, *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (1972) and *The History of Sexuality* (1978) that Foucault lays out the conceptual scaffolding for the notion, used throughout this thesis, of a "discursive economy" (1978: 11), and of the discursive "events", "objects" and "formations" emerging within this field of knowledge and meaning-making

(1972: 28-40). Articulating the fluid and historically contingent processes through which a particular discursive formation is produced —*here, I posit femicide as such a discursive formation*— Foucault describes how certain "objects" of that discourse emerge (or fail to emerge) within a complex field of power relations that need to be mapped and analysed (1972: 44-5). The "object", Foucault explains, "does not await in limbo" for a discursive order that might "free it", for "it does not pre-exist itself"; rather, the object of discourse is produced through "the practices that systematically form" that object (1972: 44-5, 49). Significantly, Foucault eschews approaching the objects of discourse in isolation, since his framework is precisely oriented towards exploring the *relations* between discursive elements, and articulating the *productive processes* through which *differences* and *classifications* between those objects are regulated (1972: 42).

My thesis figures this notion of the "objects" and "events" of discourse through the femicide victims/bodies and cases that form the central corpus of analysis— charting how these emerge within a wider field of articulations around violence in 'post war' Guatemala. Conceptually approaching femicide as a discursive formation with multiple articulatory manifestations establishes the need for thinking about the political-ideological "work" being performed through a discourse of femicide, and through the boundaries between and bodies of violence(s) that such a discourse produces (Foucault 1972: 49; Wilcox 2015: 13). Indeed, thinking in these analytical terms draws out the necessity of articulating the diverse forms that hegemonic appeals to femicidal violence (might) take in a given historical moment: for the implications of these appeals resonate not merely in relation to discursive-representational regimes, but within political-policy interventions, too.

Following a range of feminist and critical scholars who broadly draw upon Foucauldian formulations (eg., Boesten 2010a, 2014; Ferreira da Silva 2012; Wilcox 2015), I likewise reject the interpretation, often waged against Butler's work too (Nussbaum 2000), that Foucault merely "reduces politics to language" (Moussa and Scapp 1996: 89) and collapses "everything into discourse" (Lazarus, quoted in Moussa and Scapp 1996: 89). Indeed, as feminist scholars have argued in relation to the production of gendered subjects/ivities, discursive practices are embedded in power relations; they are therefore inescapably *material* in their effects upon bodies

(Butler 1993a). This qualification is especially pertinent to questions of violence and the gendered, racialised, and classed articulations through which its harms materialise (Boesten 2010a: 11; Ferreira da Silva 2012; Wilcox 2015: 11). Eluding the flawed understanding of Foucauldian genealogies of discourse (Moussa and Scapp 1996), subjects, and power, the work of a rich corpus of feminist, postcolonial, and queer theorists who deploy, and extend upon, Foucauldian thinking precisely highlights the political possibilities for non-hegemonic forms of agency and "counter discourses" that are opened up when normative truths (about violence and bodies, for example), are unsettled.

Certainly, if we understand the different nodes of the discursive economy of femicide—the "event" of a political speech, policy document, or newspaper article that deploys the term in relation to the topic of violence, or a particular victim's case emerging as an "object" of sociocultural significance—as existing within a wider spatial and temporal context specific to the empirical location under analysis, Foucault's framework carries enormous weight for a feminist analysis of what violence 'does' *beyond what it most manifestly 'does do'*:

> "… discourse is not a slender surface of contact, or confrontation, between a reality and a language… in analysing discourses themselves, one sees the loosening of the embrace… of words and things… discourses [are not] groups of signs… but [are] practices that systematically form the objects of which they speak. Of course, discourses are composed of signs; but what they do is more than use these signs to designate things. It is this *more* that renders them irreducible to language… and to speech. It is this 'more' that we must reveal and describe." (Foucault 1972: 48-9).

In tracing the varied articulations of femicide within the discursive field of violence in Guatemala, the task is thus not only to "direct attention to the… momentary presence and… wider ensemble of practices within which ["femicide" is] activated (Gregory 2013: 154-5). Rather, the analytical horizon extends beyond issues of "presence"— beyond the visibility or re-presentation of femicide, as such— towards an account of the partial contexts (Haraway 1991), historical and otherwise, "that make possible the appearance" (Foucault 1972: 32) of *particular* readings and *particular* victims/bodies of violence, alongside specific hegemonic formations (Foucault 1980: 118). However,

in order to account for what—or who— is at stake within the practices and processes that help constitute the discursive-material limits of gendered violence, it is crucial to bring in Butler's pivotal discussions around "performativity" (1990, 1997) and, relatedly, around the "regulatory norms" that govern which subjects/bodies "matter" (1993a, 2004a, 2010).

Although Butler is noted for "popularizing" performativity (theory), Posocco (2014a: 5) highlights that "the term and the theoretical propositions captured by it have multiple genealogies pointing to philosopher J. L. Austin's classic text *How to Do Things with Words* (1962)". As Posocco explains, Austin's formulation draws out a "doing", or creating, within discourse that exceeds mere "description… of an empirically ascertainable and ontologically distinct reality" (2014: 6). According to this view, representations—indeed, even supposedly neutral "descriptions"— are actually "resignifications" or "reinscriptions" which are necessarily constituted through knowledge practices (Haraway 1991; Posocco 2014a: 5). In this view, when the contextual 'coordinates' (as I refer to them throughout this thesis) of a femicide are cited within domains of political or cultural power— that is to say, details related to the subject/body, spatiality, or temporality of the femicidal violence—such "knowledge practices of description" (Posocco 2014a: 6) work productively to (over)determine the boundaries through which *particular forms of violence* and *particular types of victims* "are brought into being" (Posocco 2014a: 6), while others are obscured. Therefore, these *contextual coordinates* are also, necessarily, *ideological coordinates*. For instance, to allude to some of the cases discussed in later chapters: relaying that a femicide victim suffered from "domestic violence", and that this victim was a wife and mother; or that a victim's body was discovered in a ravine or a motel room with signs of sexual violence and torture, and that the victim was involved with "gangs" or was a "prostitute"; or, alternatively, describing a victim outside of the terms of "femicide", and instead referring to historical forms of state-sponsored sexual violence, or, indeed, denying that such violence occurred (at all or with the sanctioning of the state), constitutes "a doing" (Posocco 2014a: 6) through which "boundaries are drawn" (Haraway 1991: 201), and meanings are (re)made. Such a view of performativity opens language up to the critical interrogations engendered by feminist (and other critical fields of) analysis (Butler 1997).

Butler's feminist "restaging" (Posocco 2014a: 6) of performativity theory proceeds through a Foucauldian analytics of regulatory power, discursive practices, and norms (Boesten 2010a: 4), most memorably in *Bodies that Matter: On the Discursive Limits of Sex* (1993a) and *Excitable Speech: A Politics of the Performative* (1997). Although this thesis draws extensively upon Butler's later work—particularly the material in which she grapples with the racialised body politics of war and (in)security practices (2004a, 2010, 2015)—the core generative terms deployed herein come from these aforementioned earlier works.

In multiple accounts, Butler precisely builds upon the notion of "performativity" in order to argue that the ostensibly natural (physical) differences between subjects/bodies—in Butler's initial work, those differences which are implied by sex (1990)—are interpreted according to "historically and culturally formed" normative frameworks within which we then, in turn, "perform", and are constrained by, our "appropriate" genders (Boesten 2010a: 2-3, 2014: 16-7). As Boesten persuasively argues, while Butler's discussion is (at least in these earlier accounts) focused on sexuality and gender, her emphasis on the normative violence of "regulative discourses" (Butler 1993a) "allows for the inclusion of" racial, class, and other norms into the analysis (Boesten 2010a: 4-5)— particularly when one draws in Butler's later work on grievability and precarity in the context of the so-called "war on terror" (2004a, 2010). Butler's discussion of the regulatory interpellations (see page 56) through which gendered bodies of violence are produced *as* recognisable or unrecognisable subjects of violence (Butler 2010: 6) cannot adequately proceed without accounting for the constraints enacted by processes of racialisation (Boesten 2010a: 9)—an especially important caveat for thinking through femicidal violence in Guatemala (Costantino 2006; Nelson 1999; Sanford 2008).

In Butler's framework, the performative refers not to an individual 'act' of discourse, but instead, to a "discursive *practice* that enacts or produces that which it names" (1993a: 13, emphasis added). She thus parallels Foucault in centralising her analytical focus on *processes relationally* (Boesten 2010a: 4), rather than on singular acts in isolation. Discourse is thus read as a formative or productive practice that gains authoritative power through citational repetition (Butler 1993a: 10, 13). While this claim can be (and indeed has been) misread (Nussbaum 2000) as implying that

discourse actually causes or creates that which it refers to, such as demarcations of race or sex, Butler makes it clear that her formulation does not deny the materiality of bodies, as such. Instead, her interpretation of discourse implies that the materialisation of bodies is an *effect* of power in that regulatory norms are inextricably embedded in discursive practices (Butler 1993a: 2, 2010: 12). In a recent book geared at breaking down the interface between feminist theorisations of embodiment and international security studies, Wilcox cogently rearticulates the Butlerian narrative on discourse and materiality:

> "The materiality of bodies is not only an effect of political practices, but such practices are formed in relation to bodies as well. The "culture" of discourse and politics and the "materiality" of the body are intimately entangled in a chiasmic relationship… bodies must be understood as both material *and* cultural, both produced by practices… *and* productive themselves. Bodies are thus not fixed entities, but are always unstable and in the process of becoming. They are ontologically precarious, existing only in virtue of certain material/political conditions that allow them to be intelligible to others." (2015: 11)

Significantly, Butler explains that the authoritative power of discourse "to bring about what it names" derives from the practice of repetition of "ideal norms" and regulatory schema that govern how we evaluate and (fail to) recognise life/lives and the social ordering of the latter (1993a: 13, 1997: 51). Following Foucault's notion of "biopower"— the disciplining of the body through the state's regulatory interventions (Foucault 2004: 81), and thus a "domain of life over which power has taken control" (Mbembe 2003: 12)— Butler situates the category of "sex" as a (violent) regulatory ideal (Boesten 2010a: 11), which, alongside norms of gender and race, creates a matrix of exclusion for "abject beings" whose bodies fail to materialise "in the service of the consolidation of" hegemonic imperatives (Butler 1993a: 2-3).

Importantly, the mobilisation of normative schema within exercises of state, military, or cultural power can be explicit or implicit about the objects of intervention and regulation (Butler 1993a: 4). For instance, to draw upon examples discussed in this thesis: legislation and policy might overtly 'target' specific forms of gendered violence (and thus, particular victims or perpetrators, if the policy or law pertains to

"domestic violence", for example), political rhetoric might contain references to the theme of femicide, and media coverage might centralise its focus upon a femicide victim (whether in visual or narrative form). More implicitly, however, political and cultural discourses might contain references to "healthy homes" and "strong families", or to "insecure zones" and "gang violence", without necessarily referring to "femicide". As Butler emphasises, whether the practices that "demarcate" norms do so categorically or not, they invariably "differentiate", and are thus instrumental (1997: 44) to the ordering of life along a grid of "intelligibility" where there are bodies that matter, bodies that do not matter, bodies that matter less, and those that fail to be marked or "counted" at all (Butler 1993a: 2, 2004a: xiv-xv). Whether implicitly or explicitly drawn, the normative delineation of such boundaries not only marks differences between bodies; as Wilding stresses in relation to urban violence in Brazil, "boundaries" also segregate "understandings of different forms of violence and their perceived level of acceptability" (2012: 2).

Another central trope for analytically framing the relationship between discourse and materiality is Louis Althusser's notion of "interpellation", which Butler draws upon to explain how normative schema work through discourse to constitute the (limits to the) "social existence" of individuals (Butler 1997: 5). Interpellation gestures at the processes through which subjects are metaphorically "addressed" within the terms of social norms inscribed in exercises of power. In a passage that clearly underlines the significance of this concept to the discursive representation of femicide and victims of violence, Butler explains:

> "[l]anguage sustains the body not by bringing it into being or feeding it in a literal way; rather, it is by being interpellated within the terms of language that a certain social existence of the body first becomes possible. To understand this, one must imagine an impossible scene, that of a body that has not yet been given social definition, a body that… becomes accessible on the occasion of an address, a call, an interpellation that does not "discover" the body, but constitutes it fundamentally." (1997: 5).

These analytical strands of Butler's thinking provide a strong foundation for approaching the discursive-material dynamics of sociopolitical performances—across political-policy and cultural domains—linked to femicide and gendered violence in

Guatemala. Such a framework bears enormously on questions of why particular forms, and indeed, particular victims of violence emerge as politically consequential within a field of gendered violence that is densely occupied by other bodies, and seemingly less recognisable victims.

Feminist, Postcolonial and Queer Accounts of Bodies and Embodiment: Normative Violence, Necropolitics, and Disposability

As alluded to in the discussion of Butler's work above, when the object of inquiry is violence, what the emphasis on discursive-material dynamics and power relations inevitably gestures at is the body—or bodies, produced and "undone" by violence (Butler 2004b). Beyond Butler's own thinking, however, there is a rich corpus of feminist, postcolonial, and queer literature that "establishes the need for thinking theoretically about bodies in order to understand the dynamics of violence" (Wilcox 2015: 1). Conceptually venturing towards the gendered body, and the physical, symbolic, and normative violences through which those bodies are marked, destroyed, and/or disappeared, requires foregrounding how the nexus of racial, sexual, class, and other differences work to regulate the meanings of, and boundaries between, femicidal violence and bodies within a broader historical-political context (Boesten 2010a; Haritaworn et al. 2014; Wilcox 2015; Scheper-Hughes 2004; Stanley 2011). Thus, alongside feminist formulations, postcolonial and queer accounts offer especially valuable analytical tools for theoretically framing 'the body' as existing within a deeply political discursive terrain— one in which the conditions of a body's emergence, or its (non)recognition, are constrained by norms and practices that not only regulate the *domain of life*, but the *domain of death* where "power has taken control" (Aizura 2014; Feldman 2004; Foucault 2004: 80-1; Mbembe 2003; Stanley 2011; Wright 2011). Specifically, I suggest that the theoretical vocabularies of necropolitics[13] and normative violence help carve out a space for articulating modes of gendered disposability—fluid and differentiated, though no less insidious—as these emerge in relation to femicidal violence in Guatemala.

Like violence, which similarly "defies easy categorization" (Scheper-Hughes and Bourgois 2004: 2), bodies are inherently political: the "matter" of bodies, and, indeed,

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[13] Elaborated further below.

questions of embodiment, are necessarily bound up with, and articulated through, knowledge practices and power relations (Ahmed 2000; Butler 1990, 1993a, 1993b, 1997; Foucault 1978, 1979; Haraway 1991; Mbembe 2003; Nelson 1999; Scarry 1985). As recent scholarship demonstrates (Evans and Giroux 2015; Gregory 2013; Haritaworn et al. 2013; Stanley 2011; Wilcox 2015), when bodies are absent from discussions of violence, (in)security, and citizenship, or when they *are* invoked, but as somehow "natural organisms" or "pre-political" entities, an ontological erasure occurs which fundamentally undercuts our ability to think through the place of the body within the nexus of gender, violence, and discursive practices (Haraway 1991; Wilcox 2015). Understanding how "[v]iolence is not only something that is done to an already established body, [but] rather, various forms of violence are part and parcel of the production of the various bodies that are subjected to violence" (Wilcox 2015: 15), provides a key conceptual passageway for interrogating how governing techniques ostensibly aimed at 'protecting' (through public policy, for example), or 'representing' (through political rhetoric or media portrayals) vulnerable subjects, might actually reinstall the condition of disposability (Haritaworn et al. 2014; Radcliffe 2015) that I suggest circulates for so many victims of femicidal violence.

The point of departure for much of the theoretical interrogation of "the matter of bodies" is precisely by way of the observation that there is no 'natural' body that precedes, or exists outside of, the discursive practices and power relations that mark, constrain, and effect the materialisation of its boundaries (Ahmed 2000; Butler 1993a; Foucault 1978, 1979; Wilcox 2015). While by no means the exhaustive account of the relationship between power and materiality, the most useful entry point is, once again, Butler's discussion in *Bodies that Matter,* not least because it informs so many later accounts which critically expand upon her formulation:

> "… what constitutes the fixity of the body… will be fully material, but materiality will be rethought as the effect of power, as power's most productive effect… "Sex" is, thus, not simply what one has… it will be one of the norms… which qualifies a body for life within the domain of cultural intelligibility." (1993a: 2)

In suggesting "that discourse is formative" of bodies, Butler's Foucauldian proposal is to approach "the notion of [bodily] matter, not as site or surface, but as *a process of*

materialization that stabilizes over time to produce the effect of boundary, fixity, and surface we call matter" (1993a: 10). The conceptual point is not to reduce the subject to the body, nor the body to the subject, but rather, it is to insist upon the relational, historical, and political nature of norms that leave particular bodies more vulnerable to (state and non-state) violence, and yet less visible *as victims* of such violence (even when those bodies are rendered visible in media accounts, for example) (Boesten 2010a; Evans and Giroux 2015; Wilcox 2015; Winter 2012).

Crucially, as many postcolonial, feminist, and queer accounts have insisted (Ahmed 2000; Aizura 2014; Edelman 2014; Haritaworn et al. 2014; Luibheib 2008; Mbembe 2003; Stanley 2011), when thinking about gendered bodies "undone" by violence, this necessarily leads to a consideration of other regulatory norms, such as race, class, and sexuality, that govern and constrain how subjects/bodies (fail to) materialise representationally (Butler 1993a; Wilcox 2015). Most notably, in a "corrective complement" (Wright 2011: 709) to the Foucauldian biopolitical view of the state's control of bodies and populations through regulatory interventions and technologies, Achille Mbembe develops the notion of "necropolitics" to unpack "contemporary forms of subjugation of life to the power of death" through the lens of postcolonial and critical race queries (2003: 39). Explaining that the notion of biopower is "insufficient" for unpacking how "death structures" exercises of power, just as it is inadequate for explaining why particular "populations are subjected to conditions of life" that make them more vulnerable to death, or "to the status of *living dead*" (2003: 40), Mbembe's notion of necropolitics opens the space for an analysis of violence, death, and disposability "in subalternity, race, war and terror" (Haritaworn et al. 2014: 2). For Mbembe, the modern nation-state is characterized by the fact that there are groups "who are marked for death… through overt or invisible" techniques of governance (Martin-Baron 2014: 51). Therefore, rather than *threaten* sovereign power (of the state, or, indeed, of "globalizing forces from the outside") (ibid.), the destruction of the "(no)bodies" who are considered undesirable and dangerous, or of those whose deaths go unconsidered (because they were "nothings") instead helps *consolidate* that power, alongside the consolidation of normative ideals that secure the recognition of "living" and "liveable" bodies (Ferreira da Silva 2012; Stanley 2011).

Mbembe's analytical reworking of Foucauldian notions of regulatory power is vital to approaching femicidal violence as a productive force within contemporary stratifications of life and death in Guatemala. In particular, as a theoretical tool, the necropolitical facilitates an examination of the discourses that visibilise, differentiate, and/or obscure the bodies of victims. I thus read it as a useful entry point for articulating the gendered, racialised, and classed nodes through which hierarchies are (re)constituted. Certainly, the following question, as posed by Mbembe, significantly frames how I conceptually approach the cases of femicide and gendered violence addressed in this thesis:

> "Imagining politics as a form of war, we must ask: What place is given to life, death, and the human body (in particular the wounded or slain body)? How are they inscribed in the order of power?" (Mbembe 2003: 12).

In a recent volume that deploys Mbembe's concept to explore the politics of violence and death against gender non-conforming bodies/subjects, Haritaworn et al. forcefully show how violent inclusions/exclusions exist at the interface of racist, classist, and ableist regimes (2014). Stanley, for example, situates an account of the "overkill" of "non-normative sexuality/genders" on the horizon of necropower, using "the term *queer* to precisely index the collision of *difference* and violence" under liberal democratic regimes (2011: 3, 7). In an important corrective to conceptual frameworks that posit "simple dichotomies" of subjects or bodies of violence as existing along an axis of recognition/disposability or visibility/invisibility, Haritaworn et al. frame the terrain for a critique of discursive economies of violence as far more nebulous (2014: 1). Supplementing the concept of necropolitics with queer critiques, the task, they insist, is not simply to map subjects of violence onto a grid of intelligibility (Butler 1993a), where some are catalogued as recognised, while others are marked as disposable (to the state and/or society). Instead, the point is to unpack the processes through which "difference is… absorbed into hegemonic apparatuses", "distinctions between war and peace dissolve", and yet where there persists a "symbiotic [but unequal] co-presence of life and death" (Haritaworn et al. 2014: 2-3).

To bring such a view into my own analysis locates the problem of the discursive boundaries between femicide, gendered violence, and the bodies of victims as one of

historical and sociopolitical contingency, even as these boundaries might contain discernible continuums and patterns (Carey and Torres 2010; Sanford 2003, 2008). The notion of 'differentiated disposability', which I use to discuss the discursive practices that stratify femicide and its victims according to a nexus of structural and symbolic inequalities and oppressions, does not therefore gesture at a pre-determined hierarchy of gendered life and death. Instead, following the aforementioned theoretical lines of inquiry, the concept seeks to highlight "the processes, conditions and histories that underpin and sustain" (Haritaworn et al. 2014: 3) certain hierarchical formations of gendered violence in the context of what is officially 'post war' Guatemala.

Still, as Melissa Wright argues, for the concept of necropolitics to be truly useful to the analysis of contemporary articulations of gendered violence, it needs to account for how "the politics of death and the politics of gender go hand in hand" (2011: 710). Referring to the "gendered necropolitics" of "public" expressions of femicidal violence in the context of Mexico's narcopolitical drug wars, Wright offers a helpful framework for linking Mbembe's notion of necropower with questions of gendered embodiment, state regulatory practices, and the discursive terrain within which femicide is interpreted (2011). Noting how the practices through which femicide is absorbed within mainstream political and media discourses of social cleansing and (legitimations of) state violence are laced with normative assumptions about gendered death (who dies and why), Wright's proposal is that necropolitical analysis is "incomprehensible without a feminist analysis of the patriarchal state ideology that undergirds the violent status quo" (2011: 726). In a notable parallel to the frameworks that circulate in relation to contextually and ideologically differentiated articulations of femicide in Guatemala, Wright insists that the discursive terrain of Mexico's drug violence is deeply gendered in relation to considerations of space and subjectivity. While building off of her earlier notion of Mexico and China's "disposable women" (2006a, 2006b), in which she frames a critique of the political economy of global capitalism through an identification of a "myth of disposability" that circulates in relation to women's (factory) labour, and, crucially, in relation to their bodies, here Wright's argument is far more nuanced. Whereas her earlier work suggested a somewhat deterministic view of "poor brown females" (Gaspar de Alba 2010) as necessarily being relegated to "disposable… form[s] of waste" within the narratives

that attempt to explain (away) the economic and sexual violence against, and/or murder of, women working in "free trade zone" factories (2006a: 14), here Wright's analysis is significantly strengthened by a necropolitical framework that tracks the complex (and necessarily fluid) processes through which such disposability is crystallised—and, indeed, open to contestation (2006b, 2009). In particular, by mapping how deeply racist, sexist, and classist moral codes help normalize the violence against "public" women whose bodies get discursively tied to the perpetrators of drug violence, or to the social decay associated with prostitution, Wright's gendering of the necropolitical offers an analytical framework for unpacking the discursive practices that the state, media, and other powerful interlocutors use to *absorb*, rather than to *obscure*, femicidal violence within the domain of political rhetoric, policy, and representation (2011: 713-4).

> "… within the messy interactions linking the production of the state to the reproduction of its subjects… [t]he dead provide the raw materials for this politics; their bodies, their gender, their location, and their scars and mutilations are the basis for weaving tales… Their deaths are politically significant for the government's justification of its measures… as necropolitics meets biopolitics. (Wright 2011: 726)

Such an intervention is paramount to my own analysis, which locates the subjects/bodies of femicidal violence as an entry point for mapping a wider discursive economy of gendered violence in 'post war' Guatemala. Indeed, my own empirical materials point not to an 'invisibilisation', as such, of femicidal violence in its private and public forms (although, as I discuss, there are necessarily victims and violences that go unmarked); instead, what I find especially analytically relevant is how certain forms of gendered and femicidal violence get explicitly (and implicitly) deployed and/or absorbed within a range of politically and culturally significant "discursive fields of action" (Foucault 1972, 1978, 2009). Certainly, by highlighting how norms linked to women's "appropriate" roles and behaviours constrain their apprehension as subjects of violence *both in life and in death* (Wright 2011: 709), Wright's analysis brings into sharp relief the necessity of connecting the discussion of biopower and necropower as these operate through *gendered* techniques of governance and intervention.

These aforementioned accounts strengthen the critical prowess of a feminist discursive-material analytics of embodiment. In particular, they serve to highlight how regulatory imperatives are grounded in ethno-racial, sexual(ity), and other normative frameworks that intersect (and collide) with gendered ones.

At this point it is useful to further unpack the concept of "normative violence" (or what is often described as "everyday", "symbolic", or "invisible" violence (Scheper-Hughes and Bourgois 2004: 21). Although the idea of normative violence encompasses the reflections of many theorists (Bourdieu 2004; Bourdieu and Wacquant 2004; Bourgois 2004; Butler 2004b; Taussig 2004), there is nonetheless a common emphasis on the relationship between violence and its (mis)recognition or (in)visibility. In other words, normative violence draws out the processes through which violence is rendered "seemingly unintelligible", "legitimate", or "routinized" (Scheper-Hughes 2004: 21). While norms themselves, such as those that designate "appropriate" gender behaviours, may not be constitutive of *physical* violence (although, they can- see Stanley 2011 and Haritaworn et al. 2014), they are necessarily restrictive (Butler 2004b). Furthermore, a subject's/body's failure to "comply with" the terms of these norms can prompt physical violence (Boesten 2010a: 5; Butler 1993a: 1-2). Drawing out the Butlerian formulation of normative violence in order to examine the role of entrenched societal hierarchies in designating particular subjects of gendered violence "unintelligible", Boesten cogently rearticulates the tenuous relationship between bodies, violence, and recognition:

> "Normative violence is the violence of the norm… [it] makes physical violence possible, and simultaneously invisible. Invisible violence is violence that is not socially understood as violence because of its normalization; it is tolerated and normalized because it is perpetrated in response to social transgressions… The limitation of what one can be… creates much suffering for those who cannot conform to the norms, who are excluded by recognized society, or whose bodies are violated on a daily basis… [Thus] a careful questioning of the normative truths that guide and restrict life helps visibilise violence otherwise tolerated, normalised, and in some cases, legitimized." (2010a: 5-6)

It is important to emphasise that the "invisibility" referenced here does not necessarily refer to a "scopic" invisibility—that is to say, the "invisible" does not gesture at a lack

of "seeing", through visual apprehension, violence or a victim of violence (Stanley 2011: 2). Instead, what is being highlighted in the formulation are the *processes* through which we "read" and "recognise" violence/victims in some cases, but differently "read", and then fail to recognise these elements, in others (Butler 1993b). This qualification of the "visual" and "visible" as constrained and enabled by norms that structure the field of interpretation (Butler 1993b; Winter 2012) has important implications when it comes to representations of femicidal violence. It suggests that because processes of normative violence (where a subject is seen as racially inferior and thus deserving of, or an inevitable victim of, gendered violence) work productively to *normalize violence*, these perceptions will not necessarily be countered by visual or discursive frameworks that simply bring those subjects into mainstream domains of political or cultural representation. This recalls the risk of "absorption" into "hegemonic apparatuses" that the queer necropolitical literature cautions us to (Haritaworn et al. 2014: 2-3; Stanley 2011). An on-going observation within the empirical chapters of this thesis is precisely that femicidal and gendered violence, albeit in varied articulations, *are* actively deployed by hegemonic interlocutors within the state, political spaces, and mainstream media: in other words, one 'hears' and 'sees' violence in "everyday arenas" (Offit and Cook 2010: 2). But of course, not all victims and violences are interpreted equally, and there are inevitably those that are invisible because they go unmarked or unregistered (Scheper-Hughes 2004).

Indeed, because exercises of physical violence are so often concentrated on bodies that have likewise been marked through practices of "non-physical"—normative or symbolic—violence (such as the stigmatization attached to racialised or gender non-conforming bodies, or the structural exclusion of particular groups from access to the basic necessities required to reproduce life) (Edelman 2014; McAllister and Nelson 2013; Stanley 2011; Wilcox 2015), the concept of normative violence provides insight into the complex relationship between femicidal violence and discursive "economies of recognition" (Ahmed 2000: 6; Aizura 2014: 130) or, indeed, between the processes of normalization that obscure any recognition (Boesten 2010: 2, 11; Evans and Giroux 2015: 138-9).

In later chapters of this thesis, this idea of normative violence gets linked to the concept of gendered necropolitics, through an examination of the performative staging of femicides according to the political-policy frameworks that I suggest circulate within government and mainstream media discourses in Guatemala. This contemplation draws out practices through which boundary-producing forms of "(hyper/in)visibility" (Martin-Baron 2014: 51)—specifically, (mis)recognition, instrumentalisation, and disarticulation— get enacted for particular victims of femicide, alongside specific formations of gendered violence. To cite some specific examples, I question various instances of femicide's discursive-visual production through the lens of normative violence and necropolitics: in one case, a femicide emerges through a "domestic violence" frame (VIF), ideologically locating its victim subject *as a victim* (of a single male perpetrator's violence, rather than the state's) and *as a marked loss* (not only to her family, but to the wider society). In notable juxtaposition are a series of other cases: subjects for whom their violent deaths get tied to problems of "public insecurity" or moral decay (again, linked to non-state perpetrators). As I demonstrate, these practices ideologically shift the bodies away from a victim label, towards a status occupied by the ostensible perpetrators of this "public" gendered violence: namely, the "internal enemies" embodied by the (noticeably racialised and economically-marginalised figure of the male youth) "delinquent" or "gang member". As I discuss in my analysis, the problem of "disposability" circulates throughout the narrative framings of gendered and femicidal violence, even as cases are highly differentiated. Whether "certain bodies are marked and marketed to as live, lively, and deserving of life" or "destined towards death… of little consequence", hinges significantly on the "raced, gendered, classed and sexualized position" of the victim (Martin-Baron 2014: 50, 57). In other words, the "performative aspects" of the government or media's gendered necropolitics (Martin-Baron 2014: 52) lean upon norms that in some cases constrain, and in others enable, the emergence of subjects/bodies "in terms of race, class, and gender" ideals (Boesten 2010a: 9). However, to paraphrase Boesten's argument in relation to the politics of sexual violence in Peru, social hierarchies *between* women based on class or ethnicity do not protect against a victim's gendered disposability, but produce differences in terms of how that victim/body is represented, and in terms of the outcome of her death (for example, whether a victim's case remains in a condition of legitimized impunity) (2014: 59). I suggest that this latter qualification is vital to understanding

the operation of 'differentiated disposability' in Guatemala. Such an understanding of the *productive* nature of gendered hierarchies precisely highlights the way in which normative violence informs the relational boundaries between victims, without obscuring the operation of patriarchal exclusions that render most victims of femicide and gendered violence inconsequential, albeit some in (both) life and (others) in death (Trujillo 2010).

The concept of normative violence is therefore crucial for understanding how practices of "inclusion and exclusion, or incorporation and expulsion" (Ahmed 2000: 6) are always already operating within the scene, or discursive framing, of femicidal violence, to obscure and/or limit the apprehension of (destroyed) life (Butler 2010; Wilcox 2015). It is therefore invaluable for ascertaining how the bodies of femicide victims become sites for "weaving" (Wright 2011: 726) politically expedient narratives that (re)constitute the racial, class, and gender exclusions informing the contours of gendered violence in Guatemala (Carey and Torres 2010; Costantino 2006; Sanford 2008). In addition to challenging normative ontologies that treat bodies as "stable or pre-political" entities (Wilcox 2015: 8), the notion helps explain "the violence of [the] norms" that actually frame representations of bodies (Boesten 2010: 10). Of particular relevance to this thesis, normative violence gestures at how the ostensibly physical differences that mark boundaries between bodies[14], not only establish which subjects will be more vulnerable to structural, symbolic, and physical violences, but also helps explain why "the parameters of inequalit[ies]" (Boesten 2010: 5) are simultaneously *normalised*.

Using the analytical frameworks discussed above allows, not merely for an inquiry into "the political work that the body" does (Wilcox 2015), but, in particular, they allow me to rearticulate the nexus of private and public, as well as contemporary and historical expressions of femicidal violence and the regulatory practices linked to modes of state protection, intervention, and (in)security, through feminist, postcolonial, and queer accounts of the body/subject. An engagement with these critical theorisations of necropolitics, normative violence, and "the historical

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[14] For example, those markings assumed through the dyad between the indigenous Mayan woman (*mujer maya*) and the *ladina*-cum-"non-indigenous" "white woman" (Grandin 2000: 84; Nelson 1999: chapters 4-6).

specificities of embodiment" (Wilcox 2015: 138) thus opens a crucial pathway for tracking the production of hierarchies of gendered life and death within contemporary discursive formations of 'post war' violence in Guatemala.

Gendered Regulatory Power and "Bodies that Matter" in Guatemala

Although exclusionary norms are historically fluid, life and death are regulated by modes of power that are stubbornly entrenched in racial, gender, and class hierarchies across Latin America (Boesten 2010a, 2014; Boesten and Wilding 2014; Casaus Arzú 2007; Ferreira da Silva 2012; Hume 2009; McAllister and Nelson 2013; Nelson 1999, 2009; Sanford 2003; Theidon 2013; Wright 2011). Referring to the constraints placed on women's bodies across war and peacetime Peru, Boesten reminds us that cultural norms are necessarily relational (2010a, 2014). Indeed, the normative frameworks that govern appropriate gender roles and hierarchies of racial difference produce distinct outcomes for differentially situated subjects (of violence) "according to the nature of the relationship of interdependence" (Boesten 2010a: 9). Certainly, figuring processes of racism/racialisation into a framework of gendered regulatory power is an analytical imperative in Latin America. As others have charted in relation to Peru (Boesten 2010a, 2010b, 2014; Theidon 2013), Brazil (Ferreira da Silva 2012; Wilding 2010, 2012), and Mexico (Wright 2006a, 2011; Weissman 2005, 2010), or "countries with a large proportion of poor indigenous and mixed-race populations" whose vulnerability to violence "has a historical grounding" (Boesten 2014: 150), race is critically imbricated in the "contemporary forms of subjugation of life to the power of death" (Mbembe 2003: 39), and in the politics of interpretation of (the bodies of) gendered and femicidal violence (Wright 2011).

As research on Guatemala suggests (Camus 2009; Casaus Arzú 2007; Gonzales Ponciano 2013; Nelson 1999, 2009; Sanford 2003), the nexus through which subjects of gendered violence are recognised (or fail to be recognised) is significantly marked by racialised (and classed) stratifications, which are historically inscribed in the war-post war social fabric (McAllister and Nelson 2013; Sieder 2013). Bringing the notions of normative violence, regulatory power, and performativity to bear on questions of femicide in Guatemala thus requires illuminating some of the

particularities of the norms that inform and constrain "how… bodies matter *in Guatemala*" (Nelson 1999: 210, emphasis added).

Diane Nelson (1999, 2009), in particular, has used Foucauldian and Butlerian theoretical tools in order to map the regulatory interpellations by which Guatemalan subjectivities and subjects (of violence) are produced, as well as undone by "the activity" (Butler 1993a: 7) of gendering and racialising. In what Nelson refers to as "hostile markings" (1999: 28, 136), bodies in Guatemala are understood to (be) mark(ed), regulate(d), and (over)determine(d) (by) forms of normative and physical violence within a system of racial and class differentiation in which "gender [is] a constitutive category, even as it is differentially deployed" (1999: 216). She explains how the gendered ideal dyad between "The Mayan Woman (*mujer maya*)" and "white-*ladina* woman" serves as an ideological terrain upon which the contradictions and ambivalences inherent to designations of ethnic/racial difference in Guatemala are regulated (1999).

Within this system of gendered regulatory power, Nelson explains, "white" or "non-indigenous" (or "*ladina*"- more on this in chapter 4) women are regulated by a "restricted economy of property ownership", controlled sexuality through obligatory heterosexuality and reproduction, and domestic violence (1999: 216-7); the latter, in particular, is of course not reducible to the Guatemalan context, as domestic violence is a practice "through which compliance to gendered expectations is often policed" globally, albeit in different articulations (Wilson 2015: 822). On the other hand, Nelson describes how the bodies of indigenous and racialised women are (perhaps more explicitly) inscribed and regulated through exercises of (historical) state violence (such as sexual violence and genocide), and by urban and private articulations of gendered violence (including sexual abuse against women working as domestic labourers within *ladino* households) (1999: 199). This account highlights how violence reaches across the "bleeding boundaries" (1999: 211) between women's bodies, but manifests itself differently based on social hierarchies, (similarly described by Boesten in the context of Peru (2014: 59)).

This binary between gendered subjects is thus produced by, and productive of, the racial (and class) distinctions that are assumed to be "readable" through visual cues on

women's bodies (Posocco 2014a: 33); however, Nelson insists that this process involves a "gendering" of ethno-racial identifications and thus actually writes difference (violently) onto bodies (1999: 184-5, 207). Leaning on Butler's discussion in *Bodies that Matter* (1993a), Nelson further emphasises the importance of articulating how "gender is raced and race is gendered in particular ways in Guatemala" (1999: 221-2). These "power-infused vectors", which slide between race, gender, class, and sexuality norms, "are not artificially imposed on bodies", but instead, govern the discursive materialisation of bodies across social, political, and cultural domains (Nelson 1999: 241). Like Butler, Nelson emphasises the discursive-material dynamics of these norms, adding that their supremely material effects are realised through the violence of "torture, wounding, and death", which is differentially deployed against bodies in order to (attempt to) "ground" the identifications upon which the hierarchies of the Guatemalan nation-state have been built (Casaús Arzú 2007; Consorcio Actoras de Cambio 2009; Grandin 2000, 2013; Nelson 1999: 221-2). Significantly, Nelson notes that such practices have historically helped constitute and ground differences and hierarchies between women; however, "what [bodies] mean changes over time", largely in response to the conditions of possibility set by the political and cultural climate, as well as by popular struggles for rights and recognition (Nelson 1999: 227).

Tracing these practices in relation to a discursive economy of femicide requires theoretically foregrounding how the boundaries between victims/bodies, while "born of contradictions" and incapable of proving the "absolute" differences that racial and gender boundaries lean upon (Nelson 1999: 242), are re-inscribed (or contested) within instances of femicide's discursive production. Therefore, articulating some of the features of Guatemalan modes of regulatory power, especially in relation to the gendering and racialising processes by which some bodies "splatter", while others are made to "matter" (Nelson 1999: 206), can "help us understand the risks, stakes, and what is being fought over" (Nelson 2009: 254) in the attempts to organise gendered life and death through the notion of femicide, within a wider discursive landscape of 'post war' violence.

Structural Violence and Guatemala's "new violence"

Understandably, the term 'violence' is used frequently throughout this thesis. My analysis, however, leans on multiple theoretical articulations of violence—ones that not only de-centre normative (positivist) conceptions of violence as (only) physical harm, but which reconsider, if not radically extend, the available vocabularies of structural and symbolic violence. Having already discussed the analytical frameworks guiding my understanding of the relationship between discourse, materiality, bodies, and normative violence, the following section explores how theories of violence at structural levels lend themselves to this thesis. The latter are especially relevant to contemporary debates about the origins of "new" forms of urban violence and insecurity in Latin America (Koonings and Kruijt 1999, 2004, 2007; Moser 2004), as they draw in considerations of the paradoxes that arise when formal transitions to democracy and peace are undercut by on-going patterns of oppression and inequality (Snodgrass Godoy 2005: 613). But while the concept of structural violence is helpful for the purposes of framing a powerful critique of the harms inherent to the neoliberal political economy of 'post war' states such as Guatemala (Offit and Cook 2010: 42), I draw upon recent feminist critiques (Hume 2009; Wilding 2010) to address the noticeable gaps in relation to how femicide and gendered violence fit into the institutional and discursive terrain of this "new violence".

Broadly speaking, scholars of structural violence challenge the dominant moral vocabularies of violence, which they suggest dislocate patterns of affliction from both historical and political economy nodes (Farmer 2001; True 2012). The concept, coined by Johan Galtung in 1969 within a threefold typology of structural, direct (physical), and cultural (discursive and symbolic) violence, provides a means for framing macroeconomic, political, and social structures as "both constitutive of and constituted by violence" (Hume 2009: 33). As Dilts argues (2012), this formulation attempts to articulate why some forms of suffering are decidedly less visible, or rather, why some forms of harm may not be considered violence at all (the latter gestures at an overlap with the concept of normative violence, discussed earlier). Significantly, the definitional boundaries through which particular harms are awarded the label of 'violence' not only highlight the normative hierarchies *between forms* of

harm (for example: between extreme poverty and armed robbery, where the latter is interpreted as violent but the former is not). As Farmer (2001) and others suggest (eg. Biebricher and Vance Johnson 2012; Scheper-Hughes 1992), such boundaries also gesture at the hierarchies *between subjects* for whom vulnerability to those harms is fundamentally maldistributed across societies.

While the structural violence scholarship is expansive and varied, a common thread tying the literature together is an analytical imperative to trouble normative vocabularies of violence, and furthermore, to trace the *relationships* between different articulations of violence back to the structures within which these phenomena are embedded and given meaning (Bourgois and Scheper-Hughes 2004). Indeed, a key point of analytical interlocution is precisely in unpacking hegemonic discourses of peacetime violence, which tend to frame violence as a moral (rather than political) problem arising *outside* the logic of neoliberal democratisation (Hume 2009; Smith and Offit 2010). As scholars of peacetime, or post conflict contexts marked by on-going violence suggest, discourses of violence emerge at the interface between moral and political economies ideologically geared to obscure the historical and socioeconomic processes that actually make peacetime violence possible, if not inevitable (Benson et al. 2008; Bourgois 2001; Green 2004; Hume 2009). As Hume discusses in relation to contemporary domestic violence in El Salvador (2009), using the concept of structural violence mobilises a normative political judgment against neoliberal development processes precisely by naming its practices 'violent': indeed, from a critical feminist perspective, "not to do so is to embrace the definitional hegemony of powerful interests" (2009: 35).

Structural violence theorisations have been criticised for "collapsing" all forms of social injustice to incidences of violence, thereby "trivialising" their substantive differences (Farmer 2001). Indeed, Winter notes that the concept's "capaciousness… also marks its limits"—too "broad and vague" to articulate variations and intersections between, for example, "racism, sexism, colonialism, and class domination" (2012: 195). Similarly, Wacquant, while sympathetic to the "call to put history, power, and the body" on the same stage, suggests that "the appeal of the concept" might be "outweighed by the analytic perils it entails" (in Farmer 2001: 322). Using the example of slavery, Wacquant argues that, owing to the anachronisms

within its normative framework, structural violence erases the historical variations by which forms of domination, social disparity, and inequality are actually seen *and* problematised as morally offensive (ibid.).

While it is certainly important to underscore the complexities involved in deploying a concept that contains two vigorously contested terms, the criticism that structural violence trivialises different forms of violence, seems unfounded. This is particularly the case when one draws in the rich field of contemporary scholarship on the relationship between violence and visibility, and violence in and across war and peacetime. Certainly, many scholars have appealed to the use of typologies, or "grammars" of violence, to develop their frameworks for examining physical, symbolic, or institutional harms, and thus avoid collapsing all disparities "into a single category" (Menjivar 2008; Winter 2012). The point, therefore, is not to suggest that the violence of poverty, racial oppression, or sexual violence, for example, are 'the same'; rather, the goal is to identify and theorise the *relationships* between them within a wider historical and institutional constellation (Benson 2008; Benson et al. 2008; Bourgois and Scheper-Hughes 2004). The analytical impetus is thus to articulate linkages between violences, whilst maintaining a productive tension that avoids treating all violences as identical or equal. Indeed, the way in which knowledge about violences is produced is necessarily a relational process (Rai 2002; Sassen 1997; Wright 2011): as feminists have shown (Wilding 2010, 2012), this relationship hinges, to an extent, on *hierarchizing* different types of violence in ways that "have a very powerful effect on levels of visibility, fear, and… response" (Hume 2009: 27).

Also common across the structural violence literature is a general rejection of positivist paradigms "which tend to dominate research on violence" (Bourgois and Scheper-Hughes 2004; Winter 2012: 196). As scholars have shown, the empirical research (as well as political-policy) emphasis on concepts of individual responsibility and (criminal) "agentive intentionality" (Winter 2012: 196) obscures "the institutional and structural dimensions of suffering, including the role of markets and governments" (Benson et al. 2008: 40). The problem, as Winter explains, is not *de facto* the "fetishization of… visible" forms of injury within positivist paradigms; rather, the concern is how the normative emphasis on individual acts of violence

"hinders analyses that seek to connect visible modes of injury to concealed ones, while the priority of the act hampers investigations into social and historical conditions for contemporary formations of violence" (2012: 196). According to this interpretation, "the discursive limits of intelligibility" are not only structured by the kinds of harm that are defined as violence, but by modes of 'seeing' that render some subjects/bodies unrecognisable as (victim) subjects of violence (Butler 1993b), even where "the violence perpetrated against [them] is known and visible" (Winter 2012: 198).

It is within these formulations that I suggest that elements of the structural violence framework prove their conceptual relevance to discursive representations of femicide and gendered violence in 'post war' Guatemala. The call to look "beyond what is ethnographically visible" (Farmer 2001: 305), while insufficient to the task of explaining why violences that are openly 'visible' are not equally 'seen', or seen equally (Butler 1993b; Winter 2012), is significant because it pushes analytical interlocutors to avoid being blinded by an oversaturation with the *visible* brutality of femicidal violence, or by the pervasiveness of representations of violence(s) across political and cultural domains (Gaspar de Alba and Guzman 2010). As I discuss in the empirical chapters of this thesis, one central analytical observation in relation to the manifestations of femicidal violence in contemporary Guatemala is precisely that they *do not* necessarily lack visibility (in the mainstream media, for example), nor do they altogether lack acknowledgment or recognition by government and state interlocutors (in the development of policy agendas, for example). Thus, this analysis "moves beyond" (Domingo 2014) a lament regarding the lack of visibility for femicide, *per se*, to instead question the nature of femicide's discursive and political-policy visibility.

Relatedly, there is a burgeoning body of literature that highlights the emergence of "new" forms of violence and insecurity in the context of "democratisation processes across Latin America" (Auyero et al. 2015; Wilding 2010: 719). As Wilding stresses, however, the literature's reference to transitional periods of the late 1970s and 1980s, and to increases in violent crime, urban insecurity, youth gangs, and social cleansing, "has parallels in other regions and countries, such as post-apartheid South Africa" (2010: 724; also see Lemanski 2004; Sigsworth and Valji 2011). Most notably,

Koonings and Kruijt (1999, 2004, 2007) developed the concept of "new violence" in relation to the (increases in) violence that accompanied neoliberal-democratic transformations across Latin America in a trilogy of edited volumes on the subject. Within these collections, the idea of "new violence" mobilises analytical emphasis on themes of state failure (2004), urban/rural dualities (2007), and the politics of fear (1999)— with empirical accounts linking each of the latter to problems of socioeconomic exclusion and delinquency, narcotrafficking, (re)militarisation, and the residues of civil war and authoritarianism, amongst other topics (Moser 2004; Snodgrass Godoy 2005; Winton 2004).

The "new violence' literature has received critical attention in specific relation to Guatemala, providing both a method for thinking through the historical and socioeconomic context within which on-going afflictions such as femicide and gendered violence are embedded, as well as laying out an analytical framework for examining the particular discursive formations of violence in the country's 'post war' neoliberal temporality. Scholars writing about violence in 'post war' Guatemala from broadly within the frameworks of structural and new violence tend to emphasise the "neoliberal remaking" (Offit and Cook 2010: 44) of the country from the late 1980s to the end of the civil war, during a string of military-backed dictatorships, through to the signing of the country's Peace Accords (1996) (Benson et al. 2008; McAllister and Nelson 2013; Thomas et al. 2011). Under the sanitised labels of development and progress, neoliberal socioeconomic processes are interpreted as having entrenched, rather than removed, the very structures and relations that provided the kindling for the armed conflict, albeit in distinctive institutional and subject formations (Burrell 2010). Grounded in a resistance to theories or studies that naturalise violence by ascribing its causes to "violent people" (Metz et al. 2010: 17), this literature emphasises how the imperatives of neoliberal reforms to deregulate, privatise, and retract the state "from many areas of social provision" undermined the possibilities for the kinds of structural changes called for in the country's Peace Accords, such as reforms to land tenure systems and the inextricably linked problem of race/ist relations (Harvey 2005: 2-3). This emerging literature helps highlight how the subject of violence—whether in relation to gangs (Benson et al. 2008; Levenson 2013), lynching or "community justice" (Burrell 2013; Snodgrass Godoy 2005), or narcotrafficking (Solano 2013), amongst other topics— has become a crucial lynchpin

of Guatemala's moral and political economy. What is less developed, if not largely neglected, is how femicide—particularly the struggle over interpretations of this *gendered* violence—plays into the dynamics identified within the "new violence" literature.

Indeed, the relative absence of gender, as either a category or node of analysis through which post-transition Latin America's urban violence, crime, and insecurity might be productively approached, is the subject of recent feminist critiques of the "new violence" literature (Hume 2009; Hume and Wilding 2015; Wilding 2010, 2012). The question raised in these latter accounts is not merely "where are the women?" or women's experiences, within the analytical terrain of "new violence". Perhaps more crucially, these critiques question the normative, and thus political and policy implications of obscuring "new violence's" "highly gendered" dynamics (Wilding 2010: 722).

There are two especially pertinent lines within these feminist critiques that are worth discussing. The first relates to questions of temporality, while the second highlights the (spatial and subject) boundaries that are (re)drawn, and even naturalised, in the literature and policy interventions focused on Latin America's urban violence. In a critical feminist account of the limits of the "new violence" framework for accounting for women's experiences with insecurity, Wilding poses the question: "what is "new" about "new violence"?" (2010: 723). Indeed, in looking at patterns of criminality, social cleansing, and forms of "privatised" or "democratised" community lynching (Burrell 2013; Snodgrass Godoy 2005), for example, is it the violence itself, the actors involved, the spaces within which these processes take place, or the responses of the state and other actors, that is being conceptualised as "new"? Using the example of youth gangs, police, and urban crime in the *favelas* of Brazil, Wilding contests the definitional boundaries implied by the notion of "newness", explaining that:

> "[a]rguably, actors have mutated but not changed… state violence against particular social groups, including poor, marginalised communities, as a form or result of exclusion and oppression, is an *enduring*, rather than new, aspect of modern society." (2010: 725, emphasis added).

Several feminist scholars examining patterns of domestic and sexual violence in post conflict contexts such as El Salvador (Hume 2009), Peru (Boesten 2010a, 2010b, 2014; Theidon 2013), and Guatemala (Carey and Torres 2010; Menjivar 2011; Sanford 2008) likewise emphasise the *continuities* and *connections* across war-peacetime temporalities in their accounts. This line of critique is also grounded in the problematisation of boundaries— only, rather than spatial or subject/ive ones, the interrogation centralises upon the temporal boundaries that disarticulate histories of violence from its present formations. In suggesting that patterns of gendered injustice and victimisation exist on a continuum (Kelly 1988) the point is not to assert that violences are static across time, but rather, it is to explore how histories of violence "reverberate into" political-economic transitions (Boesten 2014: 5, 9; Boesten and Wilding 2015). In this view, "peacetime" violences, such as sexual and domestic violence (more readily framed as "women's issues", less so gendered ones), and urban crime and gang activity (commonly framed as an un-gendered, or youth male phenomenon), need to be unpacked to identify how norms and exclusions prevalent during conflict periods re-emerge even where "certain contextual and institutional factors" have shifted (Levenson 2013; Wilding 2010: 725). As Boesten insists, it is "continuity and affinity in the use of violence rather than rupture and exceptionality" (2014: 7-8) that should frame our approaches to the dynamics of peacetime violences.

The tendency to treat the latter as "un-gendered processes, carried out by un-gendered actors" (Wilding 2010: 724-5) is arguably part of the same logic that allows the ostensible "newness" of "new violence" to be taken for granted in much of the literature analysing post-war/conflict contexts. Certainly, by treating urban youth gangs or "delinquency", for example, as gender neutral, or, indeed, as only impacting young (marginalised and racialised) men, an erasure occurs which both conceptually and empirically removes gender relations and women from the picture (Hume and Wilding 2015). Moreover, such gender blindness is an implicit enabling force to the depoliticised and ahistorical approaches embedded within government interventions to such violence. As several scholars have shown, these interventions tend to focus their policies around criminality and target individuals or groups within a frame of moral and social decay (Hume 2009: 69), thus obscuring the role of the state and socioeconomic conditions in procuring the conditions for violence and crime to thrive

in contexts of peace (Benson et al. 2008; Boesten 2012; Boesten and Wilding 2015; Wilding 2010). The "new violence" formulation depends on siphoning out women's experiences with peacetime violence, and obscuring the "persistent", rather than "new", nature of gendered articulations of domestic, sexual, and femicidal violence which are "informed by pre-existing… inequalities" (Boesten and Wilding 2015: 75; Carey and Torres 2010; Hume 2009). The temporal limitations of "new violence" depend, to a large extent, on the framework's normatively un-gendered approach. Therefore, feminist contributions help underscore the importance of (re)historicising analyses of contemporary articulations of peacetime violence, crime, and insecurity; and, in doing so, they help open the conceptual space to account for the role of the state, structural inequalities, and embedded sociocultural norms in facilitating the continuities, as well as shifts, in relation to gendered violence (Wilding 2010: 745). Indeed, as I suggest in my own analysis of the Guatemalan context, the kinds of exclusions that persist in relation to representations and political priorities do not gesture at new, but rather, enduring inequalities, albeit ones that are grounded in distinctive formations and practices—which makes it all the more pressing that they be analytically unpacked.

A second line within feminist critiques of "new violence" pertains to the spatial and subject/ive boundaries that get reconstituted across the literature and policy interventions around Latin America's urban violence (Ferreira da Silva 2012; Moser 2004; Wilding 2010, 2012). Reflecting on the Brazilian context, Wilding, in particular, notes how the boundaries that constitute normative understandings of spatiality (public and urban/ private and domestic), subjects/subjectivities (victim and perpetrator), and of different types of violence (illegal and visible or acceptable/less visible, or invisible) reify social differences and inequalities (2012: 2). In an important parallel to the Guatemalan context, Wilding notes how the "new violence" literature's focus on gangs and urban insecurity (in other words, public domain, youth male-driven, and criminal or 'non state' violence) parallels, and therefore helps reconstitute, the logic of political-policy interventions, as well as media representations, which not only obscure women (2010: 720), but which (even if only implicitly) lean on racialised, gendered, and classed formations (2010: 726, 729). In what Hume and Wilding refer to as the "everyday scripts of violence" (2015), a "predetermined cast of characters" fill the social imaginaries, as well as the

frameworks for political agendas, where the bodies of (in the Brazilian case) marginalised black youth males are targeted, criminalised, and dehumanised in the name of intervening against violence. Particularly important is the way that Wilding identifies how research into the so-called "new violence" phenomenon in Latin America might in fact reify the boundaries within and between violences, and their levels of visibility and acceptability (2010: 722), thereby naturalising the distinctions that feminists and other critical scholars have long worked to dismantle. These divisions, Wilding argues, are deployed by the mainstream media and utilized to justify government policies; the task for feminist researchers is therefore to unpack dominant regimes of visibility and interventions with respect to this "new violence", rather than reproduce them in our studies—otherwise, we risk implicitly naturalising the hierarchies these regimes help reconstitute:

> "[on women in the public sphere]… despite the variety of roles that men and women assume, much of the time actors are categorized by the public and media into simplified groups of perpetrators (gang members or police) versus innocent bystanders and victims. Women are assumed to fall into the latter category, only really taking on a solid form when an act of violence brings their existence into relief either as accidental victims or as grieving partners or mothers. Occasionally, women are represented as exotic aberrations when their involvement in crime is 'discovered'... Simplified roles are inadequate for explaining the complexities of social interaction in contexts of violence, but they also lend themselves too easily to gendered dichotomies… [And, for women in the private sphere] the context of urban violence complicates the already complex role of motherhood… The nature of the causal links between broken homes, single parenting, and delinquency is the subject of much debate, and discourses about such links tend to shift the blame onto poor parenting and away from structural factors." (2010: 733-37)

Here, Wilding articulates the way in which spatial and subject boundaries get reconstituted when the gendered dialectics of 'post war' violences' interpretation, representation, and interventions, are disregarded. Such a view resonates with the kinds of regulatory discourses and practices I discuss in my own empirical chapters, whereby policy frameworks around "safe families" (and domestic violence), as well as "public (in)security" (and urban gendered violence) work productively to obscure and/or differentiate experiences with 'post war' violences, as well as to reconstitute the normative boundaries of women's roles as mothers/wives (when represented as

victims of domestic violence), and prostitutes/gang members/delinquents (when represented as victims-cum-perpetrators of urban violence/crime).

Indeed, by failing to deploy a gendered analysis of the dynamics of urban violence that is attuned to the historical and intersectional continuities of exclusion and marginalisation, the "new violence" framework risks being absorbed into the kinds of boundary-producing practices that hierarchize spatial and temporal sites, as well as bodies, of violence. To be fair, the field of "new violence" literature specially focused on Guatemala does a great deal to emphasise the historical continuities, if not linkages, between contemporary urban violence and insecurity and the country's (most recent) conflict (Burrell 2013; Levenson 2013; Metz et al. 2010; Offit and Cook 2010). Furthermore, much of the literature addressing the climate of 'post war' violence situates the state as central to their analysis of how powerful interests linked to the economic and military elite continue to secure a climate of impunity for historic violences, whilst channelling blame for contemporary violences through the criminalisation of marginalised (and racialised) groups "writ large" as gang members (Benson et al. 2008: 44). However, the absence of a substantively gendered and intersectional analysis of how Guatemala's "new violence" manifests itself within discourses, representations, and policies is most obvious in the absence of femicide from this analysis. In fact, with rare exceptions (Costantino 2006; Sanford 2008), and often only in passing commentary (Benson et al. 2008: 51; Burrell 2013: 254; Levenson 2013: 203; McAllister and Nelson 2013: 7), femicidal violence in Guatemala is absent from the discussion (of course, this does not discount the multiple in-country reports from feminist activists and social justice groups (eg., CALDH 2005; Mendez and Barrios 2010). Thinking through how femicide emerges within the 'post war' moral and political economy identified within the new violence literature therefore responds to a noticeable lacuna in the literature.

As Scheper-Hughes and Bourgois note, "it is difficult to conceive of violence without addressing its almost inevitably gendered contours" (2004: 22). Therefore, in reviewing structural and "new violence" theories, this section has integrated feminist accounts, which I suggest rescue the analytical value of these theories to the terrain of the discursive economy of femicide in 'post war' Guatemala. Gender "is a key… variable" through which the dynamics of crime, violence, poverty, and exclusion are

regulated (Wilding 2010: 723). As critical feminist scholars therefore insist, addressing violence and insecurity in post-war/conflict/transition/democratisation contexts necessarily requires gendering the framework for analysis. Not only does gender work through a nexus of other identity markers to influence how structural and "new" forms of violences manifest themselves in the everyday experiences, or lives (and deaths) of particular subjects, but, perhaps most crucially to the questions explored in this thesis, gender is likewise central to how *sociocultural meanings* about, and thus *political-policy responses and interventions to* those violences get constructed.

The Horizon of Critical Feminist Development Studies

This section provides a brief discussion of how this thesis can be situated within the field of critical development studies— particularly within feminist critiques of the politics of neoliberal development, democratisation, and 'post war' and post conflict transition processes (Cornwall et al. 2008; Cornwall and Molyneux 2006; Radcliffe 2015; Wilson 2015).

Recent discussions of the role of critical gender and development studies argue for modes of theorization and social enquiry that chart the processes through which (gendered, racialised, and classed) exclusions re-emerge in the context of policy interventions and discursive frameworks associated with good governance, social protection, security, citizenship, and gender relations, for example (Barrientos et al. 2008; Cornwall et al. 2004; Grugel and Piper 2009; Molyneux 2007; Radcliffe 2015; Wilson 2012; Wright 2006a). Interestingly, much of this field of critical development studies proposes the indispensability of the tools offered by postcolonial and queer feminisms, and of concepts associated with (and extending upon) Butler and Foucault, in foregrounding how development is inherently about power (Escobar 1995), and thus, how its practices are necessarily open to appropriation, absorption, and instrumentalisation (Pereira 2008; Radcliffe 2015; Sardenberg 2008; Wilson 2015).

Feminists within critical development studies increasingly emphasise the need to interrogate the politics of absorption of discourses and policies within hegemonic paradigms (Radcliffe 2015). Reflecting upon the way in which interventions

associated with neoliberalism are grounded in knowledge practices linked to racialised and gendered formations of social difference (Radcliffe 2015; Wilson 2015), Radcliffe suggests that "post colonial statecraft and neoliberal governmentality" lean upon a depoliticisation of "the parameters of power" otherwise disclosed through structural inequalities and gendered subject formations (2015: 855, 868). Beyond depoliticisation, feminists within this field of critical development studies note how the construction of policy agendas for 'protection' and 'intervention' are grounded in the very spatial divisions ('private' versus 'public') which, in turn, reassert the hegemonic imperative of heteronormative nuclear families (Cornwall and Jolly 2009; Pereira 2009) and of the resilient and servile mothers at their centre (Molyneux 2007), while simultaneously reifying racial formations that violently differentiate between "abject" bodies targeted for intervention (while remaining "non-insured" for state protection), and those "valuable" bodies who (at least officially) enjoy the benefits of citizenship (Ferreira da Silva 2012; Radcliffe 2015: 868).

In this view, the task for feminist scholars within critical development studies is to explore how discursive, policy, and other forms of interventions in the 'post war'/neoliberal/developing state might gesture at a "political economy of disposability, racialised [gendered and classed] policies, discourses, and practices" that actually "rely upon, extend and deepen" inequalities (Wilson 2015: 803, 826). While certainly "invested in the production of alternatives" (arguably more productively emerging from in-country social justice activists and feminist movements), the "challenge" for feminist researchers "is not so much to identify a new direction as to do the careful painstaking work of seeing how exclusions, marginalization, and impoverishment work themselves back in so effectively" (Radcliffe 2015: 856).

Critical development studies, Radcliffe argues, engenders "practices of insightful critique and a willingness to challenge hegemonic paradigms" (2015: 855), encouraging analyses of the processes through which (discourses of) violence and social difference—the recognition of which ostensibly gestures at critical or transformative politics— get absorbed within, and even extend upon, regimes of disposability and exclusionary power (Wilson 2015). In this context, the political and cultural recognition (or 'visibilisation') of femicide as a social problem across 'post-

transition' Latin America should be conceptualised as one such discursive site where forms of violent exclusion might get reconstituted, but within new, seemingly benign, discursive formations linked to 'protection' (chapters 4 and 5), 'security' (chapter 6), and 'peace and reconciliation' (chapter 7). The broader, yet crucial, point is that none of these discursive tropes are neutral— this is particularly true where the object of contemplation is violence, and where the subjects of intervention are the bodies of that violence. Whether these development-inflected notions of 'protection', 'security', or 'peace and reconciliation' are deployed within the context of international, regional, or, most pertinent to this case study, within national government agenda setting, they are all deeply gendered, racialised, and classed articulations. The same logic applies to the political and cultural modes of representing the forms of violence implicit within these development tropes: framing femicidal violence as domestic (VIF), non-state criminal (public (in)security), or exclusively within a 'post war' frame of reference (thus circumscribing historical gendered violence to the domain of the invisible or unrecognised), works productively to (re)draw normalising and exclusionary boundaries. Certainly, for 'post war' state's whose hegemonic power continues to be underwritten by racism, patriarchy, and classism, it is crucial to explore how femicide is deployed across political, policy, and cultural domains in ways that leave, in tact, the broader structures within which violent social relations and gendered subject formations are (re)constituted. Given the attention that gendered violence (potentially) mobilises across various sites of hegemonic power in the contemporary context, it is all the more necessary to interrogate how modes of representation or intervention organise the spectrum of femicide's (in)visibility, while simultaneously limiting the parameters of recognition for the subjects/bodies of that violence. I therefore suggest that this critical analysis of the discursive economy of femicide and gendered violence in 'post war' Guatemala holds relevance (and thus makes a small, but important contribution) to a broader and burgeoning field of critical-theory inflected gender and development studies.

Conclusion

This chapter has addressed a wide, yet overlapping, range of theoretical nodes, including concepts of: regulatory power, performativity, embodiment, necropolitics, normative violence, and structural and new violence. While these strands of thought can be linked to distinctive fields—and indeed, levels— of social inquiry, it is

important to underscore the way in which these ideas come together to form the theoretical framework that guides this thesis. In locating the bodies of femicidal violence as this thesis' key entry point for mapping a wider discursive economy of gendered violence, the purpose of this chapter has been to outline theoretical building blocks that allow me to engage with the complexities of the relationship between discourse and materiality. But while the central points of analytical interlocution for this thesis are bodies, and the discursive-material dynamics through which meanings are made out of representations of violence, as this chapter's discussion has sought to make clear, the discursive terrain within which meanings about violence emerge is not suspended above (that is, isolated from) the structural context. Indeed, a critical feminist account of the discursive-material dynamics of embodiment *in 'post war' Guatemala* cannot proceed by isolating the particular contours of this empirical constellation. On the contrary, the possibilities and limits of discourses of violence, and indeed the boundaries of gendered embodiment, are intimately entwined with institutional and political-economic nodes of the historical context under consideration.

The sections within the first half of this chapter posited a Foucauldian and Butlerian framework for unpacking the relationship between discourse, materiality, bodies and violence. Crucially, this framework was also supplemented by a rich corpus of feminist, postcolonial, and queer literature that establishes the need for thinking theoretically about how regulatory norms around race and gender inform how violence is exercised against particular bodies. Moreover, this literature demonstrates how such norms inform the politics of representation— illustrating, through concepts such as necropolitics and normative violence—how violence is a productive force in actually constituting particular bodies *as disposable*. Subsequently, the latter sections of this chapter explored how theories of violence at structural levels lend themselves to this thesis. In particular, I showed how structural and "new violence" theorisations provide a valuable analytical imperative for researchers to trouble dominant vocabularies of violence, especially pertinent to studies of violence in post conflict settings. When used in conjunction with the critical formulations around bodies and representation, I discussed how the structural and new violence scholarship provides a springboard for feminists to trace the *relationships* between different articulations of 'peacetime' gendered violence back to the structures within which such violences are

embedded and given meaning. Indeed, the analytical value of what we might equate with 'macro' level theories of violence to the terrain of the discursive economy of gendered violence, is the conceptual passageway these theories open for connecting what are perhaps the more 'visible' violences associated with femicide, to the oftentimes more insidious, normalized, or concealed violences associated with structural inequalities and historical oppressions.

Situating my analysis of the performative dimensions and regulatory practices linked to femicide within a broader framework of structural violence thus allows me to explore how contemporary discourses of gendered violence emerge—or rather, *fail to emerge*— in relation to questions of the country's historical and political economic formations. Therefore, whilst the empirical chapters of this thesis centralise their analytical focus upon the capillary workings of regulatory power in relation to bodies, (femicidal and gendered) violence, and representation, these accounts are embedded in a broader framework that allows me to link these discursive formations to the wider political priorities and policies around 'post war' violence, including: securing or protecting families, urban (in)security and crime prevention/intervention, and the temporal disarticulations of historical patterns of gendered violence from such contemporary violences. Writing about gendered violence in post war El Salvador, Hume observed that it is "impossible to dislocate the process[es] by which violence is defined and awarded meaning from matters of political economy" (2009: 29). Most significantly, I propose that the conceptual scaffolding developed in this chapter facilitates a critical 'rereading' of discourses of femicide in relation to questions of embodiment and gendered and racialised inequalities. However, by also engaging with theories of violence at structural and historical levels, I suggest that this 'rereading' articulates these aforementioned discourses to a wider political-economic context, thereby critically unpacking the continuities, as well as particularities, of discourses of gendered violence in the years of 'post war' Guatemala under consideration in this thesis.

Chapter 4 – The Disappearance of Cristina Siekavizza: *Violencia Intrafamiliar* and Privatised-Depoliticised Femicide

"What caused this case to become so relevant, if so many similar crimes are committed every day?" (Rodriguez 2013)

Introduction

In the following chapter I begin by foregrounding the case of the 2011 disappearance and presumed femicide of Cristina Siekavizza in order to trace representational practices around gendered violence in the domain of the Patriot Party government's policy framework—(and, subsequently, in chapter 5, to also trace these practices in relation to mainstream media representations). This analysis of "El Caso Siekavizza" thus spans across the proceeding two chapters, both of which take as a starting point the observation that the case has emerged representationally as a politically significant as well as culturally emblematic femicide in 'post war' Guatemala. The present chapter therefore focuses on tracing the consolidation of hegemonic policy imperatives linked to gendered and femicidal violence, while chapter 5 extends upon this analysis by analysing the performative staging of the case, and, relatedly, the materialisation of gendered and racialised normative schema which I argue regulate the politics of how, and why, lives and deaths (as well as those suspended in disappearance), come to (not) matter.

Specifically, this chapter examines the regulatory politics of staging 'private sphere', or 'domestic violence' femicides, according to a (mis)recognised *violencia intrafamiliar* frame—what I call the 'VIF frame', which I suggest has been consolidated under the Patriot Party's tenure. Cristina, a 34-year-old Guatemalan woman and mother of two, was last seen in the middle-upper class condominium she shared with her husband, also the lead suspect in the case. Since her July 2011 disappearance, the topics of her missing body, her (now captured) husband, and questions of injustice and impunity in relation to the case have remained markedly present across national discourse (although not consistently predominant); by many accounts, (the representation of) "El Caso Siekavizza" is "exceptional" in the field of contemporary femicide (even if at times, somewhat paradoxically, it is also framed as "representative" of contemporary femicidal violence).

The chapter begins with an overview of the contextual parameters of "El Caso Siekavizza" and alludes to some of the ideological elements that facilitated the case's emergence as one of the most mediatized and emblematic incidences of femicide or disappearance in Guatemala's recent 'post war' history (Rodriguez 2013). In starting with this initial overview of the Siekavizza case, my intention is to foreshadow how and why the case's contextual (and, I argue, ideological) parameters conform to the exigencies of the government's desire to privatise and depoliticise the problem of gendered violence in Guatemala. While acknowledging the ways in which democratisation and neoliberalisation in the 'post war' era spearheaded these imperatives, I nonetheless argue that Molina's Patriot Party administration has deployed particularly insidious discursive-policy strategies of rendering a thin interpretation of gendered violence 'visible', but in a profoundly non-structural way. This 'thin' reading obscures the range of (not always visible) manifestations that gendered violence takes in post conflict settings, and furthermore neglects the historical and institutional anchors of contemporary femicide.

This chapter thus embeds "El Caso Siekavizza", and what I refer to as its *contextual and ideological coordinates* (related to questions of space, subjectivity, and temporality), in relation to a wider institutional and policy shift in which the notion of "violence against women" is increasingly framed as "domestic" or "interfamilial violence" (*"violencia intrafamiliar"* rather than *"violencia contra la mujer"*, or VCM). Lined within the normative contours of the VIF frame is, I argue, an ideological imperative tethered to the highly racialised concept of the (Guatemalan) nuclear family ideal, and the woman at the centre of its reproduction. I explore how appeals to "domestic violence" and "the family" within the narratives around VIF-related femicide, place a symbolic command upon victims' bodies to appeal in some way to this framework in order to secure (potential) government, mainstream media, or societal interpellation *as victims of femicidal violence* (rather than as unfortunate, or even desirable, casualties of "public" and ostensibly "criminal" violence— a subject taken up in chapter 6). It is furthermore my contention that the VIF frame relegates political and cultural conversations on femicide to the domain of individual and ostensibly moral problems. Relatedly, I explore how such a discursive framing conceptually locates issues of protection against/prevention of violence in relation to the family unit, rather than in relation to women's rights and state or structural forms

of accountability—a phenomenon that is constitutive of neoliberal articulations of gendered violence and citizenship (Boesten 2012; Gideon and Molyneux 2012). In addition to underwriting domestic violence femicides within a privatised and depoliticised spatiality rife with norms linked to gender, sexuality, and reproduction (Roseneil et al. 2013), the VIF frame lays the ideological scaffolding for regimes that hierarchically differentiate femicide victims in profoundly racialised and classed ways—a crucial point for the analysis that follows in chapter 5. I argue that the VIF frame has emerged at the forefront of the state's discursive formation of femicide and plays a crucial role in its strategic misrecognition of the structural and symbolic violences that authorise gendered violence.

"El Caso Siekavizza": The Contextual and Ideological Coordinates of a Contemporary VIF Femicide

Cristina Siekavizza, a young woman from a middle-upper class family, disappeared on 6th July 2011 after last being seen in her home in San José Pinula—a municipality within Guatemala City that is home to wealthier segments of the population. The next day, her husband, Roberto Barreda de León, made a public statement claiming that his wife had been the victim of kidnapping—a common practice in Guatemala whereby individuals are held in order to extract ransom from the victims' family in exchange for their safe return (McAllister and Nelson 2013: 8). Barreda maintained this story for more than a month, until speculations about a history of domestic violence shifted investigative attention towards his possible role in her disappearance, soon after which he fled the country with the couples' two young children. Further compounding perceptions that the case was submerged in a web of corruption and traffic of influences due to his high-level connections, Barreda's mother, Ofelia Beatriz Ofelia de León, an ex-president of the Supreme Court of Justice (2005 - 2006), became implicated in covering up the crime (Departemento Prensa Ministerio Publico 2012; Interviewee 8, 29.01.14). Steered by Cristina's family and friends under the name "Voces Por Cristina" ["Voices for Cristina"], "El Caso Siekavizza" elicited vast mobilisations in the streets by citizens demanding a proper investigation and an end to the impunity perceived to be rife, not only in relation to Cristina's case, but also to the wider justice system (Roesch 2014a).

I was in Guatemala City for field research when, on 8th November 2013—more than two years after Cristina's disappearance— authorities from Guatemala's Ministerio Publico (Public Prosecutors Office, hereafter PPO) arrested Barreda in Yucatan, Mexico. They proceeded to return him to Guatemala pending a trial, and temporarily placed the two children in the care of their maternal grandparents. At the time of writing, Barreda's trial remains stagnant, and, according to many observers, this deferral is a condition of the de facto impunity within which the case is likely to remain (Interviewee 8, 29.01.14; Interviewee 11, 31.01.14). Barreda has proclaimed his innocence and maintains that Cristina ran away to the United States with another man and is still alive. The critical issue preventing the case against Barreda from gaining traction as a homicide—let alone a femicide—is the fact that, despite extensive on-going investigative work by the PPO and the Survivor's Foundation (co-plaintiff NGO that focuses on domestic, sexual, and femicidal violence cases), Cristina's body has never been found. At the level of representation, however, I would insist that the presence or absence of a 'material' body is somewhat peripheral to the discussion of how her case gets deployed and framed. What interests me here is: How is her disappearance/femicide understood? How is Cristina subjectivised? "To what set of interpellating calls does [her body or face] respond?" (Butler 1993a: 124-5).

As I have explained in earlier sections, I consider the contextual coordinates of each case to be paramount to understanding the nature of their deployment within hegemonic or counter discourses (what kind of symbolic capital the case holds), and of the politics of victims' representations as subjects of violence (how they materialise, or fail to materialise as "bodies that matter") (Butler 1993a). "[D]ifference", as Butler reminds us, "is never simply a function of material differences which are not in some way both marked and formed by discursive practices (1993a: 1). This implies that what is most relevant is not necessarily 'what' or 'who' the victim of femicide is (poor or wealthy, indigenous or non-indigenous, for example), but instead, what matters is how she materialises within the domain of representation. In a society as structurally racist, classist and sexist as Guatemala, however, there are important *visual* markers or discursive codes whose power to place

individuals within or outside the norms that qualify them as 'fully human', should not be underplayed (Butler 1993a, 2010; Nelson 1999, 2009).

Cristina's Subject/ivity Coordinates

The subject, spatial and temporal ideological coordinates that I distinguish between relate to how cases, and subjects of, violence are produced by racial, gendered, and class markers linked to understandings of *where*, *when* and *against and by whom* the act of violence is understood to have taken place. What stands out immediately for many observers in the first instances of the emergence of "El Caso Siekavizza" (as it was tagged in the daily newspaper, *Prensa Libre*) is that Barreda initially claimed *"la secuestraron"*— that Cristina had been kidnapped (Interviewee 9, 29.01.14). For anyone familiar with the cultural lexicon of much of Guatemala's 'post war' violence, the practice of kidnapping individuals for ransom is seen to have an important class component (Hume 2009: 76; McAllister and Nelson 2013). Namely, the understanding is that it is often the children or wives of wealthy and elite Guatemalans who are targeted by this practice, precisely because kidnappers perceive these as the best opportunities to extract monetary capital (Burrell 2013: 254). In a way, this claim set the stage for Cristina's materialisation as a member of the middle-upper classes. Although, this issue would only gain traction as the search for Cristina's body and efforts to find Barreda with the two children waged on under the support (and, crucially, the perceived funds) of both the PPO and the Survivor's Foundation (Interviewee 4, 21.1.14; Interviewee 5, 23.01.14, 23.1.14).

Beyond the discursive codes embedded in Barreda's claim of Cristina's kidnapping, the visual production of the case also played a crucial role in the materialisation of other subjective coordinates related to Cristina's racial and class coding. The mainstream media's visual choices largely centred on using the conduit of Cristina's face to sell the story—rather than the arguably more common practice of printing photos of the bodies of victims of violence, often partially covered, but still 'visible' (Carey and Torres 2010; Torres 2014). Relatedly, *Prensa Libre* used a recurring facial photo with "Caso Siekavizza" written underneath it, to the point where it transformed into a kind of logo for the case. Given Guatemala's notorious "mediatization of violence" (Das and Kleinman 2000: 4) one could argue that, had Cristina's body been

found soon after her disappearance, photos of it might also have been printed. However, there is good reason to believe that despite the widespread practice of "sensationalizing murder", especially of women (Carey and Torres 2010), Cristina's body would not have emerged representationally in the way that a field of "other" femicide victims do (Interviewee 4, 21.1.14).

Drawing on Levinas' notion of "the face", Butler suggests that while the face does not 'speak', as such, it communicates something about the (in)humanity of the subject (2004a: 131). In the domain of visual representation then, norms can "both give face… and efface… [t]here are ways of framing that will bring the human into view… and [others] that foreclose responsiveness" (Butler 2010: 77). The issue is not visibility, as such, but rather, what is paramount is how visibility is enacted—and thus, relatedly, how forms of invisibility and abjection are produced (Butler 2004a: 141). I would posit that femicide victims represented through the medium of the face tend to materialise in substantively different ways than those who are represented through the medium of the body. Essentially, while both the face and the body are "invested with cultural meaning" in relation to various "classificatory logics", the face seems to increase (though not guarantee) the possibility that the victim will be humanised (Benson 2008: 596; Butler 2004a: 141). I suggest that the aesthetic representation in this case hinges on the victims' racialisation and the manner in which faces and bodies are differentially coded and racialised.

Before delving into the subject of Cristina's racialisation, it is necessary to take a moment to expand upon the complex categorisations that emerge in relation to race and ethnicity— especially where gendered (and violated) bodies are the object of these racialising processes (Nelson 1999: 211). Although I have chosen to invoke the (contentious) concepts of "ladino/a" and "indigenous" throughout this account, particularly in my effort to reflect the discursive field as I encountered it in Guatemala, it is vital to lay bare the conceptual inadequacy of these seemingly straightforward dyads for understanding the intricate workings of racialisation and racism in Guatemala (Gonzalez Ponciano 2013; Nelson 1999: chapter 6; Posocco 2014a: 30-7). The theoretical framework developed in the previous chapter is precisely grounded upon the assumption that bodies—and thus, the gendered and racialised markings that help constitute the materiality of those bodies—are

performatively constituted through power-laden discursive practices that produce and "undo" bodies "over time and through reiteration" (Butler 1993a: 2; Nelson 1999: 210).

In her account of gender and the racialised body in Guatemala, Nelson explains that the "terms *Indian* and *ladino* are highly problematic and have long genealogies, the complexity of which [one should not] … erase" (1999: 211). Nelson deploys the metaphor of the "splattered body with bleeding boundaries"— which resonates perhaps too literally in a discussion of femicide—to foreground "the violence that governs the assumptions of gendered, racial, and other identifications", or, "hostile markings" (1999: 211). To understand why certain (gendered) bodies come to (not) matter within the fabric of Guatemalan politics and cultural discourse, we must foreground the role of the "white-*ladina* body" (Nelson 1999: 216), which is a crucial site through which the Guatemalan nation building project sustains systems of exclusion and differentiation (Casaús Arzú 2007). The latter discussion is further developed in chapter 5; however, I would briefly like to open up the categories of "ladino/a" and "indigenous" to critical discussion, in order to explain my reasoning for deploying these contentious terms in reference to the subjects of femicidal violence herein. While the narrative framing of my own account leans upon the "hegemonic status of ladino identity", it is important to foreground how such a reference to the ladino/a as occupying a space of power in relation to "Maya [indigenous] communities construed as marginalized minorities", "obscures" the *ladina*/os who experience various forms of socioeconomic and political oppression (Posocco 2014a: 36). Admittedly, then, deploying these terms makes me partially implicated in reifying an ethno-racial dyad that fails to account for the different ethno-linguistic communities across Guatemala, and for how subjects within them have been racialised historically (Posocco 2014a: 30-7).

Despite a tendency in many Western anthropological accounts for the "ladino" to disappear into "whiteness" (Gonzales Ponciano 2013: 308), the terms are not synonymous. As Gonzales Ponciano cogently argues, to treat these as tantamount to one another obscures

> "the geographies of imperial whiteness that situate Guatemala [historically] and the internal complexities of pigmentocratic

hierarchies *within* Guatemala [since] [m]ost ladinos are considered inferior to both the descendants of the Spanish occupiers (the *criollos*) and the post-nineteenth century elites descended from northern European immigrants." (2013: 308)

Gonzales Ponciano's account endorses a position whereby the workings of Guatemalan racism are not *reducible to race*, as such, because the categories are fluidly reconstituted (and challenged) through complex historical hierarchies of difference—ones that are increasingly difficult to sustain in the context of migration and cosmopolitanism (2013: 308-9). As in other accounts (Casaús Arzú 2007), the emphasis here is on the *relational* nature of racial subject formations in Guatemala (a process that is comparable, though not reducible to, other countries in Latin America "with a large proportion of poor indigenous and mixed-race populations", such as Mexico and Peru (Boesten 2014: 151)). Posocco notes that an emphasis on relationality foregrounds the (unequal) power relations that mark boundaries of difference (often beyond the domain of "identities of choice"); such processes assume a certain "readability of the body and… visibility of identity" (2014a: 33). Since the ability for gendered bodies to "pass", or indeed, their failure to "pass" as *ladina* or *mestiza* ("mixed") works on an "extremely slippery" (Gonzales Ponciano 2013: 313) ideological terrain that casts whiteness as the privileged ideal, these representational markings become especially pertinent to the discursive objects of this analysis (namely, the bodies "undone" by femicidal violence). What is paramount for my purposes, then, is not to account for the dense genealogies of race/ism and to map these onto gendered and classed formations in Guatemala (this is far beyond the scope of my thesis, and there are compelling articulations of these debates, elsewhere, see Camus 2009; Casaús Arzú 2007, Grandin 2000, Nelson 1999, 2009). Instead, what I suggest is central to foreground in my own account is the "hegemonic character" of the ladino marking as *non-indigenous*—and indeed, to underscore the 'othering" of "indigeneity" (Posocco 2014a: 35). And, even though it is historical variable (Gonzales Ponciano 2013), there is an on-going cultural denigration of gendered and racialised subjects (the figure of the "poor indigenous women") across relational articulations of "bodies that matter" in Guatemala (Butler 1993a; Nelson 1999: Chapters 5 and 6). As Posocco explains, we can both acknowledge the "plasticity and mobility" of "taxonomic" orderings around race while recognizing the normative weight of "the ladino/*indigena* dyad" and how it "inform[s] the Guatemalan

imaginaries of ethic difference" (2014a: 35). Thus, my aim here is to search for instances of discursive and visual production (Foucault 1978: 12) that engender the bodies of femicidal violence with ideological markings that reach towards the hegemony of *ladina* as white/non-indigenous, or that, in Nelson's words, are "hostilely" imposed significations (1999: 211).

Now returning to the subject(ivity) at the center of "El Caso Siekavizza", Cristina is noticeably a victim whose lighter-skin casts her within a particular "domain of cultural intelligibility" (Butler 1993a: 3); indeed, I suggest that the pretext of a range of narratives on the case is, either implicitly or explicitly, that Cristina is (marked as) *ladina*, if not "white" (Hernandez 2014). As I suggested above, in the case of Guatemala, this is the space of "non-indigeneity" (Grandin 2000: 84) "that finds its Other in the category *indígena*" (Posocco 2014a: 30). As articulated by several interlocutors, Cristina's discursive and visual marking as a gendered subject that occupies the space of the *ladina*— or a horizon of whiteness predicated on assumptions of de-racialisation that can be "read" through the body (Posocco 2014a: 30-33)— allows her to (at least partially) escape the "abjected zone" where indigenous women, and, indeed, where "non-indigenous" poor and marginalised, and thus *racialised* (Boesten 2014: 134, on Peru; Nelson 1999: chapter 6; Wright 2006a, on Mexico) women, tend to materialise as victims of femicidal violence (Interviewee 4, 11.02.14; Interviewee 27, 19.02.15; Interviewee 29, 25.02.15).

Further to her materialisation as *ladina,* or non-indigenous, Cristina emerged in the mainstream media and other prominent discourses as a "good" and "beautiful" housewife, and a "committed mother" (Interviewee 4, 03.02.14). Significantly, this type of discursive coding has been used in other femicide cases that have managed to gain prominence in Guatemala's 'post war' history—such as the murder of 19-year old law student Claudina Isabel Velasquez Paiz, who in an otherwise strong piece on modern-day femicide in Guatemala, is described by the author as "not a gang member or a prostitute" but rather, as "[b]eautiful, gregarious, and well liked" (Sanford 2008: 114). Indeed, I would suggest that the practice of positively describing the victims' appearance or accomplishments, on the one hand, and the victims' case emerging as an object of political importance, on the other, is linked in important ways through designations of social and cultural status.

The complexity inherent to how gendered bodies victimized by violence are hierarchically (re)constituted through the act and representation of that violence, points to the performative power of scripts of femicide that lean on the often depoliticised person(al)/individual features of gendered subjects. Indeed, details such as a victims' profession or her (desirable) appearance, are not innocuous to the field of racial and class designations (Nelson 1999: chapter 6). As cogently argued by Boesten (2014) in relation to regimes of sexual violence in wartime Peru, discursive codes inferring the (lower or higher) social status of victims, while not always explicitly racialised, help confirm which victims "deserve respect"—although, crucially, Boesten also highlights that a woman's "higher social class", and the implied "non indigenous" marking that comes with such a label, do "not protect against rape, but produced different outcomes" (2014: 59). Such a qualification bears importantly on the discussion herein, since victims 'like' Cristina are still subjected to femicidal violence. Indeed, while discursively produced as a woman of "higher" socioeconomic class, and situated within the convoluted normative terrain of Guatemalan ethnicity as "white", "*ladina*", and/or "non-indigenous" (Posocco 2014a: 32-3)— labels which are certainly not reducible to "race", as racist discourses in Guatemala have historically "biologized class" hierarchies (Gonzales Ponciano 2013: 308)— Cristina's body was still disappeared, or "undone" (Butler 2004b), by patriarchal violence. Later on, I will further interrogate how such gendered classifications of Cristina as a "beautiful mother" are linked to racialised normative conceptions of the nuclear family ideal. However, what is paramount at this stage is that the subjective coordinates through which she materialises representationally be situated within a broader framework of regulatory power. In doing so, we can start to appreciate how the class and racial norms by which Cristina emerges "work in a performative fashion" to mark her as a *particular kind* of subject of femicidal violence in Guatemala, and thus how these classifications may work to consolidate wider hegemonic policy and cultural imperatives (Butler 1993a: 2).

The Spatial Coordinates of "El Caso Siekavizza"

Also central to the mainstream framing of the case's contextual coordinates has been the spatiality though which the violence has been ideologically situated. "El Caso Siekavizza" has materialised as an "emblematic" case of *"violencia intrafamiliar"* or

"violencia de pareja" ("couple/partner violence") (Interviewee 13, 02.02.14), in the process circumscribing the events that led to her disappearance (and presumed femicide) to the 'private' sphere of the family (Interviewee 8, 29.01.14; Interviewee 14, 02.02.14). Crucially, the representation of the violence perpetrated by Barreda against Cristina—including controlling her access to money and limiting her movements (Interviewee 14, 02.02.14)—locates the performance of violence to the acts of an individual in the confines of the home, and ultimately characterises the femicide (or 'final act') of violence against her as an 'event' (Benson 2008: 595; Godoy-Paiz 2008; Sanford 2003: 15).

The Temporal Coordinates of "El Caso Siekavizza"

Intimately related to the discursive framing of the case as an 'event' or 'act' of lethal domestic violence is how it has been represented temporally. Namely, I would suggest that the notion that the case is an "emblematic" femicide is also rooted in its 'contemporary' nature— that is to say, in its representation as a case of gendered violence firmly situated within Guatemala's peacetime milieu. As I show further on, the violence suffered by Cristina is spatially designated to the sphere of the 'private' within mainstream media coverage and by government interlocutors' statements, thereby implicitly disarticulating it from the domain of 'public' violence authorised by the state (Gobierno de Guatemala 2013a). Furthermore, however, I suggest that the temporal coding of the case as a contemporary "peacetime" femicide dislocates Cristina's disappearance from historical precursors (Carey and Torres 2010) that exist on the continuum of Guatemala's gendered violence. According to many feminist and social justice interlocutors, the ideological impetus of how the Patriot Party government and mainstream media 'visibilise' victims of gendered violence in the 'post war' context is intimately related to a wider sociopolitical project to obscure and/or discount articulations of gendered violence performed in the mark of counterinsurgency, and thus, *state*-related, violences (Interviewee 4, 03.02.14; Interviewee 28, 23.02.15; Interviewee 25, 11.02.15). As one feminist interlocutor explained it, confining the frame of reference for femicidal violence to the 'post war' period is a central regulatory practice of the Patriot Party's governance of gendered violence: "because then all of the themes… everything related to the past gets consigned *to the past*", thus engendering an imaginary that "the victims of the past…

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'las indígenas'… don't matter" (Interviewee 25, 11.02.15). Therefore, that the temporality of Cristina's case gets discursively situated within the confines of "peacetime" violence against women—officially stripped of reference to political and state violences – suggests that "El Caso Siekavizza" is a relatively 'safe' case for interlocutors within hegemonic sites of regulatory power to lend discursive support to.

In addition to subjective and spatial coordinates related to the materialisation of racial and class markers, and to the 'domestic' nature of the case, the rhetorical form that Cristina's disappearance takes as a *contemporary VIF-femicide* is instrumental to its representation *as a femicide* within hegemonic regulatory narratives of gendered violence. Ultimately, we need to consider how all of these aforementioned ideological, ostensibly merely "contextual", coordinates materialise together in relation to subject, spatial and temporal details of the case in order to understand why and how "El Caso Siekavizza" emerges as an object of political importance for government, mainstream media and other interlocutors across Guatemala. Before we can explore these details (in part 2), however, it is necessary to consider "the problem of context" (Posocco 2014a: 24), or the historical-present in which Cristina materialises—namely, the gendered violence political-policy paradigm which engenders, and indeed "disciplines" (Hume 2009: 165), modes of response to femicide.

Patriot Party VCM-VIF Consolidation

This section draws out the shifting VCM-VIF framing of gendered violence and femicide by central interlocutors within the government and key state institutions charged with women's rights and development. To read the Molina administration's discursive formation of *"violencia intrafamiliar"* as a 'shift' may give undue credit for the privatisation and depoliticisation of gendered violence to the PP's rule; therefore, a parallel aim here is to trace the genealogy of the VIF discursive-policy framework under the tenure of other administrations in the 'post war' period. Doing so reveals that although gendered violence was increasingly recognised as a "human rights issue" rather than just a "women's issue" (as in other post war contexts across Latin America), gendered violence has been simultaneously (re)defined in profoundly

depoliticised, individualised, and procedural terms (Alvarez 1999; Berger 2006: 46, 113; Godoy-Paiz 2008; Molyneux and Lazar 2003). So while there are crucial precursors to this VCM-VIF 'shift', clearly designating a term (the "VIF frame") provides a conceptual space to address the hegemonic consolidation of this frame under the Patriot Party government. I associate the regulatory practices that are forging a limited domain that leads to the (mis)recognition of femicide with this VIF or *"violencia de pareja"* ("couple violence") frame.

According to several interlocutors, the discursive-policy thrust of Molina's administration and the key state institutions charged with promoting women's development, aims to constrict the recognition of gendered violence and femicide to a privatised-depoliticised sphere (Interviewee 4, 21.1.14; Interviewee 12, 02.02.14; Interviewee 13, 02.02.14). Without denying the problems with earlier regimes (as one interlocutor noted, things "were not that much better" under the four previous administrations of the 'post war' period (Interviewee 2, 18.11.13)), many of the interlocutors I spoke with insisted that within mainstream discourses and policy domains, the obviation of structural and symbolic forms of gendered violence has been particularly pronounced under the Molina regime (Interviewee 10, 30.01.14; Interviewee 14, 02.02.14).

VIF: The Politics of the "nuclear family"

In President Molina's inaugural address in January 2012, he made repeated reference to the central role that the nuclear family plays in ensuring that the "traditional values of Guatemalans" are protected and reproduced by future generations. He spoke about "repairing the social fabric" of Guatemalan society in terms that were couched in the language of "moral values", and these were furthermore framed as emerging in the context of "secure homes" (Gobierno de la Republica 2012).

The Patriot Party's strategic government plan, *Agenda del Cambio: Plan de Gobierno* ["Agenda for Change"] (Partido Patriota 2011) outlines five key focal areas, or "axes", for the government, and each of these contains a further five supporting proposals. The two that are most relevant for thinking through the ideological schema embedded within the VIF frame pertain to the first and fourth axes: namely,

"Security, Democracy and Justice" and "Social Development". The former includes proposals for the protection of the lives and property of Guatemalan citizens and their families (Partido Patriota 2011: 11), while the latter concerns the "promotion of social inclusion and equality of opportunities, with the aim of converting participants in social programmes into individuals who do not depend on the support of the state to get ahead" (41). Both of these axes contain multiple explicit references to *"violencia intrafamiliar"* and *"hogares/familias seguros/saludables"* (safe/secure families/homes). For example, the agenda for "Social Development" contains a proposal for "Safe Families", which is furthermore tied to the principles of "Strong Families" and the "Prevention of Domestic Violence" (49). Notably, while making passing reference to women's rights, domestic violence is framed in negative terms specifically because it can lead to the disintegration of families:

> "We recognise the existence of high rates of domestic violence, which limit the rights of women and boys and girls [the children] to a healthy life, and which furthermore makes it difficult to eradicate [this domestic violence] from the country in order to build a culture of peace." (Patriot Party 2011: 49)

In a speech elaborating the *"Hogar Seguro"* ["Safe Home"] axis of governance one year into the Patriot Party's *"Pacto por la Seguridad, Justicia y Paz"* ["Agreement for Security, Justice, and Peace"], President Molina and Vice President Roxanna Baldetti stated explicitly that eliminating domestic violence and "dysfunctional homes" is *the* fundamental basis for security and peace in Guatemala (Gobierno de Guatemala 2012a, 2013b). Additionally, they suggested that the responsibility for setting a good example for children and for not "allowing" domestic violence in the home begins with the male heads of households, who should treat women "with respect and with love"— but it extends to both parents to ensure that children are not given "bad examples" (Gobierno de Guatemala 2013b). Relatedly, Molina has stated that when domestic violence is occurring, while his administration will "do their part" to assist victims, they "need brave women" to report that they are being hit (Gobierno de Guatemala 2012b).

Embedded within the logic of these narratives is the notion that the struggle for peace and security is squarely situated within the four walls of the home, and that responsibility rests on the shoulders of "men of the house" to not use *physical*

violence, and on wives/mothers to seek help and thereby ensure that their children are given strong moral examples of safe and functional homes. As others have noted in parallel contexts around the globe, such frameworks for (women's) "safety" and "security" are deeply imbricated with neoliberal doctrines of "resilience" (Evans and Reid 2014) (in the face of gendered violence), and, particularly in developing contexts across Latin America, have become ubiquitous within the instrumentalist "social investment" policy regime (Gideon and Molyneux 2012: 296; Roseneil et al. 2013: 902). Feminist observers note that the latter conceptually locates protection (from violence) in relation to "the family", or the children, rather than in relation to women's rights (Boesten 2012: 364, 2014: 141-2). Such a "familial" approach to "women's safety" is, as some have noted, antithetical to the task of inscribing gender equality, let alone transformative gender relations, into government policies around domestic violence (Boesten 2012: 364). Indeed, because "social investment" policies are often ideologically tethered to deeply conservative conceptions of the "integrity" of the family unit (Gideon and Molyneux 2012: 297), they fail to interrupt forms of patriarchal authority that help order exercises of power therein (Boesten 2014: 141-2). A policy framework that situates the imperative for protection against, or prevention of, gendered violence within the notion of "strong families" therefore warrants critical interrogation (Interviewee 12, 02.02.14). During an informal encounter in Guatemala City, for example, an acquaintance recounted a story whereby a female relative of hers had reported domestic violence to the PPO, in the hopes that they would facilitate the safe removal of her two children into her care; however, because, ostensibly, the violence was "only" being inflicted upon the wife/mother, she was ordered to return to her husband's home or risk losing custody of the children (Author Field Notes, 01.02.15). Such an example reverberates with the "family" rights paradigm that has been charted in relation to social investment approaches to domestic violence: the horizon for "protection" is a nebulous ideal of the male-headed nuclear household (Boesten 2014: 134), or, in the best case scenarios, the conceptual entry point is the "protection" of children's rights (although such a claim is undermined by policy practices which assume that children are "safe" in homes where they bear witness to domestic violence).

In President Molina's different forms of publically addressing the nation, he makes explicit links between having strong "heads of households" and "nuclear families",

and the battle to eradicate "*violencia intrafamiliar*" across the nation. Noticeably, the discursive-policy thrust of Molina's Party leans on deeply conservative and religious ideological schema that structure the criteria of the nuclear family in Guatemala, (and across much of Latin America) (Casaús Arzú 2007). Indeed, the Guatemalan ideal of 'the family' is a crucial site for the reproduction of racist, heterosexist and classist methods of differentiation (Nelson 1999: 216). These considerations matter enormously when we reflect on the 'types' of victims of domestic violence that are being addressed within the context of the Patriot Party's calls to end domestic violence. The constraints, as feminist interlocutors note, are palpable: victims of violence are found in the context of a heterosexual couple (Interviewee 30, 25.02.15), and the violence is perpetrated against mothers by male heads of "dysfunctional" homes (Interviewee 13, 02.02.14). The language used by Molina illuminates a form of violence that is steeped in moral lexicon, rather than political or social (in)justice terms. The notion seems to be that mothers deserve to be free from violence because of the instrumental role they increasingly play in the political and social economy of the home. Perhaps more revealingly, still, the discursive injunction is placed upon the father (to refrain from violence), and upon the mother (to not allow violence— especially for the sake of the children). As we can discern in the passage below, in addition to the heteronormative and patriarchal overtones, this logic tilts the framing of responsibility (and accountability) away from the state and onto "resilient" individuals (Evans and Reid 2014) within the home:

> "I have always said that men must [treat] a woman with respect, because every day she plays a more important role, every day she is helping more in the economy of the family, she is working, she is watching the children, she is concerned that they don't get sick, she is concerned about feeding her husband, she is concerned about taking care of the house. … we don't want men to hit women, and to them [women] we are saying that they should not let men hit them…" (Gobierno de Guatemala 2013c)

This implicitly gendered command to women suffering domestic violence to "endure" for the sake of their families, or in the mark of "strengthening" their families, places responsibility on mothers to (re)produce "strong" future generations (their children). Therefore, the "Strong Families" approach resonates deeply with the instrumentalist "investment approach" of a range of ostensibly "gender" focused social protection policies across Latin America (Gideon and Molyneux 2012; Molyneux 2000, 2002),

wherein "women's rights" as a horizon of gender justice, are trumped by a "family rights" paradigm underwritten by patriarchal power relations (Boesten 2014: 134-5). Not only does such a framework marginalise women outside the procreative-heteronormative nuclear ideal, but, even in cases of domestic violence where such a family unit exists, it also engenders an imperative for *mothers* to protect themselves, *and their children* from gendered violence.

In a historical account of political-legal governance practices in relation to domestic violence in Guatemala, Carey and Torres note that "in a legal system that elite men established and [preside] over, domestic violence is not afforded the same consideration and seriousness as offenses that [challenge] state authority" (2010: 150). Noting the historic "collusion" of governments and state institutions such as the courts and police towards de facto indifference and normalization in relation to domestic violence (and violence against women more generally), Carey and Torres argue that violence in the so-called "private" sphere of the home has never been central to the political-policy platforms of governments across the 20th century leading into the war and 'post war' periods (2010). Indeed, they suggest that "victims of domestic violence were the sacrificial lambs who kept quotidian tensions at an acceptable level" across times of "both dictatorship and democracy" (2010: 150). However, what is significant in relation to Molina's Patriot Party is how "*violencia intrafamiliar*" has emerged as a central trope through which the government crystallizes its discursive ordering of gendered violence in Guatemala. Thus, what is left pending is not whether domestic violence occupies a prominent space in the field of political rhetoric; instead, the question is how seriously domestic violence offenses are actually taken in the legal domain, as well as what the scope and nature of the state's role in preventing and addressing this violence is beyond the level of discursive appeals. Perhaps even more significantly, the role of the state in procuring gender inequalities and authorizing gender violence and injustice is largely evacuated from the account offered by the VIF framework and its recourse to "safe homes" and "strong families" (Partido Patriota 2011: 49). Feminists interlocutors working on the so-called 'frontlines' with victims of violence emphasize that, even with the concentrated rhetoric around eradicating "domestic violence" and supporting the construction of "safe homes", the Patriot Party framework fails victims within the domain of the private sphere (to say nothing yet of those outside of the home):

> "This system re-victimises them [victims of *violencia intrafamiliar*]… from a perspective of structural violence against women, right? For example, that continuum of violence is there… if they are experiencing violence from their partner… and then on top of that the system doesn't respond to them? Well that continuum of violence is not only lengthened but furthermore there is another… another perpetrator [besides the partner]… the institutions of the state [are part of the violence] in that sense." (Interviewee 14, 02.02.14)

The concurrence of the Patriot Party's policy focus on *"violencia intrafamiliar"* with the lack of substantive political commitments that might actually challenge its structural determinants, partially corroborates Carey and Torres' observation. It suggests that even as gendered violence "sustains" the state, (certain articulations of) domestic violence, and calls to eradicate it, can be (thematically) deployed within the field of discourse if the government in question understands the political citation of domestic violence as a condition for the reproduction of social hegemonies (Foucault 1978: 92) and thus, of its authority (Carey and Torres 2010: 142, 145). In a pertinent analysis of post-conflict policies around gender equality and violence in Peru, Boesten highlights a similar tension whereby, on the one hand, the field of "post-conflict national politics" is concentrated by governments placing "discursive emphasis" (2014: 131) on, and "actively intervening" (2012: 361) in, the domain of domestic, or "family violence"; yet, on the other hand, the normative frameworks which structure the very state institutions developing (and implementing) policies and legislation around these issues are profoundly patriarchal, racist, and classist (2014: 125-35). In drawing out the seemingly paradoxical existence of a range of policy and legislative interventions in this (VIF frame analogous) domain of "family violence" (Boesten 2012: 363, 2014: 136), and the failure of these interventions to translate into genuine reforms in the everyday (let alone structural) conditions of inequality for women, Boesten suggests that this is less of a paradox than a logical outcome of the tension inherent to "post conflict" states that have not undergone structural transformations (2012). Her argument is that the post conflict Peruvian state continues to be a central *perpetrator* of violence against women (2012: 363) due to its refusal, under consecutive administrations, to tackle the institutionalised patriarchy, racism, and classism at the centre of its *wartime* governance practices (2014). By acknowledging the continuums within the structural fabric of the war and 'post war'

state, Boesten shows how peacetime impunity for gendered violence is at least partially explicable through a historical lens, and, certainly, why such peacetime impunity is probable even where policy gestures towards eradicating gender violence exist (2014: chapter 6). Boesten cogently illustrates why, under such conditions, narrow post-conflict appeals to "family rights" in the domain of domestic violence policy do little to undermine the ideological norms that actually authorise gender violence, and, as I would suggest is pertinent in the Guatemalan context, why disciplining responses to domestic violence through a perspective that "champions the family", while neglecting issues of women's rights or racial and economic inequality (2014: 141-2), perpetuates the regulatory structures of the state and its cultural support networks.

What, then, is the nature of the Patriot Party's discursive deployment and appeal to "*violencia intrafamiliar*"? I would posit that, as has historically been the situation in cases of gendered violence, the VIF frame's reliance on an idea of "the nuclear family" has implications that fall along lines of race and class; however, the particular contours of these implications intersect in complex and historically contingent ways. Significantly, the domain of heterosexual marriage and reproduction is a central tenet of the Guatemalan ladino-elite's ideological scaffold "for maintaining difference" (Casaús Arzú 2007). In this formulation, "the [ladina] wife and mother" is situated at the core of the family, carrying the moral obligation to ensure the reproduction of "the line, the class, and the nation" (Nelson 1999: 218). Given the on-going references to a mother's responsibility towards her children, her husband, and even to herself (when she is a victim of violence), Molina's narratives seem to rely on the foundations of the white-ladino notion of the family, but his construction obfuscates race or class. How can we inflect this observation into an interpretation of the 'types' of victims, and forms of violence, that emerge by way of the state's focus on eradicating domestic violence in dysfunctional homes? And can we briefly mobilise "El Caso Siekavizza" at this juncture to think through the logic of the case's political and cultural deployment?

On the one hand, it is noteworthy that, taken together, the focus on the parents' role in maintaining safe homes for children within the Patriot Party's discursive-policy framework, alongside its treatment of "El Caso Siekavizza" as politically emblematic,

potentially moves away from stereotypes that criminalise poor indigenous (and poor ladino) men— (essentialist "culturalist" frameworks which emerge by way of ideological interpellations in which racialised and/or poor men are ostensibly the only demographics that use violence against their partners) (Ramirez et al. 2014; Weissman 2005, 2010: 231). Indeed, because in Guatemala "elites seldom [allow] such transgressions to be dragged into public arenas" (Carey and Torres 2010: 148), the Patriot Party's strategy of centring policy discussions for gendered violence around the VIF frame, alongside Molina's (and other government interlocutors) tagging of "El Caso Siekavizza" as "emblematic", leaves the door open to a (re)reading of the VIF frame along lines that may challenge racialised and classed assumptions about domestic violence (Interviewee 2, 18.11.13).

Less optimistically, however, the ideological thread running through the discursive-policy framework of "Strong" and "Safe Families" hints less at a desire to overcome racist or classist assumptions about domestic violence, and more towards an interpretation that is conservative and moralising, and furthermore, towards a notion of accountability that is steeped within neoliberal logics of individual responsibility and self-reliance (Evans and Reid 2014). At best, this procures a reading of male perpetrators of domestic violence as morally bankrupt (or even 'monstrous') husbands and fathers; at worst, it potentially slips into blame narratives which focus attention on why, given her role in maintaining a safe home for her children, a woman/mother would not report violence? Paradoxically, the blame narrative for (nuclear-family conforming) victims of domestic violence *who are not killed* is both to "endure" or "deal with" the violence (themselves), thus inscribing the neoliberal imperative for self-reliance (Evans and Reid 2014); yet the discourses that circulate within sociopolitical and cultural rhetoric simultaneously question *domestic femicide* victims who failed to escape their fates: "why did she endure her husband's violence? Why didn't she report him?" (Interviewee 12, 02.02.14). At both a political-policy and cultural level, then, the disciplining of responses to victims of "*violencia intrafamliar*" get structured around the individual, and the 'personal choices' she made, or failed to make, in navigating her safety within the home and against a violent partner (Interviewee 13, 02.02.14)— whether in relation to victims whose experiences with domestic violence result in femicide or not. The VIF frame is thus also crucially related to 'post war' neoliberalising transformations of gendered

citizenship, and consequently, to how responsibility for preventing and responding to gendered violence gets conceptualised according to principles of self-reliance and "neocitizenship" (Berger 2006: 42).

As I discuss further on, several threads of these logics circulate in the domain of political and media representation in relation to "El Caso Siekavizza"—creating the foundations for a highly 'politicised', but not necessarily 'political', case of domestic violence femicide. Indeed, the absence of structurally or historically articulated understandings of gendered violence depoliticises the content of the Patriot Party's VIF frame. However, I would argue that it is precisely this reading of *violencia intrafamiliar* that enables "El Caso Siekavizza" to emerge as a "cause" for the Molina government. An indigenous feminist community activist I spoke with framed the case as a powerful medium through which the Patriot Party has been able to (re)install the discursive limits of societal debates around gendered violence to a 'post war' and family-centric frame of reference:

> "I mean, the amount of energy, the amount of resources… the, the amount of [state] mechanisms that have been exhausted on this case… it really puts into question this whole system… how resources are distributed for women's access to justice… for women of a [certain] class… with social status, in comparison to *la mujer cotidiana*… to say nothing of the rural or indigenous woman!… Look, I don't want to take anything away from that particular femicide [of Cristina]… but I have to say that the case doesn't have the potential historical weight [that is] implied by the [trials for] sexual violence committed against indigenous women during the war" (Interviewee 3, 21.01.14).

In the above exchange, this indigenous feminist interlocutor was referring to the Maya-Ixil victims/survivors that offered their testimonies of sexual (and other) violence during the 2013 genocide trial (Burt 2015). I suggest that her comment implicitly articulates the ideological boundaries that regulate the political (in)significance and/or (in)visibility of victims of gendered violence across history, whereby those bodies falling outside the limit points of a contemporary *violencia intrafamiliar* femicide framework fail to engender the (at least discursive) support of the state. As I have indicated, however, we will need to bring in a discussion of other regulatory norms of stratifying gendered life/death in Guatemala in order to more adequately account for the emergence of "El Caso Siekavizza" at the level of the

mainstream media and civil society, and especially the particular contours of
Cristina's materialisation as a "recognisable" and "grievable" (Butler 2004a) subject
of violence.

Situating the VIF frame within an analytics of structural violence in Guatemala, and
particularly the deflection of the "persistent" historical and institutional linkages
between gendered violences and the state, President Molina's consistent references to
"*hogares seguros*" (safe/secure homes), "*violencia intrafamiliar*", and *"violencia de
parejas sentimentales"* (violence between intimate partners), are also important for
reasons that concern the productive role of discourses of gendered violence in the
consolidation of political imaginaries in the 'post war' context. Indeed, a particular
configuration of the problem of gendered violence and women's safety/security is
crystallising when Molina or other government interlocutors repeatedly invoke the
VIF frame— one which references "violence as more of a *theme*" emerging within
(and therefore the responsibility of) the context of a private family "than a social (and
therefore state) *problem*" (Interviewee 14, 02.02.14). Even more troubling, the nexus
being drawn between this limited reading of gendered violence (as occurring between
heterosexual couples in a home) and national security and peace, suggests an
obfuscation of the role of the state in actually authorising violence and impunity, as
well as the role that other forms of gendered structural violence and inequality play in
undercutting genuine peace and security for women. Within the boundaries of
Molina's VIF frame, the discursive injunction for how to deal with violence reveals
how limited in reach his Party's notion of gendered violence is:

> "when we [our administration] talk about not wanting
> violence, we say that the example begins in the home, security
> begins in the home, we don't want domestic violence, we
> don't want [men] to hit women…" (Gobierno de Guatemala
> 2013c)

Interestingly, the VIF frame combines seemingly contradictory processes of rendering
'private' sphere domestic violence a political, or at least a Patriot Party issue
(Interviewee 13, 02.02.14), whilst depoliticising violence against women through the
neoliberal framing of responsibility in terms of the private sphere of the family
(Berger 2006: 51). According to one feminist interlocutor, the government's
dislocation of gendered violence into a hollow VIF frame, is part of a wider political
strategy being pushed across state (as well as academic) institutions in order to

visibilise certain forms of violence that can be deployed to push hegemonic regulatory imperatives, while obscuring others:

> "[the problem is]… co-optation.. [The Molina administration is using] the problem of violence as a political platform... so structural violence... against women isn't recognised…. here what is recognised is *partner violence*. That is what is given a great, great deal of weight. So [in Guatemala] we continue always problematising violence in relation to the private sphere, and moreover, in relation to… the family… the couple… so the violence perpetrated in the public sphere… at work, school, in the streets… isn't problematised."
> (Interviewee 13, 02.02.14)

The link between the government's regulatory practice of framing violence against women in terms of VIF, and the privatisation of responsibility and depoliticisation of the problem, is complex. Interlocutors highlight the fact that Molina and other key government representatives have tended to embed domestic violence within neoliberal discourses of individual and family responsibility. As one women's rights lawyer in Guatemala explained it, narrowing the discursive-policy focus to domestic violence between a couple within the nuclear family setting devolves responsibility from the state (where, legally speaking, it should exist) to individuals, while simultaneously situating the source, or 'cause' of violence, within the home and away from the state and/or structural factors (Interviewee 10, 30.01.14). Put another way, if violence and insecurity begin inside dysfunctional homes, at the hands of irresponsible and immoral male heads-of-households (or worse still, due to the poor decision making of wives/mothers who fail to report violence), what are the concepts of accountability that emerge? In a context where impunity for genocide perpetuated by a military state (CEH 1999) has contributed to Guatemala's status as one of the most violent and impunity-ridden 'post conflict' countries in the world, this is, of course, an especially problematic contraction of the scope for understanding the foundations of violence. As another feminist put it, violence— the domestic violence that Molina actually refers to in discourses of gendered violence within the (mis)recognition frame—"is a couple's problem" which locates its source *outside* the central logic of the country's violent 'post war' democracy (Interviewee 2, 18.11.13).

Yet, while situating responsibility for eradicating domestic violence on "men who are responsible for their homes [and] with mothers who set a good example [by] taking care of the children… and the husband" (Gobierno de Guatemala 2013d) the government also simultaneously carves out a role for the state to deal with violence (some of it femicidal) in the public domain using its police and military forces— (the subject of chapter 6) (Interviewee 3, 21.01.14). As I alluded to earlier, the difference in treatment hinges on the distinct regulatory frameworks that circulate for femicides in private and public domains—and, crucially, on how the gendered subjects that emerge representationally across these spatialities help (re)constitute the boundaries between violences and bodies in the mark of reproducing hegemonic political and cultural imperatives. The VIF frame circulates in relation to the government's regulatory aim of visibilising domestic violence against women *only to the extent* that it remains a privatised-depoliticised issue, and therefore, politically 'safe'.

The Presidential Secretariat for Women and the VIF Frame

The materialisation of the VIF frame within Molina's and the PP's discourse on violence is not a politically isolated phenomenon. Several feminist and women's rights interlocutors note with concern that, particularly since 2012, the key institution charged with coordinating public policies for women's rights and development in Guatemala, the Presidential Secretariat for Women (SEPREM), has been converted into "a public relations office" that reinforces the regulatory norms of the Executive Branch (Interviewee 19, 11.02.14).

Forming part of the 'post war' consolidation of democratic spaces for women's institutional representation, the complicated trajectory of SEPREM points to the tensions borne out of post conflict nation-building projects coinciding with neoliberal globalisation and the "depoliticisation" of gendered violence and the individualization of citizenship that such reforms stimulate (Berger 2006; Gideon 2008). As with other institutions officially dedicated to the domains of gender equality and women's development in Latin America, SEPREM represents many paradoxes for the women's and feminist movements in Guatemala, particularly in relation to the institutions' (in)effectiveness as a point of intervention for gendered violence. As Drysdale Walsh notes, institutions that address violence against women in developing countries are

not initiated by the state, but rather, by feminist movements using the state as a site of struggle to make demands in relation to women's rights (2008: 49). Such a reading of the formation of women's institutions in 'post war' Guatemala resonates with the accounts of feminist interlocutors who lived through that period:

> "Today, the failure of the state of Guatemala.… a failure to create genuine public policies that are specifically geared towards the eradication of all the different forms of violence…. Remember, it was the historic struggle of… women's and feminist movements… to create SEPREM… there was never any political will from the state, no, that was the initiative of organisations of women, not the state. The same goes with the creation of the Institute for the Defence of Indigenous Women. All of the institutional framework, all of the mechanisms for the advancement of *Guatemaltecas* in the mark of fulfilling the Peace Accords… has been the [results of the] historic struggles of women. Now, presently with this government there is a real regression... across all of that institutional framework." (Interviewee 3, 21.01.14)

SEPREM was initiated in 2000 under the administration of Alfonso Portillo (2000 – 2004) of the Guatemalan Republican Front Party, following an initial period of Constitutional and legislative reform between 1985-1999. In her study of the post-1986 democratisation period in Guatemala, Berger notes that SEPREM was part of a package of 'post war' changes that "paradoxically [gave] women some more rights and legal basis for claiming them, while creating the foundation of neocitizenship for Guatemalan women" (2006: 46- 55). In theory, but according to feminist interlocutors, only intermittently in practice, SEPREM has provided a pathway through which women's groups have built state capacity and, however tenuously, engaged in a dialogue with representatives of the Executive Branch (eg., Interviewee 19, 11.02.14). For feminists in Guatemala, a crucial entry point of interlocution with the state during SEPREM's nascent stages of development was in the struggle to (re)define the contours of women's rights, especially in relation to gendered violence and citizenship in the 'post war' era (Interviewee 19, 11.02.14). Yet, as feminist interlocutors explained, the processes of neoliberalisation that paralleled democratisation in Guatemala profoundly undermined the movement's ability to articulate "peacetime" policies and legislation on gender violence in ways that kept the object of intervention (namely, domestic and other forms of violence against women, including femicide) within a politicised framework (Interviewee 2, 18.11.13). The problem, one feminist academic offered, is that within the context of "post war

reforms", "visualizing violence against women as a *social* problem" goes against the grain of neoliberal democratisation (Interviewee 2, 18.11.13). Namely, the reconfiguration of political and social relations engendered by neoliberal restructuring limits the discursive field of transformative action— "depoliticising" social problems like "peacetime" gendered violence through an ideological occlusion of the persistent structural inequalities of power which make that violence both possible and normalised (Alvarez 1999; Boesten 2010a, 2014). Indeed, the "dialectical trajectory" (Berger 2006: 98) between (struggles against) violence and neoliberal imperatives produces the kinds of tensions I suggest circulate within the government's VIF framework, wherein the logic of political intervention engenders a focus on "the family" alongside individualized forms of accountability. In other words, violence gets "pathologized", individualized, and depoliticised, and "solutions" get located at the procedural or moral, rather than structural level.

Certainly, despite varying degrees of feminist representation in the leadership roles of SEPREM since its inauguration, both the institutional and legal architecture underwriting its strategic focus are widely perceived as sites for the depoliticisation and neoliberalisation of women's rights (Interviewee 2, 15.01.14, 15.01.14; Interviewee 10, 30.01.14; Interviewee 13, 02.02.14; Interviewee 14, 02.02.14). This interpretation tempers some of my earlier assumptions that the political and ideological imperatives undergirding the VIF frame are 'new' developments under the Patriot Party's rule. Interrogating my claim of a 'shift' through a (recent) historical lens brings into clear view some of the elements of the Guatemalan state's privatising-depoliticising regulation of gendered violence through the recent democratic and 'post war' transitions (Godoy-Paiz 2008).

It is important to highlight that much of the legal architecture through which institutions like SEPREM coordinate public policies is likewise steeped in conservative and patriarchal terms (Berger 2006). This suggests that the ideological contours of the Patriot Party's VIF frame resonate across an institutional and temporal context that extends beyond Molina's administration (Interviewee 2, 18.11.13; Interviewee 7, 23.01.14). Indeed, as has been pointed out, the Guatemalan Constitution (1985) defines gender through essentialist biological terms and situates its focus on the nuclear family (Berger 2006: 43). Further still, the 1996 Law to

Prevent, Sanction and Eradicate Intra-Family Violence (Decree 97-1996, the "Domestic Violence Law") and the Law for the Dignity and Integral Promotion of Women (Decree 7-1999) (Musalo et al. 2010), both approved under Alvaro Arzu's government (1996 – 2000), define women in relation to their families and frame women's rights in neoliberal terms that concentrate the focus on what women can do for themselves, rather than what the state can (and should) do for women (Berger 2006: 46-51; Drysdale Walsh 2008). Further evidence that the deployment of "*violencia intrafamiliar*", rather than "*violencia contra la mujer*", was a political impetus informing the discursive-policy framework of Guatemalan politics long before the Patriot Party's tenure, feminist and women's rights activists note that the "Domestic Violence Law" only passed through Congress after the language of VCM was replaced with VIF. This move obscured the language of the regional Convention it was modelled after[15], while "subtlety" depoliticising the substantive content of the Law's objects of intervention (Berger 2006: 47). Perhaps, rather than thinking along the lines of an aberrant change in political coordinates, it is more apt to postulate that across the 'post war' years of legal and democratic reforms, Guatemalan women and gendered violence have been "redefined" (ibid.) in ways that largely resonate with the coordinates of the VIF frame that I have identified within the Patriot Party's discursive-policy framework. These earlier developments should therefore be regarded as important antecedents to the regulatory strategies around gendered violence under the Molina administration.

Despite these precursors, tracing the genealogy of the discursive-policy framework of VIF from 1996, (when the Peace Accords were signed and when the Domestic Violence Law was passed), to what is now, at the time of writing, the fourth year of Molina's rule (and more than seven years since the Law Against Femicide was passed), suggests a more concrete consolidation of the VCM-VIF shift than under the four previous 'post war' administrations**.** With the women's movement spearheading the widening purview of this legal scaffolding for violence against women in the democratisation period (Godoy Paiz 2008), Molina's administration has had to rely

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[15] The Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment, and Eradication of Violence Against Women, ("Convention of Belem do Para") which went into force in 1995 (Musalo et al. 2010: 191).

heavily on using SEPREM as a strategic site (and, indeed, has utilized the institution's leadership as an instrument) for the ideological policy consolidation around recognising only domestic, or "family" violence, rather than violence against women, as a "theme" requiring state intervention (Interviewee 13, 02.02.14).

According to several interviewees, the use of SEPREM as a strategic site for consolidating hegemonic imperatives of ruling administrations has reached unprecedented levels under the Patriot Party (eg., Interviewee 20, 11.02.14). Indeed, whereas in past administrations, SEPREM has been headed by women directly connected with progressive elements of feminist and (post)revolutionary movements[16] (Berger 2006: 55), Molina, in one of his first acts as President, appointed Elizabeth Quiroa, a woman known to have close ties with elite political sectors of Guatemala, and the notoriously conservative Catholic order of Opus Dei (Interviewee 2, 18.11.13; Interviewee 13, 02.02.14). Even more crucially, investigations into Quiroa's political affiliations have established that she has been linked to the Patriot Party since it was founded (CMI 2014: 61). One feminist activist active with the Left-wing insurgency in the late 80s, and who has been working with civil society movements since the peace process began in 1996 to push the different administrations to accept greater accountability in relation to women's rights, expanded on why she understood the years of Molina's Patriot Party to have been some of the most damaging:

> "… the underlying problem is that there's been a process to deconstruct the democratic institutions created after the Peace Accords… towards an authoritative approach… an authoritative outlook, a militaristic outlook of the state…. So there is an authoritative approach to power whereby [they say] 'I don't need to consult with anyone'. That is also transferred to the institutional level… for gender equality, especially within SEPREM… So… it's really been a serious problem. They have eliminated the mechanisms for dialogue that we've had in the past... But it goes beyond the elimination of the organizational points of dialogue… it also has to do with the use of this institutional framework in favour of the political policies of the governing Party. Because these institutions were not created for that, they were created to defend the interests of women. But we can see how… these institutions have practically been converted into public relations office for

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[16] Such as Dr. Lili Caravantes under President Alfonso Portillo, and Sonia Escobedo under President Alvaro Colom.

the government… Totally separated from the defence of women's interests." (Interviewee 19, 11.02.14)

One crucial factor that shifted the ideological and policy terrain of SEPREM was precisely Molina's controversial decision to change the selection process for the Secretariat's leadership, which brought Quiroa to power. Whereas previously the selection was made amongst a series of candidates put forward by a cross-section of the feminist and women's movement(s), under the new regulations, the President was empowered to unilaterally choose its leader (Prensa Libre 2012a). Interlocutors I spoke with highlighted the anti-democratic consequences of his decision. Firstly, they highlighted the *disarticulation* of several core state and non-state anti-violence against women networks such as CONAPREVI (the National Coordinator for the Prevention of Interfamilial Violence and Violence Against Women) and the REDNOVI (Network of Non-Violence Against Women)— particularly through the comprehensive draining of financial and human resources, but also, importantly, through the denigration of the ideas, and women, behind these networks within the governments' political rhetoric (Interviewee 13, 02.02.14; Interviewee 14, 02.02.14;). These processes severed some of the vital points of dialogue and policy conciliation between the state and women's groups across civil society (Interviewee 28, 23.02.15), and sent a clear message to interlocutors across feminist and women's social justice circles that SEPREM was being geared towards the Patriot Party's own imperatives (Interviewee 13, 02.02.14).

Relatedly, interlocutors noted the comprehensive *articulation* of SEPREM's strategic agenda in harmony with the discursive-policy framework of the Patriot Party under Quiroa's leadership (Interviewee 14, 02.02.14). For example, in focusing SEPREM's efforts towards (neoliberal) development-related issues, Quiroa helped spearhead the decline of the institution's (at least discursive) emphasis on femicide and 'other' forms of violence against women. In an extraordinary display of ideological congruence with Molina's administration, SEPREM's violence-related policies were absorbed into the "Operational Plan for Development", which forms an explicit axis of the Patriot Party's governance agenda (Interviewee 2, 15.01.14, 15.01.14).

The explicit manifestation of the VIF frame in SEPREM's policy framework suggests that the government is consolidating its strategy of recasting *violencia contra la mujer*

in terms of *violencia intrafamiliar* in one of the key sites where understandings of, and responses to, gendered violence are regulated. Notably, the most recent anti-violence campaign on the home page of SEPREM's website[17] discards any remnants of previous references to "VIF *and other forms of violence against women"*: the graphic simply reads, "*Violencia Intrafamiliar*" and then provides the number for a direct phone line, presumably for women wishing to report domestic violence.

It is crucial to situate this narrow appeal to victims of VIF in relation to SEPREM's singular focus on a program for gendered violence that is linked to the Domestic/Interfamilial Violence Law (1996), rather than to the Femicide Law (2008). Indeed, the only explicit violence-related programme referenced on SEPREM's government website is PROPEVI ("Programa Para la Prevencion de Violencia Intrafamiliar", or Programme for the Prevention of Domestic/Interfamilial Violence), of which the main objective is cited as "improving the quality of life of families… within the framework of preventing and attending to domestic violence" (SEPREM n.d). The marked resonance of this narrative with the Patriot Party's "Strong" and "Safe Families" proposals outlined earlier corroborates the claims and concerns of women's and social justice interlocutors I spoke with. The congruence is so pronounced, in fact, that a series of media campaign videos posted to SEPREM's website under the title, "I love life, I promote peace" (SEPREM 2014a), mirror the Patriot Party's strategy of engulfing calls to end domestic violence within the imperative to have "healthy families and homes" for children; and further still, of limiting the idea of the promotion of peace in Guatemala to the eradication of interfamilial violence within "dysfunctional" homes. The latter examples once again recall the ideological contours of social investment approaches discussed previously. Here, the objects of intervention for gender (in)equality and violence materialise within a heteronormative patriarchal framework— one which is also inextricably classed and racialised (Nelson 1999: chapter 6). The horizon of protection is therefore located at the parameters of "the family" and "the children", rather than of women's rights (Boesten 2014: 136-142; Gideon and Molyneux 2012).

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[17] SEPREM Home page [WWW] Gobierno de Guatemala. Available from: http://seprem.gob.gt/ [Accessed 13.09.14]

SEPREM's ideological collusion with the Patriot Party's normative schema for regulating gendered violence is likewise conspicuous in the public service announcements Quiroa made to mark the 8th of March (International Women's Day) and the 25th of November (International Day to End Violence Against Women) in 2014. In the first announcement, Quiroa frames the significance of the day in relation to women being or becoming empowered to better themselves and their lives, "for themselves". Her statement further specifies where women's struggles should be directed, and why women deserve 'this day':

> "… to you, who gives love to your family, to you, who dedicates your time and your patience [to them]… fight for your family, fight for your life, fight for yourself, because you're worth it, because you are a woman, and because you are special."(SEPREM 2014b)

The discursive reference to a woman's central role in her family establishes the limits of what 'kind' of Guatemalan woman is being interpellated within Quiroa's address: she is a (heterosexual) wife, she is a committed mother, and from there she derives her value. Drawing back on my earlier discussion of the white-*ladina* mother as "the culturally ideal vessel of the Guatemalan family" (Casaús Arzú 2007) embedded within the Patriot Party's discursive-policy VIF framework of "Safe and Strong Homes", I suggest that Quiroa's message similarly makes an implicit call to the conservative-religious figure of the woman who frames herself, and her daily work and struggles, in relation to her family (Nelson 1999: 216-218). Moreover, when understood in these terms, invoking the notion of "patience" could be read as an implicit appeal to women to tolerate violence or abuse within the domain of their lives, their families, and their homes. Taking into account the moral and political framework for violence within which Quiroa's statement is situated, it seems reasonable to interpret her statement as representing a couched request for women to tolerate violence in order to salvage the nuclear family. While open to alternative interpretations, this message can also be discerned in comments that Vice President Baldetti has similarly made alongside President Molina on women's "special" resilience in relation to *violencia intrafamiliar*. In the mark of the "Safe Families" campaign, Baldetti stated that because Guatemalan women "are mothers", they are "disposed to defend the life of [their] children" within the family (Partido Patriota 2010), a statement which strongly evokes the patriarchal and heteronormative

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overtones of neoliberal gendered citizenship as family-centric, and women as "resilient".

If doubts remain about the contraction of the scope of the 'types' of victims and violence(s) being contemplated by the VIF frame, and the conjunction between SEPREM's discursive-ideological "limit point" (Fischer and Benson 2006) for gendered violence with the Patriot Party's framework, Quiroa's message to women on 25th November of 2014 reads like a passage from the government's Strategic Plan (Partido Patriota 2011) in relation to "*violencia intrafamiliar*":

> "… above all, you should not allow it that you suffer violence inside of your nuclear family. You have to do your best to fight violence, and you have to teach your sons and your daughters that violence is not the way to get things; but rather, that it is through dialogue, negotiation, conciliation, and respect…" (SEPREM 2014c)

Foregrounded, once again, is the nuclear family, and the heterosexual wife/mother's central role in its healthy reproduction. Violence within the context of that family emerges as a kind of "nuisance" which threatens the integrity of this family ideal—indeed, an almost peripheral "nuisance" that can be appeased through (non-political) strategies of discussion and compromise. And while expressed in terms that hint at a women's right to live a life free from violence, Quiroa's statement is laced with the neoliberal grammar of a victim's role in preventing and stopping any violence exercised against her, as well as her duty to ensure the emergence of future generations who understand that violence is not "the way". Incredibly, on this symbolic day in the battle to eradicate violence against women, she does not make reference to femicide or gendered violence outside of the spatiality of the nuclear family home—this, despite a study released in the same time frame which put 2014 amongst the "most" violent years for women in Guatemala since the 'post war' period began (Ramirez et al. 2014)

Like the Patriot Party's VIF discursive-policy framework, I suggest that SEPREM's failure to make any direct reference to femicide and other forms of violence against women is part of a strategic effort to situate the issue of gendered violence in profoundly conservative terms of the nuclear family and heterosexual couple. Within the confines of this account of gendered violence, responsibility and accountability

are cast according to neoliberal injunctions for self-reliance (call the VIF helpline to report; be courageous and do not allow your husband to hit you) and individual blame (the violent husband is morally bankrupt, irresponsible, or even monstrous; the victim failed her children by not reporting the violence) (Interviewee 13, 02.02.14). Furthermore, this interpersonal frame dislocates the role of the state as a *perpetrator of violence* (Boesten 2012) by obscuring the structural support networks of systemic impunity for femicide (Lagarde y de Los Rios 2010). It therefore also obscures the Guatemalan government's lack of political will for investigating (both VIF and non-VIF) cases of violence against women and femicide— simultaneously obscuring its duty in relation to *preventing violence* through positive prevention and eradication measures.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have sought to chart what I refer to as a 'VIF' discursive formation within the Patriot Party's regulation of femicide and gendered violence, and to consider its implications for the contemporary politics of (mis)recognition. Using the springboard of the contextual and ideological parameters of "El Caso Siekavizza", I then proceeded to illustrate the ways in which the shift from VCM to VIF has become consolidated at the institutional level under the PP— including within branches of the state which are meant to function independently on behalf of women's rights. I explored how the VIF formation produces a neoliberal and moralising injunction around domestic violence, within which the latter is conceptualised as a private and individual, rather than inherently political, problem. We saw that, in championing "the family", the VIF frame re-inscribes the racial, class, and sexuality contours of the ideal (Guatemalan) family unit, and particularly the wife/mother at its centre, with a consequent differentiation in relation to the visibility and recognition of "domestic" or "private" femicide victims. I furthermore suggested that the VIF framework procures the (mis)recognition of the historical, structural, and intersectional nature of femicide, and relegates the problem to a privatised-depoliticised sphere.

Examining the discursive-policy terrain of the VIF framework partially discloses the normative boundaries engendered by the Patriot Party and SEPREM's narrow appeal to victims of domestic violence. By ideologically addressing "the family" and the wife/mother within it, and by furthermore spatially centring on the ostensibly private

domain of the household, the VIF frame lays important normative scaffolding for the regulatory practices which I suggest work productively to differentiate subjects of femicidal violence. Although this chapter has suggested important links with the efforts to mobilise and consolidate a VIF frame and the emergence of "El Caso Siekavizza" as a politically 'recognisable' and socially 'emblematic' femicide in Guatemala, chapter 5 further develops this analysis in order to elucidate the ways in which the discursive and policy recognition of VIF-related femicide is ideological and, crucially, hierarchical.

Chapter 5 – An Emblematic VIF Femicide and the Politics of *"las otras Cristinas"*

"The case belongs not only to the Siekavizza family, it is the case of all of the people of Guatemala." (Cruz 2014)

Introduction

Building off of the previous chapter's analysis of the Patriot Party's consolidation of a 'VIF' frame in its regulation of femicidal violence, the following chapter turns to the performative staging of "El Caso Siekavizza" in order to chart the discursive production of what has been widely marked as an "emblematic" femicide in Guatemala. As I have argued thus far, gendered violence works as a productive force in relation to the consolidation of hegemonic political imperatives—such as policies that effectively depoliticise and privatise domestic violence. However, regulatory practices do not work in isolation to materialise difference and consolidate exclusion: gendered violence is likewise productive of the very subjects/bodies that get constituted relationally according to norms of cultural intelligibility. Butler's (2010: 8) conceptualisation of how bodies come to materialise as "recognisable" through discursive practices bears enormously on this chapter's consideration of how Cristina's disappearance emerges as an emblematic femicide case. Indeed, it is precisely in asking the Althusserian question (introduced in relation to Butler's thinking in chapter 3) of "to what set of interpellating calls" Cristina responds to— whether as a subject of violence, as a(n) (absent) body, or as an "emblematic" femicide case—that I suggest we are able to carve out a space to critically address the Patriot Party government and mainstream media's deployment of "El Caso Siekavizza". This question also opens a conceptual pathway for exploring the politics of "the other Cristinas" (Interviewee 4, 03.02.14), drawing out what I conceptualise as a kind of 'differentiated disposability' within a complex 'femicide victim hierarchy'.

The aim of this chapter is therefore to more explicitly dissect the materialisation of "El Caso Siekavizza" according to the coordinates of a private sphere VIF femicide, by tracing the field of narratives, or different "instances of discursive production" (Foucault 1978: 12), that surfaced during field work and across a broad range of textual and visual materials. In analysing the kind of productive work that (the representation of) Cristina's body is doing within the discursive economy of gendered

violence in Guatemala, I propose that the processes by which "El Caso Siekavizza's" 'contextual coordinates' materialise within mainstream political and media narratives ensure that Cristina emerges as a consequential death (if not life) "within the communicative sphere of Guatemalan civil society" (Benson et al. 2008: 43). I draw upon the concept of "scopic regimes" (Gregory 2013; Mulvey 1975), which can be mobilised to understand the way in which the state and mainstream media's "agendas and techniques of political visualisation" condition subjects' visibility according to racial, class, and other exclusionary schema (Kleinman 2000: 231). By exploring the discursive codes and "aesthetic labour" (Torres 2014) used to bring Cristina into the domain of recognition, I argue that the performative staging of this case is linked to a wider moral economy of differentiated and (mis)recognised gendered violence.

This chapter therefore puts the wider political-policy context produced through the VIF framework in direct conversation with "El Caso Siekavizza", and, specifically, with the hegemonic— as well as counterhegemonic— narratives that have emerged in response to it. In tracing the performative staging of this case, I am especially interested in developing lines of analysis that lend themselves to understanding the widespread political and societal investment in Cristina's disappearance— an investment which is (at least discursively) mirrored in the Patriot Party government's on-going engagement with the case. Here, drawing upon my earlier discussions of the ideological scaffolding produced by the VIF frame, I move into a discussion of the "imbrication of race and class" (Nelson 1999: 207) in the politics of 'private sphere' gendered violence and death. I propose that "El Caso Siekavizza" reveals the racialised and classed demarcations that cast some femicide victims—even if only tenuously— within a domain of cultural intelligibility, and which therefore differentiate or exclude others. Importantly, while recognising that this particular femicide case is notable in terms of the sheer level of mainstream contemplation it has engendered, I nonetheless try to maintain some productive tension in relation to its "exceptional" nature by drawing attention to a range of other femicide cases across the war-post war period.

In an effort to explore the possibilities for a transformative re-framing of the case, and others like it, this chapter also explores how feminist and social justice interlocutors have attempted to interrupt and rework the hegemonic narrative governing "El Caso

Siekavizza" by challenging both the VIF frame through which it materialises, as well as by troubling the politics of "the other Cristinas" (a reference to Guatemala's "other" femicide victims). By drawing from a field of narratives from feminist activists, lawyers, journalists, photographers, and social justice interlocutors whose accounts I situate in the domain of counter hegemonic discourse, my analysis strives towards a critical rereading of "El Caso Siekavizza". Such a rereading of the performative staging of this case, and of the dominant frames of perception that materialise within and through it, might help disclose the constraints and/or possibilities that 'post war' domestic violence femicides hold for generating accounts of contemporary femicidal violence in Guatemala that are historically and structurally *articulated*. "Articulated", in other words, gestures at the production of partial accounts and descriptions (Haraway 1991) which foreground the *relations* between the victims and bodies of femicidal violence, and, in refusing to treat cases as individual events grounded in moral problems, might forge pathways to novel understandings of this violence (Nelson 1999: 3). In trying to re-articulate what I argue are deeply political linkages between *domestic violence femicides* and forms of structural violence and historical inequalities, this critical re-reading of "El Caso Siekavizza" thus moves against the current of the VIF frame that I suggest circulates in hegemonic articulations of private gendered violence.

Beyond the observation that the case 'fits' within the hegemonic political-policy imperative of the VIF frame discussed in chapter 4, I propose that Cristina emerges as a meaningful victim in large part due to "classificatory logics" which guide the interpretation of subjects of violence (Benson 2008: 596; Butler 2010: 8). I aim to show that Cristina's disappearance (and presumed femicide) emerges *as a femicide*— and, a politically relevant and culturally emblematic one at that—in large part because her case, and her body, materialises in ways that conform to gendered and racialised regulatory ideals. It is not only that Cristina is (at least partially) *recognised* within the discursive and visual representations of the state and the mainstream media. What matters—and what I suggest needs to be interrogated— is that she is *recognisable*. As one women's rights interlocutor noted on the relationship between racialisation and recognition, "El Caso Siekavizza" demonstrates how the gaps between victims emerge by way of ideological interpellations pervasive in, though not specific to, Guatemala: "here one can see how class continues to weigh [on victims], how family

continues to weigh, right? How cronyism matters, right?" (Interviewee 3, 21.01.14).
Indeed, left pending in the hegemonic narrative framing—and what I propose then
gets mobilised within the field of counter discourses—are precisely the tensions
concerning why and how the life/death, face/body, image and story of a victim such
as Cristina emerges in Guatemala.

In order to account for the practices which allow this case to emerge as comparatively
significant in a country with an on-going history of widespread gendered violence and
disappearances, I insist on the need to foreground the conjunctions between the
discourses linked to femicide, and the contemporary field of political and policy
practices (in this case, the VIF frame). To paraphrase Foucault (1978: 44), we need to
ask: what historical conditions and relations enable "El Caso Siekavizza" to emerge?
In working through the range of government, mainstream media, and
counterhegemonic narratives circulating in relation to "El Caso Siekavizza", this
chapter therefore explores the following questions: What racial, class, and gender
constraints get crystallised when Cristina is framed using discursive codes such as
"mother", "wife", or "beautiful", and as a victim of *violencia intrafamiliar*? What
cultural criteria get reproduced in the aesthetics of her visual framing in the media
through the conduit of the face? (Torres 2014). What other victims of gendered
violence are contemplated within the discursive economy of Cristina's disappearance
and presumed femicide? Who is left out or cast in an abjected zone of "nothingness",
a "zone of death"? (Stanley 2011: 10). Who "vascillates between" the zone of
recognised and repudiated humanity and why? (Butler 2010: 77).

Hegemonic Narratives on "El Caso Siekavizza": The Discursive Production of an Emblematic VIF Femicide

"Remember that both the President [Molina] and the Vice-President [Roxana Baldetti] participated in that whole process [of Cristina's case] … the state put itself in a clear position in relation to the problem. So, this means that the current Government of Guatemala is against this [femicide/impunity for femicide] … look, there is a position now." (Interviewee 11, 31.01.14)

When interviewed by reporters shortly after the capture of Roberto Barreda, President
Molina said two things that I consider paramount to this discussion. First, when
pushed to reflect on the perceptions of "some members of civil society" that Cristina's
case has received special treatment relative to "the others", he stated that while "El

Caso Siekavizza" is an "emblematic case", he agreed that all disappearances/ femicides should receive the same response. To this end, Molina offered that his administration has been strengthening its capacities in this field with the advent of the "Security Task Forces" (of which there is a specific Femicide Unit—a subject I return to in the next chapter). This led to Molina's second important claim: he articulated the capture of Barreda and the rescue of the two children as "a response of the state" (Gobierno de Guatemala 2013e).

Significantly, by framing responsibility—indeed, *credibility*—in relation to the state's actions, I would suggest that Molina reveals a clear desire to situate "El Caso Siekavizza" as a gendered violence case (and the 'event' of Barreda's capture) within the domain of political relevance. Of course, this is neither a 'new' performative practice under the Molina administration, nor specific to the Guatemalan context. It is well understood that gender and violence (both separately and together) have historically been thematic sites of "strategic manipulation" for "political purposes"; indeed, this exercise is not limited by geographic or temporal boundaries (Berger 2006: 98).

In light of my earlier discussion of the PP's increasing deployment of a VIF frame, which I claim helps consolidate a wider imperative to privatise and depoliticise gendered violence, it might be easy to simply cast the government's desire to 'take ownership' of this case in relation to its compatibility with the coordinates of 'private sphere' domestic violence. However, this reading would largely obscure the weight that other ideological coordinates of "El Caso Siekavizza" carry in relation to why Cristina materialises as a recognisable subject of violence across the national body politic, and furthermore, as to why the case itself emerges as "emblematic" within political and mainstream media narratives.

To recall a point made earlier, under the Molina administration's discursive-policy framework, the nuclear family (with the implied reproductive and heterosexual couple) is framed as the site within which gendered violence is 'bred', so to speak. Importantly, this does not signify a feminist (re)reading of the home as an overlooked space in which patriarchal violence is exercised (Sassen 1997: 30). On the contrary, as I have suggested, the PP's narrative framing of violence should be situated in relation

to wider imperatives to obscure the structural and symbolic forms of violence that exist in the public domains of everyday life in Guatemala. These can moreover be linked to political strategies to disarticulate the central role that the state has played as a perpetrator of violence and, in theory, to the role that it *should* play in eradicating this violence. Furthermore, emphasising the "role of the family" precisely concentrates *violencia intrafamiliar* within the domain of individual problems, while making it a relatively 'safe' and politically instrumental issue for the Patriot Party to take up (Interviewee 14, 02.02.14). Indeed, in "Rise up for Life", one of his first public events as President of Guatemala, Molina made the following comment:

> "we [Guatemalans] want to break the cycle of violence… we want to begin with *violencia intrafamiliar*…. Which is how, which is where this culture of violence [in Guatemala] begins and is generated." (Emisoras Unidas 2012)

Now, as has already been noted, several women's rights and social justice interlocutors explain the PP's narrative framing of violence against women in terms of *violencia intrafamiliar* as a practice which references gendered violence as a depoliticised "theme" rather than a social problem. As suggested, these consistent discursive references to *violencia intrafamiliar* in relation to the topic of gendered violence can be understood according to the Foucauldian notion of "regulative discourses" and Butlerian interpretation of "the productive power of repetitive performance" (Boesten 2010a: 4). Notably, domestic violence is firmly embedded in the discursive regime at play in many of Molina's speeches and in the Patriot Party government's Strategic Plan. Moreover, as I showed earlier, the VIF frame has also emerged as central to the Presidential Secretariat for Women's (SEPREM) discursive-policy framework since the appointment of Elizabeth Quiroa to the institution's leadership position (Interviewee 14, 02.02.14).

The practice of articulating (the theme of) domestic violence as a political (party) priority suggests that within hegemonic narratives linked to the government's deployment of gendered violence, *violencia intrafamiliar* is being relegated to a domain of the forms of violence that the state considers "seeable" and "recognisable" (Feldman 2000: 49; Winter 2012: 200). In a somewhat paradoxical way then, VIF is 'political' and yet depoliticised (by way of the individualizing neoliberal injunctions

discussed in part one). As I developed in an earlier section, this narrative framing procures a field of visibility for gendered violence that "dislocates the political economy and social landscape" within which violence in general, and femicide in particular, take place and thrive (Springer 2010: 946-7; Weissman 2010).

However, the discursive emergence of a case like Cristina's is not only possible due to (nor is it solely driven by) political and policy imperatives; moral and cultural codes weave themselves complexly into both state and mainstream media (representational) regimes of violence (Torres 2014). It is not just "El Caso Siekavizza" that is (mis)recognisable within the terms of the VIF frame of private-sphere violence— enclosed within the spatiality of the home, and in relation to the actions of subjects of the nuclear family within it. The case is 'visible' to (and its materialisation is arguably facilitated by) interlocutors within the government and the mainstream media, who continue to offer support to the family, and to report and comment upon its developments. At the level of representation, Cristina emerges as a victim of gendered violence who is a political priority to the state (at least rhetorically), and who is not "disposable" to the mainstream media (indeed, her story would need to be considered highly profitable, or "palatable" to the public, to receive so much front page coverage) (Interviewee 3, 21.01.14).

Still, must we not also attend to the notion that *Cristina herself* is 'seen'—'visible', and 'recognisable'? Admittedly, this observation needs to be held in suspense in light of the political imperatives already illuminated, which might suggest to us that *any* victim of a VIF- related disappearance or femicide could emerge as a subject that 'matters' within sites of hegemonic power in Guatemala. The 2014 murder of Mitzie Alejandra Sanchez-Makepeace, a 24 year-old Guatemalan woman killed (presumably) by her husband, has been repeatedly invoked as "another Caso Siekavizza". The case indeed shares many of the ideological coordinates of Cristina's: like the latter, Mitzie emerges as a young mother and wife who suffered at the hands of a controlling and violent man (Diario La Hora 2014). Crucially, while her lifeless body was found shortly after she went missing, and her husband is potentially facing prosecution within a femicide tribunal (Ministerio Publico 2014a) it is worth highlighting that, like Cristina, Mitzie likewise is consistently represented through the medium of her face and through photos that animate her (liveable) life. Indeed, as I delineated earlier,

the government in question specifically interpellates victims of *violencia intrafamiliar*, like the latter, within its discursive-policy framework for gendered violence[18].

While acknowledging the various institutional appeals to domestic violence victims within regulations of femicide is a necessary component of this analysis, policy imperatives alone are insufficient for understanding the contours of Cristina's materialisation. In a particularly interesting exchange, a feminist human rights activists who also works within the Public Ministry commented on my suggestion that only *violencia intrafamiliar* femicides seemed to attract the attention of government, or mainstream media, interlocutors. In her account, this interlocutor powerfully qualified the productive force of the VIF frame's hegemony:

> "… well yes, but the reality is that you need to be from the
> upper classes to become visible through that VIF framework,
> because there are thousands of other such femicides that don't
> receive the same attention [as Cristina]. That's one of the
> ways that *violencia intrafamiliar* [cases] get disarticulated"
> (Interviewee 27, 19.02.15).

I would suggest that the reference to "the upper classes" in this account could be read as overflowing with meanings that are not explicitly ascertainable within the concept of "class". While the question of what, precisely, is getting conjured up when interlocutors cite the class of a (this) femicide victim is certainly open to interpretation, there was notably a wide field of feminist and social justice interlocutors who gave form to this idea of the "weight" that class carries in the representation of victims (Interviewee 3, 21.01.14; Interviewee 28, 23.02.15). One interlocutor, paralleling the account given above, insisted, "racism and class issues have a lot to do with it [the Siekavizza case's prominence]" (Interviewee 17, 06.02.14), to which a second interlocutor during the same exchange added: "yes especially when one considers the amount of other femicide cases that there are" (Interviewee 18, 06.02.14). Indeed, one way to figure this invocation of the "class imperative" for victims of *violencia intrafamiliar* femicide is to draw in my earlier discussion of the ideological nodes through which class is "raced" and gendered (and vice versa), and how this complex nexus is articulated in Guatemala (Gonzales

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[18] Although it is important to note that there is still resistance, even to VIF-related murders of women, being represented as *femicides* by state authorities (Ramirez et al. 2014).

Ponciano 2013; Nelson 1999: chapter 6). Doing so allows me to situate these aforementioned accounts in relation to the problem of a femicide victim's "social status": a discursive "limit point" (Benson et al. 2008) that I suggest works productively to explain (away) modes of regulatory power that differentiate the bodies of femicidal violence, while keeping them "mutually entangled" through the normative markers that stratify gendered life/death (Butler 1993a; Wilcox 2015: 164-5). Indeed, the trope of "social status" implicitly mobilises notions of class and race (Gonzales Ponciano 2013), and is thus a crucial node through which regimes of differentiation for femicide victims get re-inscribed.

The issues of "social status" came into play when interlocutors referenced the femicide of Mindy Rodas, wherein the victim's body, and indeed the case, materialised under vastly distinct terms from "El Caso Siekavizza" or, indeed, from that of Mitzie Alejandra Sanchez-Makepeace, despite also being situated within the domain of VIF-related violence (Interviewee 27, 19.02.15). The case of Mindy Rodas emerged in several exchanges, particularly as an object of comparison with that of Cristina Siekavizza (Interviewee 26, 18.02.15; Interviewee 29, 25.02.15; Interviewee 27, 19.02.15). A 23-year-old mother to a five-year-old son, Mindy Rodas was, in the words of some observers, "killed twice" (Hernandez 2011) by femicidal violence. Mindy was first victimised in a brutal June 2009 attack by her husband, who "beat her with a rock and attempted to remove her face by cutting off her forehead, nose, lips and chin" (Hurtado 2011). According to reports, the nature of the attack was precisely to leave her without a face, and thus *unmarkable* or unidentifiable once she was left for dead. Mindy, however, survived the attack, and, at the behest of women's rights groups in Guatemala (and then only later with the support of the then-President's wife, Sandra Torres and the Mexican consulate), she was taken to Mexico to undergo facial reconstructive surgeries. Prior to the completion of these procedures, however, Mindy fell into a depression and requested to return to Guatemala (Interviewee 26, 18.02.15). Significantly, it was feminist and women's organisations that mobilised to try and attract *international media* attention to Mindy's case, in their efforts to raise funds for the expensive surgeries (Hurtado 2011), as her case did not mobilise vast segments of Guatemalan political or civil society (Interviewee 27, 19.02.15). In what is notably referred to by social justice interlocutors as one of the more tragic and revealing cases of femicidal violence in Guatemala, on 18th December 2010, more

than a year after the initial attack against her, Mindy's body (along with that of another woman) was found "tortured and choked to death". Her body, unidentifiable and, thus, "unclaimed", was buried as "XX", or "Jane Doe", only later being discovered by her mother after a month of searching for Mindy's whereabouts (Hurtado 2011). While the extensive practices of overkill that were exercised against Mindy's face and body were noted by interlocutors reflecting upon this case, I suggest that one commentary, in particular, gives form to the idea that differentiations between victims such as Cristina Siekavizza and Mindy Rodas work through a nexus that is implicitly structured through gendered ideals, and racialised and classed norms:

> "Mindy's case was one of those cases that we tried to visibilise… and it did get some visibility and in some ways got treated as emblematic, [but] the contours of the case, and the context of how it ended, show the gap between victims of this violence. This is a question of status… of social status… she [Mindy] would have survived if she had the same status as Siekavizza." (Interviewee 27, 19.02.15)

Indeed, within the trajectory of gendered violence that led to their death/ disappearance, *both* subjects were victims of *violencia intrafamiliar*, both at the hands of husbands with whom they had children, but the materialisation of their cases, their bodies/faces, and stories, has proceeded along palpably different trajectories. In suggesting that the outcome of Mindy's case hinged on her (lack of) "social status", this narrative undercuts the explicit weight of the *violencia intrafamiliar* framework, instead inferring that racialised and classed norms within the field of (visible) victims of femicidal violence perform their own violent exclusions. Endeavouring to critically account for the political and cultural *weight* of Cristina's disappearance and presumed femicide within a field of hegemonic narratives, establishes the need to analytically interrogate tropes linked to "family commitment", "social status', or "social circle". The case of Mindy Rodas demonstrates what happens when these concepts surface within the discourses that attempt to account for the (differential) representations and outcomes of femicide cases ostensibly located within similar formations of gendered violence.

It is necessary to situate the figure of Cristina, and the frame of loss that her representation suggests, in relation to Guatemala's system of gendered ideological

differentiation, which rests in large part on controlling white-*ladina* women's bodies and sexuality[19] (Casaús Arzú 2007):

> "White-ladina women's bodies are the site for maintaining
> difference…. This suggests that gender is raced and race is
> gendered in particular ways in Guatemala. Bodies matter and
> are called upon to mark racial and other differences… but
> these categories of difference splatter with… contradictions."
> (Nelson 1999: 216, 222)

Indeed, the racism and classism legible in desires to maintain "purity of blood" through the control of white women's sexuality are central to gendered social imaginaries of the ladino elite in Guatemala (Nelson 1999: 215). As Casaús Arzú forcefully argues in her seminal work on the historical roots of racism in the Central American country (2007), and which Nelson later takes up in her analysis of the country's 'post war' body politics:

> "white-ladina women's sexuality [is] forcefully channelled
> through reproduction sanctioned by state and church. [Situated
> within] [t]he elite family, [is] the wife and mother at the
> center, reproducing for the line, the class, and the nation…"
> (1999: 218)

In order to arrive at an analysis of the government and mainstream media's deployment of the Siekavizza case, I argue that we must articulate the nexus between these kinds of gendered regulatory mechanisms, which differentiate women and gender roles in relation to racial and class markers, and the *mark of absence* that seems to be symbolically left when the (figurative) life and body of a subject contemplated by this ideological regime, is lost (Nelson 1999: 207). As delineated below, the performative staging of "El Caso Siekavizza" in narratives linked to the state and mainstream media implicitly appeals to this gendered "grammar of respectability [linking] race [and] class", thereby laying a symbolic scaffold which helps guide (differential) interpretations of violence and its victims (Nelson 1999: 226).

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[19] Similarly gendered constraints operating through race and class vectors have been traced in relation to Peruvian women's lives (Boesten 2010a, 2014), as well as in the North American context, where (neo)colonial discourses on sexuality are cited for historically placing white women as key propagators of structurally racist projects of nation-building (Smith 2005: 7-33).

Mainstream Media Narratives

Reflecting on the narratives that circulate in relation to "El Caso Siekavizza" in the mainstream media brings into sharp relief the productive power of the regulatory ideal of the white-*ladina* woman "in constructing scopic [and discursive] regimes of violence" in Guatemala (Torres 2014: 17). That Cristina materialises through the conduit of the face, and that her story is told within the confines of a soap opera-like recounting of her life alongside an abusive man, hints at the role of the mainstream media's "labour" in (re)producing hegemonic cultural and political imperatives in the 'post war' context.

Here, I draw on Prado and Hughes (2011: 109) in conceptualising the "mainstream" commercial media as one of the "primary communicative sphere[s]" for the reproduction of hegemony and "value cues". Particularly relevant is their observation that in Guatemala, as is widely true across Central America, the commercial media is intimately connected to oligarchic political powers and therefore largely operates to further entrench policy, as well as cultural imperatives, that structure interpretations and responses to violence and to peoples' social realities (2011: 110). In their analysis of the Guatemalan print media, Rockwell and Janus (2001: 106) have similarly shown how, in relation to both its concentrated ownership within the predominantly *ladino* oligarchy, as well as to the nature of its coverage, this medium is geared towards the consolidation of state and cultural hegemony. The undemocratic roots of the control and content of Guatemala's media has likewise been noted by in-country groups of journalists dedicated to transparency and "responsible reporting" (CERIGUA 2013).

I furthermore draw on Torres' (2014) detailed analysis of the Guatemalan print media's coverage of violence during the war period, in which she cites imperatives at the levels of political (market) and moral economy as driving (and constraining) the narrative framing of violence and its victims. In particular, Torres looks at the "aesthetic narratives" behind the images of violence taken by graphic photographers contributing to the popular daily, *Prensa Libre* (2014: 14). While she maintains her focus on the years preceding the 'post war' period, her identification of the economic and ideational criteria driving the labour behind representations of gendered violence provides a crucial framework for thinking through contemporary representations of victims' faces and/or bodies— hinting at the continuums, as well as the shifts, in the

discursive economy of gendered violence since the transition period(s). Torres' observations allow me to maintain some productive tension in relation to Cristina's representation in the mainstream media—which simultaneously relies on ideological norms in calling for her recognition, while situating these calls within market-driven criteria in order to commercially exploit a gendered figure that is "profitable" at least partly due to entrenched patriarchal structures (Carey and Torres 2010: 142; Torres 2014: 21).

We need to remain alert to the complexity of Cristina's representation, which enacts a frame of humanisation, while concurrently undercutting and limiting its possibilities by objectifying and exploiting the symbol of her face for political and commercial interests. I propose that we need to examine the mainstream media's commercial exploitation of "El Caso Siekavizza", alongside the Patriot Party's deployment of the case within the context of its *violencia intrafamiliar* political-policy imperative. In so doing we may be able to partially illuminate the dialectic between gendered moral codes, race, and class, and the mobilisation of political and cultural recognition for victims of femicidal violence in Guatemala.

In the empirical examples given below, I propose that Cristina—or rather, the face of Cristina— "slides into" (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 177) an ideological notion of the white-*ladina* woman at the core of the Guatemalan nation state and its culturally desirable social body (Carey and Torres 2010: 157). Without necessarily making direct reference to the race and class vectors through which her case has materialised, a range of moral and discursive codes gesturing towards this ideal surface within the media's interpellation of Cristina. In addition to marking her as a victim of *violencia intrafamiliar*, she emerges as a young and beautiful maternal figure, whose life was prematurely extinguished by a monstrous male figure (Interviewee 4, 03.02.14). It is these interpellations, I argue, that work through the aforementioned political policy imperatives linked to the VIF frame, to situate her as a victim worthy of justice—a lost life that deserved the protection of the state, and whose case must therefore not be left in impunity.

Prensa Libre's **"El Caso Siekavizza"**

The following examples are taken from *Prensa Libre*, Guatemala's most highly circulated daily newspaper (CERIGUA 2013; Torres 2014: 23). As I described in my Methodological Framework chapter, I reviewed each daily edition of the paper during my two stages of field research (October 2013 – February 2014 and January 2015 – February 2015). I furthermore accessed the online edition of the paper when I was outside of the country in my efforts to follow coverage of this (and other) femicide cases that came to form the objects of my analysis.

On the 7th of July 2012, the one-year mark of Cristina's disappearance, *Prensa Libre* published an editorial entitled "The painful case of Cristina Siekavizza" (Prensa Libre 2012b). Referring to "El Caso Siekavizza" as "part of our national story", the editorial cites the "exceptional" nature of the case in relation to the extensive public outrage and mobilisation of civil society it has generated. While acknowledging that it is "only one of the thousands of cases of family violence against women" perpetrated by "heartless men", the article situates societal responses in relation to indignation for the corruption perceived to be rife in the case.

In a more recent article framed as an analysis of impunity for the violent deaths of women in Guatemala, Cristina's case emerges within the first paragraph as the key symbol of impunity for femicide (Roesch 2014b). Interestingly, the article, entitled "Crimes without punishment", opens by offering an explanation as to why this case has gained such importance across Guatemalan civil society: firstly, because of the epidemic nature of *violencia intrafamiliar*, and, secondly, because the case reveals the high levels of corruption that exist within the state (as already noted, this is a reference to suspicions that Roberto Barreda's mother, an ex-President of the Supreme Court of Justice, assisted in covering up the murder). While there is perhaps a subtext within the opening account that hints at (and contests) alternative discourses which articulate the case's prominence in relation to the victims' subject coordinates (Interviewee 5, 23.01.14, 23.01.14), as in the aforementioned editorial, no direct reference is made to the racial or class directives driving Cristina's materialisation (Torres 2014: 16). A similar obviation is notable in the same newspaper's editorial several days after Barreda's capture: the article frames the widespread national "and without a doubt also some international attention" on the case in relation to its

symbolic representation of the thousands of other cases of extreme violence against women, and because of the connections between the accused and high positions of power within the justice system (Prensa Libre 2013b). Of course, these points are all valid. The concern here pertains to what is failing to get contemplated within the narrative being deployed to explain the "El Caso Siekavizza's" prominence— to what is getting obscured in these refusals to explicitly address, or grapple with, the weight that racial and class coordinates carry in the apprehension of gendered violence.

Another pertinent article is the somewhat curiously entitled "There was femicide" (Roesch 2014a). In it, the author claims that the media's insistence on (extensively) reporting on "El Caso Siekavizza" has been an instrumental component of the increasing consciousness of Guatemalan society about the "sad reality" of the country's high level of femicides, in which women are killed at the hands of "their partners". Notably, by recounting Barreda's first hearing, wherein he made his initial statement of innocence, insisting that "Cristina is still alive", the cues we are given in Roesch's article (2014a) focus our attention on the vile nature of a perpetrator cold enough to articulate such words in the presence of the victim's family. The sentiment that *Prensa Libre's* coverage of the case has been crucial to the project of 'waking' Guatemalans up to the reality of femicide and impunity was similarly echoed by a journalist who noted that, "the media [has] not let up pressure" against Barreda's family and his presumed accomplices (Interviewee 8, 29.01.14).

The concern here is two-fold. Firstly, there is a palpable continuity with earlier cited examples of violence against women and femicide collapsing into notions of domestic or partner violence within state and institutional discourses. Indeed, in these *Prensa Libre* articles, gendered violence discursively emerges in a similarly constricted fashion to the Patriot Party and SEPREM's VIF framework—with the requisite spatial (private) and subjective (heterosexual partner/ex-partner) coordinates for femicide that this implies. This is suggestive of Stanley's prescient analysis of the way in which "privatizing violence" works productively to heterosexualise "the national body and its trauma" (2011: 7). Further still, however, the narrow focus on subjectivity (Zizek 2008: 9), particularly in relation to perpetrators, delimits a thin field of responsibility/accountability for thinking through the problem of systemic

domestic violence and structurally unequal power relations – not to mention other forms of gendered violence outside the purview of the "domestic" frame (Crosby and Lykes 2011; Patterson-Markowitz et.al 2012; Rosser 2007).

In addition, and even more problematic, is the noticeable appropriation of "Si Hubo Genocidio" ("There Was Genocide") in the aforementioned article, which explicitly invokes (without actually referencing), a phrase used across parts of Guatemala's body politic to cite and symbolically castigate the state for its (on-going) role in (historic) violence and impunity. The problem is not, *de facto*, the deployment of this familiar phrase for the purposes of making a rhetorical rebuke to Barreda, and to those accused of covering up the crime of femicide. Rather, the concern is the extraordinary absence within the text of any reference to the genocide (and national trial) that has likewise been left in a condition of (juridical) impunity, though for far longer than "El Caso Siekavizza" (Burt 2015). This absence is all the more puzzling given the vital historical reference point, and arguably far richer context, that the genocide provides in relation to themes of injustice for (gendered) violence (Interviewee 19, 11.02.14)

In evading any reference to Guatemala's genocide and the ever-pending national trial[20], there is a notable congruence here in relation to how both mainstream media, and the key NGO co-plaintiff on the case, situate issues of impunity, corruption and traffic of influences. For example, in a televised interview alongside members of the Siekavizza family and the case's chief prosecutor from the PPO, the prominent director of the Survivor's Foundation framed the "emblematic" nature of "El Caso Siekavizza" in terms of Guatemalans' fight against impunity— asserting that the process of justice is not merely about punishing he who is responsible, but also about "establishing the truth about what happened" (Cruz 2014). The Foundation's director insisted that if impunity were to be broken in this case, a pathway to justice would be opened for many victims of violence. She furthermore maintained that insidious parallel powers within the political and legal domains have created obstacles which all but guarantee that no substantive progress on a trial to prosecute Barreda and his alleged accomplices will be made. Interestingly, this comment was ostensibly offered by the interviewee to corroborate another point she made: that those within civil

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[20] For on-going coverage of the stagnant trial and other key developments, see International Justice Monitor, part of the Open Society Justice Initiative (2015).

society who suggest that the Siekavizza case monopolises news coverage of violence and injustice need to consider that, despite this media attentiveness, it will still almost certainly remain in a condition of impunity. Like the aforementioned *Prensa Libre* articles, what is so puzzling about this failure to reference the genocide trial within the context of discussions about the impunity surrounding "El Caso Siekavizza", is that each theme invoked in relation to the latter case fundamentally intersects with themes of the former (Interviewee 3, 21.01.14).

But perhaps this disarticulated—and indeed, differentiated— impunity is not so puzzling, after all. I propose that this peculiar neglect of the coexisting genocide trial needs to be situated within the context of the thematic strands of (mis)recognition and *disarticulation* that have been identified in relation to discursive economies of (gendered and femicidal) violence in Guatemala. Feminist scholars analysing recent "exceptional" cases of sexual violence in India note that mainstream media representations play a performative role in the process of exceptionalising and confirming that violence against particular gendered subjects "matters" more than the violence against those who do "not as easily fit the identity criteria that [can] outrage its middle-class citizens (Dutta and Sircar 2013: 298; Wilson 2015: 822-24). Noting the media's coverage of the widespread anti-rape protests that emerged in Dehli, across India, and internationally in response to the brutal gang rape and murder of an urban middle-class student, Jyoti Pandey, Dutta and Sircar argue that media representations:

> "… have the effect of erasing history, of exceptionalising… event[s] in a way that has the capacity to elide not only the rich lineage of feminist activism and struggles against sexual violence, but also the memories of several other, equally brutal experiences of violence against women from marginalized communities" (2013: 297)

Lending credence to my claim that the 'coordinates' of violence are paramount to the politics of victims' discursive emergence and representation, Dutta and Sircar discuss how during the protests for Pandey, the concurring rape, murder, and public "dumping" of the bodies of three minor siblings in the marginalized district of Maharashtra, failed to mobilise outrage, let alone attention, amongst the public or media. The authors suggest that this signals how "location and identity [are] essential

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qualifiers in determining who is worth being the subject of urban, middle-class concern and rage" (2013: 298).

Perhaps the issue that confronts us within these mainstream media narratives on "El Caso Siekavizza" is that both the *subjects* and *forms* of violence being contemplated influence how victims, and the injustices that they or their families experience(d), are differentiated within an "order of power" that is inescapably racialised and, I would insist, classed (Boesten 2014; Casaus Arzú 2007; Mbembe 2003: 12). In fact, within the "symbolic space" of "Guatemala's ethno-racial hierarchy" (Menjívar 2011:15) and mainstream meditations on violence, the primary subject of "El Caso Siekavizza" emerges as the recognisable and worthy "victim in the struggle for hegemony in suffering" (Zizek 2008: 3). Here we encounter a realisation of Boesten's "hierarchy within the exception" (2010a: 15): a life marked as worthy in relation to ideals of race, class, sexuality and nation, is simultaneously a death marked by a violent patriarchal and gendered differentiation which authorises that life's destruction (Menjívar 2011: 15).

Thus, the gap, and lack of articulation, between Cristina and those victims contemplated by the genocide trial, materialises by way of precisely the kinds of regulatory interpellations that I propose differentiate or obscure the "other Cristinas" (Interviewee 3, 21.01.14; Interviewee 7, 23.01.14; Interviewee 17, 06.02.14). Indeed, I would suggest that victims such as Cristina emerge by way of a complicated dialectic between: a case's contextual-cum-ideological coordinates (for example, a VIF femicide gets spatially located in the 'private' sphere), cultural norms of intelligibility (the victim discursively emerges as *ladina*, and thus "non indigenous" (Grandin 2000: 84)), and political-policy imperatives of the historical moment (such as neoliberal injunctions around gendered violence as a private/ised concern), casting her family's quest for justice within clear moral imperatives. Put simply, Cristina's life 'mattered': here, death/disappearance warrants (even demands) societal grief, and impunity surfaces as an injustice that must be rectified. These imperatives communicate to the wider Guatemalan society that impunity is unacceptable, and that establishing accountability for those responsible for Cristina's disappearance—an absence that is deeply marked— is essential. The dilemma does not exist, *de facto*, in the outrage and mobilisation of civil society to Cristina's presumed femicide and the

belief that traffic of powerful influences played a role in its cover-up; instead, it exists in the "selectivity" inherent to the representation of this case as exceptional, or exceptionally meaningful, to the wider society (Dutta and Sircar 2013: 299). As noted in relation to the differential responses to extreme forms of sexual violence and murder in India, the (representation of the) "extraordinary" response of civil society to particular cases of violence against middle-upper-class and caste urban women, contributes to the normalization of this same violence against "other" (more) marginalised women (Dutta and Sircar 2013: 299).

To further demonstrate the contours of the media's discursive framing of the case, we can look to a succession of celebratory articles published in *Prensa Libre* the week immediately following Barreda's high-profile capture on the 8th of November 2013. These make the disarticulation (or rather, missed-articulation) between different(iated) victims and gendered violences all the more palpable. In addition to once again situating "El Caso Siekavizza" within the terms of "*violencia intrafamiliar*", the narratives reveal the extent to which the wider social body is (presumed to be) emotionally affected by this case, and by the (loss of the) victim at its centre.

For example, *Prensa Libre's* editorial on the day immediately following Barreda's arrest boldly asserted in its headline that it was, "The most anticipated arrest of the year" (Editorial Prensa Libre 2013). While this proclamation is, in itself, questionable, it is useful to turn to the body of the text to explore the subtleties effecting the representation of the victim as worthy and, indeed, exceptional (Interviewee 3, 21.01.14; Interviewee 27, 19.02.15). Below, I quote a passage that illuminates the discursive codes of visibilisation and recognition, as well as the noticeable omissions, that emerge by way of representations of both Cristina's absence, and Roberto's capture:

> "The arrest of Barreda constitutes a *moral victory* for the many people… who have fought hard in order to clarify this case, and who won the support of thousands of people who held marches demanding justice, which is *unprecedented in the history of the country*. The presence of women in these demonstrations had among its reasons, and primarily, the fact that this is a case of femicide that proved that *domestic*

violence can, and does, occur at all levels of society."
(Editorial Prensa Libre 2013, emphasis added)

Leaving to one side the questionable accuracy of the claim that the social mobilisation around "El Caso Siekavizza" is "extraordinary", what warrants further analysis, is the observation that this narrative appears within a core site for the communication and reflection of "particular ethnic prejudices and attachments" (Torres 2014: 17) that reflect and effect hegemony in Guatemalan society (Hughes and Prado 2011). While hegemonic norms are complexly woven into the media's performative staging of violence, the reader/viewer/audience's "gaze" is also "structured through those hegemonies" (Butler 1993a: 132). This suggests that the sentiments within the text materialise in the context of wider political and cultural narratives; they do not "initiate a moral or political stance, but… reinforce one." (Moeller, quoted in Torres 2014: 16). In citing the "valiant" efforts of Molina for his government's coordinating work with Mexican authorities, the article likewise brings into view the state's productive role in closing this particular chapter of "El Caso Siekavizza". The concluding sentences present "the lesson" of the case in terms that, if we draw in considerations of the vast field of other victims left (un)contemplated in the past and present context of Guatemala's justice system, reverberates with silences and omissions:

> "For now… [we should understand] that capturing… crime suspects often takes time, it is therefore necessary to have patience and trust. In this instance, the time was long, but the first step towards justice has been taken." (Editorial Prensa Libre 2013)

Where, in this formulation of the long and slow 'road to justice', do the victims of Guatemala's genocide and wartime systemic sexual violence fall? Indeed, the temporality of legal interpellations of the latter historical violences spans nearly two decades of suspended and miscarried attempts at justice (Alianza Rompiendo el Silencio 2012; Burt 2015). Even still, this observation fails to resonate within the moral economy of justice deployed above. Similarly, where might the thousands of *"casos engavetados"* (shelved cases) of contemporary femicide be situated in this interpretation? (Interviewee 3, 21.01.14) Within the trajectory of the article's discussion of the emblematic nature of this "domestic violence" case, I propose that the terms of reference constitute limits on the femicides that (this narrative contends)

are being contemplated when strangers across civil society join demonstrations led by Cristina's family and friends. The editorial thus presents us with a discursive framing of a struggle for justice which helps (re)constitute exclusionary norms in relation to hierarchies of victims and their experiences with impunity.

On the 10th of November, *Prensa Libre* ran another article that rehearsed similar sentiments and claims; this one was simply entitled "The capture of Barreda" (Amor de Paz 2013). Here too, "El Caso Siekavizza" is decisively marked as "the most *emblematic*" case of femicide, "although this example of *domestic violence* is not the only one in Guatemala" (emphasis added). This statement rearticulates, almost verbatim, comments Molina made the day prior, on what constitutes the case as "emblematic": he suggested it was emblematic because it represents the violence experienced by many Guatemalan women by their husbands or romantic partners (Gobierno de Guatemala 2013f). While significant, this congruence between official state responses to Barreda's successful capture, and mainstream media contemplations such as this one, is perhaps not as striking as the emotive force with which investment in justice for Cristina is communicated by the author on behalf of the wider social body:

> "The Guatemalan people received the news of Roberto Barreda's capture with great joy… In many parts of the city, people burned firecrackers and lit lights [in celebration]… and I must confess that I have never so enjoyed firecrackers like I did the day of his arrest." (Amor de Paz 2013)

During the course of one of my field visits, I noted with curiosity the far-reaching sense of joy amongst people who had no connection, as such, with Cristina or her family. News of Barreda's capture reached me through a telling trajectory: the neighbour of the house I was staying at (in one of Guatemala City's wealthier condominiums) called and delivered the news to the housekeeper, and insisted that she turn on the radio to follow developments. She then ecstatically delivered the news to me, and we proceeded to listen to an announcer recount the arrest. What this suggests is that the sentiments of the *Prensa Libre* article cited above extend beyond that author's own personal views, or even of those who celebrated the arrest with firecrackers (Author Field Notes, 08.11.13).

Further still, in the article's description of the "Olympic-like" way in which Cristina's presumed killer fled with "total impunity", the case gets staged in almost *telenovela* (soap-opera) like terms. Indeed, Barreda is described as having evaded authorities with the help of corrupt individuals operating within "mafia"-like positions of power (Amor de Paz 2013). One might ponder whether this representation of Barreda shifts focus from the victim to the perpetrator—or, indeed, whether the former's agency is largely obscured in this account. Still, both the violence and the subjects involved are cast in terms that centralise focus on subjective details of the *individuals*, creating a sense of the "extraordinary" nature of the 'acts' or 'events' that facilitated Barreda's insulation from the justice system (Author Field Notes, 24.01.14). As I discussed previously, this type of narrative framing dislocates understandings of the structural nature of gendered violence and impunity, and thereby misrecognises the complex dimensions of femicide's authorisation at the level of the state and society.

"Faciality" and the Scopic Regime of "El Caso Siekavizza"

My focus on the significance of representations of faces (as opposed to bodies) of gendered subjects of violence has been suggested throughout this chapter, but it figures especially prominently here in relation to Cristina's materialisation in the *Prensa Libre* accounts under analytical consideration. I argue that there is a significant, as well as deeply moral, script that can be discerned through the decision to use the vessel of the victim's face in the frequent coverage of "El Caso Siekavizza". I connect these observations to on-going political and cultural narratives that get reconstituted through the labour of media representations, and which I furthermore suggest hold important explanatory power about why particular victims of femicide discursively emerge as politically significant and culturally emblematic.

To develop these lines of analysis, I bridge together theoretical contemplations on "the face". In particular, I draw on Deleuze and Guattari's notion of "faciality" (1987), which Benson develops in relation to structural violence and inequality (2008), alongside the concept of "scopic regimes" (Gregory 2013; Mulvey 1975; Sassatelli 2011). For Benson, faciality "refers to how power and perception overlap, as well as to how ethical orientations are formed and/or inhibited on the basis of what people see" in others' faces (2008: 596). Faces are actively produced through "social

typologies and power relations" within domains of representation (ibid.). Butler's deliberations on the relationship between the differential (visual) framing of violence and the "regulation of affective and ethical dispositions" also bear on this discussion of "faciality" (2010: 1). I understand the aesthetics of Cristina's facial representation as embedded in a wider "gendered scopic regime" of violence (Mulvey 1975), which refers to the patriarchal schematization of the visual field and the symbolic ordering that reduces (images of) women to objects who "bear", but do not "create", meaning (Mulvey 1975: 804).

Within the domain of femicidal violence, what we might call 'death and (in)justice differentiation' also materialises by way of *visual* frames, which help constitute "fields of recognisability" alongside zones of invisibility and disposability (Butler 1993a: 3; Haritaworn et.al 2014: 2; Stanley 2011). The aforementioned newspaper articles coexist alongside a constellation of images of Cristina reproduced by the mainstream media. Most prominent amongst these is what I consider the de facto "logo" within *Prensa Libre's* staging of the case: under the tag-line of "Caso Siekavizza", which is printed in red and white, is a black and white photo of Cristina's face in close view, her eyes cast directly onto the viewer. While "the majority of [news articles] take numbers [or statistics] as the starting point" for stories about gendered violence (CERIGUA 2013: 25), coverage of Cristina's case frequently begins with this facial photograph. Indeed, unlike the bodies and statistics that tend to litter representations of victims of femicide and gendered violence (Interviewee 18, 06.02.14), this facial "logo" was used four times in separate articles from *Prensa Libre* editions on the 11th and 12th of November 2013, days after Barreda's capture— and ten individual articles covering the case appeared in these same editions.

And while, as Butler insists, "[t]he visual trace is… not the same as the full restitution of the humanity of the victim" (2010: 78), I contend that framing Cristina through the conduit of the face (alongside recurring narrative coverage) is instrumental to her emergence as a subject of violence worthy of national consideration and grief. Here, I suggest that the Levinasian notion of the facial encounter as the site of ethics and human responsiveness succeeds because the aesthetic of Cristina's face produces a "recognisable" subject (Benson 2008: 595; Butler 2004a: 6-8) within the cultural ideals and gendered moral lexicon of Guatemala: a young *ladina*, heterosexual-wife

and mother-– (especially when pictured with her husband and children, as was common in the weeks following Barreda's capture) (Nelson 1999: 217-8). This is due, at least in part, to the way in which our apprehension of human life hinges on "scopic regimes" and on "the work of the visual [which] must figure with… reading[s] of race, gender, and sexuality" (Stanley 2011: 2, 7). Indeed, as some have noted, Levinas' facial ethics falter when applied more generally, precisely because faces are *not* equally perceived, for they are always engendered by "racial schemes, class structures, and other classificatory logics" (Benson 2008: 596). In grappling with these issues, Butler posits that:

> [i]f, as… Levinas claims, it is the face of the other that
> demands from us an ethical response, then it would seem that
> the norms that would allocate who is and is not human arrive
> in visual form. These norms work to *give face* and to *efface*
> (2010: 77).

Within the visual framing of "El Caso Siekavizza" in the mainstream media, I propose that the photograph of her face works to humanise her in "an implicit [call] for [the] recognition" of a life we should mourn (Carey and Torres 2010: 157). This starkly contrasts to recurring practices wherein victims of gendered and femicidal violence—when they are represented at all—materialise in what are often graphic displays of cadavers, often only partly covered (a topic visited in greater depth in the next chapter) (Interviewee 10, 30.01.14). One *Prensa Libre* journalist explained the social morbidity of the print media and the wider public's (apparent) desires to 'see' violence in these terms: while a violent death makes for 'good' (sellable) news, "better yet if there is a photo [of the body]!" (Interviewee 8, 29.01.14). Indeed, as I further develop in the next chapter in relation to instrumentalism and discourses of (in)security, bodies that "litter city streets, urban ravines, and the imagination of the media" are marked in decidedly different terms to that of Cristina's, though they are likewise embedded in racial, class, and gender grammars (Carey and Torres 2010: 142).

The facial logo deployed by *Prensa Libre* for representing Cristina is, like all visual traces of the (undone) human, an "ambivalent tool" that may or may not succeed in (de)humanising its subject, or in summoning the grief or moral outrage of the viewer (Butler 2010: 10; 2010: 10-2; Mirzoeff 1999: 240, 248-9; Nelson 1999: 61; Smith

2005: 28). Certainly, "the use of the face within the media… [can work] to effect dehumanization… [because] personification does not always humanize." (Butler 2004a: 141). This is applicable to the visual frame that circulates in mainstream media representations of Roberto Barreda; who, despite the recurring facial and animated photos of him, materialises somewhere between a 'monstrous' and 'despicable' man (Author Field Notes, 08.11.13, 13.11.13). Drawing upon the concept of the "gendered scopic regime", it is notable that the workings of "faciality" in Cristina's facial image(ry) recall Mulvey's articulation of "fetishistic scopophilia", whereby the visual scene is structured to "build up the physical beauty of the object, transforming it into something satisfying in itself" (1975: 811-2). Crucially, while the latter may gesture at the "value" of the female subject/object ("value" as aesthetic beauty), particularly when we contemplate the face in relation to those subjects whose visual representation is organized through a "voyeuristic" gaze upon the body (next chapter), this visual framing nonetheless emerges within a patriarchically constituted visual field (Mulvey 1975; Sassatelli 2011). The visual field exploits the (figure of the) victim; in "El Caso Siekavizza", Cristina's face is, to cite one interlocutor, part of a "filthy game… to commercialize [her] figure", and to "exploit femicide" more generally (Interviewee 3, 21.01.14). Nevertheless, within the "carefully staged scene of visibility" in which the photograph of Cristina appears (Torres 2014: 19), addressing the viewer directly through the subject's gaze, I would still emphasise that the image seems to be geared to communicate the humanity of the victim, and thereby to view her death as a substantial loss.

It is useful to historically interrogate my claim that the face and/or body images depend in large part on a discursive economy of femicide in which a victim's racial and class coordinates condition the forms of their (in)visibility. A question worth asking is whether or not, and through what medium, Cristina might have been represented within mainstream media accounts in a different temporality, such as during the civil war. If, as I am arguing, apprehending victims of gendered violence as "recognisable" and "worthy" of the state's protection and/or society's grief/moral outrage hinges on how particular ideological coordinates of the case, such as the victim's body, materialise within domains of representation, how have these practices departed (if at all) from those governing the materialisation and representation of victims of femicide in the (official) wartime context? And what might this reveal

about the productive force of (representations) of gendered violence in the consolidation of state power in times of war and military dictatorship, as opposed to times of ostensible peace and democracy?

In their archival work examining the genealogy of femicidal violence in Guatemala since the turn of the 20th century, Carey and Torres propose that the state's, the justice system's, and the wider society's authorisation for gender-based violence long precedes the "often-cited" 'post war' transition period (2010: 144). In mapping the practices that were deployed within *Prensa Libre's* media representations of the past, the authors demonstrate how "the practice of sensationalizing murder [of women] has its roots in the business of journalism" and in the engrained cultural norms of exclusion (153). Interestingly, in this, as well as in a later piece by Torres (2014: 14), they suggest that the practices of displaying the "bodies of nonindigenous" Guatemaltecas "for public consumption" during the war were instrumental in laying the foundations for "reviewing violated bodies *today*" (Carey and Torres 2010: 154, emphasis added). Citing the example of the 1968 murder of Rogelia Cruz Martinez by the counterinsurgency state as an "emblematic" example of how violated *ladina* bodies were sensationalised in media accounts, the article explains:

> "Embodying the characteristics of the ideal woman in the late 1950s, [she] was constituted… as an emblem of the nation through her body. As a Ladino beauty queen and teacher representing Guatemala at the 1959 Miss Universe Pageant, Cruz Martinez was the epitome of femininity." (Torres 2014: 153)

Although the country's newspapers at the time described the horrifying nature of the violence and overkill exercised against her, these same journalistic accounts "emphasised that her murder was *a loss* to the nation because her body—the national symbol—had been violated" (154, emphasis added). Significantly, Cruz Martinez was not 'just' the "Beauty Queen" (Treacy 2001)—she had involved herself in student activism and was romantically involved with a revolutionary leader, thereby transgressing norms that aim(ed) to exclude women from exercising civil rights in public life (Carey and Torres 2010: 154, 161). Carey and Torres note that this "transgress[ion] [of] gender norms" caused women who involved themselves in

politics "to be defined as citizens who did not matter and thus warranted being targets of state-sponsored violence" (161).

Referring to the "pivotal role" that a "victim's gender and ethnicity… [played in]… the forms of reporting on violated cadavers" (2010: 156) during the civil war, Carey and Torres propose that these logics "laid the foundation" for how the media visually or textually re-presents contemporary femicide victims. However, in emphasising the (important) continuities within the practices of femicide re-presentations, there is an important distinction that gets obscured. While Cruz Martinez was indeed marked for death (and even disposability) by the state, as other educated and politically active *ladinas* were during *La Violencia* (Sanford 2003: 53), she was also (as Carey and Torres themselves note) marked *as a loss* and as a *mournable body* within newspaper accounts (2010: 154). Like Cristina's missing body, Rogelia's violated body left/leaves a *mark of absence* that is palpable in the displays of shock, outrage and affect of the nation as a whole (Gonzales Molina 2011; Treacy 2011). The parallels within the notion of the "loss" that Rogelia's death signifies with "El Caso Siekavizza", and other young *ladina* femicide victims such as Claudina Velasquez (the case referenced earlier of the 19 year-old law student murdered by her ex-boyfriend), and Mitzie Alejandra Sanchez-Makepeace, are evidenced in both the aesthetic and discursive choices used to mark them as losses (that matter). In the portrayals of each of these victims, facial imagery is consistently deployed, and adjectives such as "mother", "wife", "beautiful", and "good-girl" appear, evidently gesturing towards recognition (Gonzales Molina 2011; Sanford 2008; Wright 2009). Departing somewhat from Carey and Torres' account, then, I propose that what has perhaps shifted in the 'post war' milieu is that textual accounts of overkill, and media depictions of bodies, are largely concentrated on racialised (not of course synonymous with "indigenous", as discussed earlier) and/or socially marginalised women's bodies. While Cristina's face is likewise displayed for the "public[s] consumption" (Torres 2014: 14), the hegemonic message is one of loss. However, as one women's rights interlocutor put it, the notion of loss permeating depictions of *violencia intrafamiliar* femicides is often steeped in paternalism and lacks any rights-based focus: "for women killed within the four walls of their homes [the discourse] is one of 'oh poor thing!'…" (Interviewee 14, 02.02.14). In contrast, the bodies of marginalised, or so-called "public" women displayed for consumption in narrative

and visual media accounts, emerge within a script that arguably casts their deaths as 'gains' according to (barely implicit) discourses of the need to "socially cleanse" (Sanford 2008: 118) the "garbage of society" (Interviewee 3, 21.01.14; Interviewee 7, 23.01.14).

The issue that 'faces' us, so to speak, is that the victims in question are highly differentiated through ideological coordinates that constrain the forms of their emergence *as victims*. Whereas Cristina is relegated to a sphere of recognisability, the victims contemplated by Guatemala's Genocide Trial, for example, or femicide victims cast in zones of invisibility/ disposability, not only fail to (fully) emerge as recognisable and worthy lives, but the violence and impunity considered within the terms of their experiences fail to weigh as significant(ly) within these hegemonic frames of representation. Within the discursive framing of mainstream media interlocutors, "El Caso Siekavizza" is interpellated through a filter of enormous loss and grievability, and, moreover, through a narrative of grave injustice and impunity that cannot stand (Interviewee 3, 21.01.14). And while the deployment of the VIF frame is significant to this formulation because it situates such violence within the regulative discourses and policy framework of the state, I insist that it is the coproduction of Cristina's face alongside discursive codes steeped in gendered moral lexicon, which prove crucial to her representation as a subject whose lost life (should) matter(s), and whose case thus warrants the state and society's consideration[21].

The "Many" versus the "Other" Cristinas

The notion of the particular (or significant) loss that Cristina represents to the Guatemalan nation is not peculiar to mainstream media accounts. We can situate the aforementioned mainstream media interpellations of "El Caso Siekavizza" in relation to the government's regulatory framework for gendered violence because the particular event gets "absorbed into hegemonic" state imperatives (Haritaworn et al. 2014). Narratives of key interlocutors within the Patriot Party can be interpreted as implicit assurances that both the case and its primary victim subject 'matter'

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[21] As the next chapter seeks to further demonstrate, the implications of these differentiations are particularly devastating for subjects of femicidal violence whose bodies (rather than faces) are called upon to mark their disposability.

significantly to this administration. In Molina's commentary on the case, I suggest that the PP leader not only betrays a desire to situate *violencia intrafamiliar*, and "El Caso Siekavizza", within the state's moral economy of recognisable violence, but to situate Cristina as a 'worthy' *subject* within the national body politic. Indeed, threaded throughout the discursive production of 'the event' of Barreda's capture, and in commentaries that have followed the stagnant trial, is the implicit suggestion that impunity in this particular femicide case would be an injustice—not only in the more obvious legal sense, but in a moral one (Roesch 2014b). What is discernable within the discourses of government authorities is a desire to publicly demonstrate that this case will not be "shelved", as so many others are (perceived to be) (Interviewee 3, 21.01.14). Interestingly, this sentiment links to earlier cited mainstream media articles that seem to collectively implore that the case must not be left in a condition of impunity (Prensa Libre 2012b). Explaining how his administration worked to capture Barreda in Yucatan, Molina stated:

> "I made a commitment with the Siekavizza family since last year, and with the support of the Ministry of the Interior, thousands of calls and messages with information about [Barreda's] whereabouts were processed, all of which were attended to, and fortunately the last one was the one that allowed for his apprehension." (Gobierno de Guatemala 2013g)

Similarly, on the day of Barreda's capture, the Minister of the Interior, Héctor Mauricio López Bonilla, explained the efforts of his branch of government and the PPO's in the following terms:

> "… this case was paradigmatic, and for that reason we gave the necessary attention to it, alongside the promise that the President of Guatemala, Otto Pérez Molina, gave to not rest until it was resolved." (Ministerio de Gobernación 2013a)

In addition to the claim that impunity has never been an option in this case, the narrow schema identified earlier within the VIF framework of the PP and SEPREM's regulation of gendered violence underpin its "emblematic" nature. In a statement on the Government of Guatemala's website, Molina is referenced as saying that the case is emblematic "for representing the violence and abuse that many Guatemalan women are subjected to by their husbands [or] romantic partners…" (Gobierno de Guatemala 2013f). The ideological foundations of these nuclear family demarcations have

already been rehearsed in an earlier section, but they warrant repetition here: the assumptions grounding the criteria for subjects of gendered violence are inextricably linked to regulations around women's sexuality and gender roles. As I identified previously, these normative criteria are littered throughout the government's agenda for addressing domestic violence, as well as in the interpellations of anti-domestic violence services and campaigns by SEPREM. In a later comment that could be interpreted as an implicit retort to criticisms launched against the Patriot Party and the PPO that "El Caso Siekavizza" has received an inequitable amount of political attention and public resources, Molina ensures that:

> "Here we make daily efforts to resolve the cases of many Cristina Siekavizzas, we are aware of [the need to do] this. To that end we have strengthened the capacities of [our] institutions, security forces, the Ministerio Publico, and our work with civilian intelligence." (Gobierno de Guatemala 2013f)

As we might recall from an earlier section, Molina was pushed on this point during the course of a separate public statement he made after Barreda's arrest, to which he insisted that the "same efforts" were made across femicide cases in Guatemala. Such declarations need to be interrogated on many different levels, particularly against the backdrop of cases with distinct ideological and contextual coordinates, as I have referred to them. Since it is the task of the next chapter to interrogate these types of political claims relationally, I will only briefly rehearse some arguments here.

In the above statement, Molina deploys the notion of "many Cristinas"— when we draw back to the observation, threaded throughout this chapter, that Cristina symbolically embodies the ideal category of the white-*ladina* woman in Guatemala, this interpellation is revealing for its limitations. It is important to highlight that the notion of "*many* Cristinas" is conceptually distinct from the one offered by several interlocutors on "the *others*", when they raised the issue of femicide victim hierarchies (Interviewee 3, 21.01.14; Interviewee 14, 02.02.14; Interviewee 4, 03.02.14). Whether delivered in the staging of the most widely circulated mainstream newspaper, or a government representative's statement, the standpoint that impunity for Cristina's fate is unacceptable leans heavily on embedded racial, class, and gender norms. These, I argue, mobilise readings of her disappearance/probable femicide as

an assault on the moral and cultural framework of society, and the nation-state itself. But what fate awaits the women—dead or disappeared—who fail to be marked within the terms of the 'ideal' white-*ladina* figure? If these victims are not apprehended as losses, does this not also impact whether they are seen to merit exhaustive investigations by the state? Or whether impunity is contemplated as an unacceptable injustice?

We can at least partially attend to this question by drawing precisely from that largely un-contemplated field of "others" whose cases remain "shelved" or "unmarked" in zones of invisibility, or differential visibility. Indeed, the Patriot Party (and the mainstream media's) interpellation of "El Caso Siekavizza" is so pronounced, that it creates "an excess of any intended referent"—the "excess" comes in the form of a range of excluded and "unliveable" victims (Butler 2004a) who are brought into relief by Cristina's own relative hypervisibility (Interviewee 2, 15.01.14). The dubiousness of Molina's claims of "equal treatment" for femicide cases is most clearly exposed by the realisation that, indelibly, the large majority of femicides (will) fail to emerge as political events within the field of government (and, indeed, media) discourses—and, further still, that they will remain in conditions of impunity. Of course, as I have emphasised, the failure of representation (or differentiated representation), as well as the structural limitations of the law's interventions into gendered violence, have a genealogy that far precedes the PP's tenure. Yet, even restricting the analytical interrogation to a specific temporality of the Molina administration illuminates the discursive limits of the state-institutional labour that ostensibly goes into resolving the cases of "many Cristinas"; and, similarly, reveals the constraints within the media's labour in bringing "the others" into the domain of representation.

Two examples of contemporary femicides are worth mentioning here. The first occurred in late January 2014 and was brought to my attention by interlocutors I was speaking with on the topic of the fallout after Roberto Barreda's arrest. The subject of "the others" (femicide victims) became a focus of discussion after an interviewee showed me the front page from that day's *Nuestro Diario*[22]: there, under the headline of "Mother and Son Killed", was a full page photo of the laid out body of a 31 year-

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[22] The second most circulated national newspaper. *Nuestro Diario* is notorious for its deployment of visual images of violence (CERIGUA 2006, 2013).

old indigenous woman, still wearing her *traje* (traditional dress), and the body of her son. The limited newspaper narrative informed us that the victim, whose name was Candeleria Lopez, was also 8 months pregnant, and that she was strangled to death, while her son had frozen to death, allegedly while waiting with her body (Nuestro Diario 2014). Another detail of the photo that was commented upon by this interlocutor pertained to the children and community members who are shown to have formed a circle around the two bodies—all of their gazes cast upon the victims (Interviewee 5, 23.01.14). This latter observation drew out discussions about the normalisation of violence and social morbidity across Guatemala's body politic. But perhaps even more crucial to this discussion, the vital point was made that the photo suggests that no police officers, or officials from the PPO, are at the scene yet—or, if they are there, and merely outside the photographer's frame, they have nonetheless allowed community members to get closer to the bodies than would be reasonable if they wanted an uncontaminated crime scene (Interviewee 4, 23.01.14). Indeed, a second photo actually shows a group of male community members carrying the woman's body from the side of the road (and presumably placing it on the flat terrain where the circle of onlookers pictured on the front-page photo, later form). What interlocutors I spoke with suggested was that there would never be a proper investigation, so contamination was an irrelevant detail. The consensus appeared to be that this femicide would remain eclipsed in a state of impunity and non-recognition.

On the one hand, I would suggest that this case is illustrative of what Butler refers to as the state's "refusal of discourse" (2004a: 35), as I am not aware of any public statement that was made by any high-level government interlocutor on the efforts that would be made to resolve the deaths of these two victims. In effect, she and her son failed to emerge in the field of state discourses. On the other hand, because she does materialise in the media, it also demonstrates the differentiated forms of labour that bring femicide victims into domains of representation: we learn little about this woman's life beyond her victimisation, and the absence of any visual representation besides her lifeless body forecloses her substantive recognition as a liveable life.

The second femicide case comes to us by way of a small-budget documentary film entitled *Justicia Para Mi Hermana*, or "Justice for My Sister" (2012), and covers the case of a young mother, Adela Chacon-Tax, who worked in a bar in the department of

Escuintla. Her ex-boyfriend is suspected of killing Adela, whose body was discovered (by Adela's eldest daughter), tortured and naked, in a ravine. The film tracks the efforts of Adela's sister, Rebecca, in pursuing justice for the murder, and shows her encountering, and struggling against, the structural impunity and institutionalised inequalities that have been highlighted in relation to marginalised women's experiences with gendered violence. When filming began, the case was effectively "cold"—lacking any institutional follow-up, despite Rebecca's on-going visits to local branches of the police and PPO. The film's director/producer expressed that the decision to focus on a case such as this one was precisely impelled by the lack of (appropriate or sufficient) address—whether in the actions of the state, or in mainstream discourses—given to victims "like Adela" (Interviewee 21, 28.09.14). But while Adela, a "poor *mestiza*" (Interviewee 29, 25.02.15), is indeed brought within the domain of representation through the medium of this film, and, in fact, her sister's struggles resulted in an extremely rare successful conviction of the perpetrator in one of the country's few Specialised Femicide Tribunals, I argue that we cannot mistake this labour—of a dedicated family member pursuing justice, and of an activist filmmaker representing that struggle—as the efforts of the state in resolving the murder, nor of the mainstream media in illuminating the case.

Indeed, the kind of discursive and visual labour that goes into representing both of these femicide victims is of a noticeably different kind than that which circulates in relation to "El Caso Siekavizza". The *kind* of 'work' that goes into representing the subject of violence contemplated in the *Nuestro Diario* case brings into sharp relief the way in which "scopic regimes" of gendered violence can deploy images in ways that actually foreclose the forms of visibility and recognition—in this case, through a "voyeuristic" gaze that transforms the victim subject into an object for the viewer (Mulvey 1975: 811-2). Meanwhile, the labour that goes into representing Adela, and bringing her story (and that of her sister), into the domain of representation is precisely that—a form of (counter-hegemonic) *labour* that emerges at the peripheries of hegemonic domains of representation because, as one feminist journalist put it, "Adela [her case] would not have emerged organically" within the domain of mainstream representation were it not for the documentary that gave partial form to Adela's murder, and to her sister, Rebecca's, struggle (Interviewee 26, 18.02.15). Although "Justice For My Sister" is dedicated, at least in part, to the project of

extending visibility and recognition to a femicide victim that I suggest would have otherwise remained largely unmarked, it is precisely the non-hegemonic forms of labour required to bring her into the field of visibility which suggests that neither Adela, nor her story, would emerge as "sellable" or "emblematic" within the state or mainstream media's domain of relevance (Interviewee 3, 21.01.14).

The Family Imperative

One pattern that emerges by way of these two examples, and which is also prescient in relation to "El Caso Siekavizza", is the widespread emphasis on femicide victims' social circle— what I refer to as *the family imperative*. In particular, the social circle becomes paramount within and across mainstream (government interlocutors and the mainstream media) explanations offered for the (differential) nature and scope of consideration given to different femicide cases. Thus, for example, when pushed on the topic of why "El Caso Siekavizza" pervades the media's discussions of femicidal violence, or why it is afforded a degree of state consideration that is unmatched in the field of 'post war' femicides, the response has resoundingly referenced the struggle of Cristina's family and friends. The director of the Survivor's Foundation (co-plaintiff NGO) put it in these terms:

> "[Cristina's family and social circle] have not allowed the case to die, which is something that does not happen in the rest of the cases, unfortunately there are not families that continue to insist with the media [on coverage]" (quoted in Rodriguez 2013)

What is troubling about this formulation is the assumption that similar efforts do not exist in other cases—a claim quickly destabilised just by looking at the struggle of the main protagonist in "Justice for My Sister", and further still, at the many long-running struggles of families of Guatemala's "disappeared" victims of the state's counterinsurgency war (Interviewee 4, 03.02.14), or the continuing struggles of victims/survivors of wartime sexual violence to bring the state, and individual perpetrators, to justice (Alianza Rompiendo el Silencio 2012; Consorcio Actoras de Cambio 2009). And yet, none of these cases have received anything resembling the degree of state or mainstream media interpellation that Cristina has—arguably, in the case of the "disappeared" and sexual violence victims/survivors, the nature of that

interpellation has been active or implicit de-legitimation (Interviewee 25, 11.02.15), a subject I return to in chapter 7. Perhaps more troubling still is the assumption that, where similar struggles are not perceptible, this can be equated to a lack of desire/will/ or effort on the part of family members to pursue justice. Indeed, this obscures the reality of how the social position of a victim's family can facilitate or constrain access to media or state institutions (Nelson 2009: 61)—whether in the form of financial resources, or social connections to powerfully positioned interlocutors. Referring to the case of Adela Chacon-Tax, one interlocutor, a feminist academic working at Guatemala's national university, offered a reflection on what, in tracing Adela's sister in her struggle for justice, the documentary film invokes in relation to those on the peripheries of Guatemalan society's concerns:

> "there [through Rebecca's struggle], you can see what it
> means, what it takes … for a person to seek justice… for a
> person who has *nothing* [material or otherwise] in this world"
> (Interviewee 2, 18.11.13).

Indeed, as discussed earlier regarding the norms that circulate in relation to victims who emerge as "losses" to the nation, attributing state or societal investment in a case simply to a victim's family circle is part of a broader denial of how race and class privilege actually function across Latin America— of the extent to which, as one interlocutor phrased it, each femicide case is "loaded with classism and racism" (Interviewee 27, 19.02.15). Below, I cite a particularly revealing exchange with one interlocutor who framed "El Caso Siekavizza" as "emblematic" of femicide and of the wider struggle against impunity in Guatemala:

> Authour: "why then do you think that this case has mobilised
> so many people across Guatemalan society? There are no lack
> of femicide cases here… it is not something rare, right?"
>
> Interviewee: "No, but, culturally, I think that Cristina exists
> in… she lived in a committed social circle… it's not her as the
> victim, as such, that moved [people]… or, or the family's
> wealth, but rather, that social circle that came together…"
> (Interviewee 11, 31.01.14).

Returning to the concept of the family imperative, we can see how the contours of this argument allow "political commentary [to] stop at a certain point… at which critique comfortably rests" (Benson et al. 2008: 45). The point is not to question or undermine

the on-going, and no doubt instrumental, efforts of Cristina's family and friends in the form of "Voices for Cristina"— but rather, to situate their *successful* mobilisation of state responses (even if only at the level of discourse), widespread mainstream media coverage, and societal investment in the case. Remarking on the way in which the government and mainstream media's repeated references to Cristina's dedicated family or "social circle" help re-inscribe forms of hierarchical differentiation between femicide victims, a feminist lawyer who provides legal support and accompaniment to victims of sexual violence and to the family members of victims of femicide noted:

> "… they will emphasize some cases but not others… because for example with the case of Siekavizza, which I do feel has been an emblematic case… the amount of resources that have gone into that case have simply not allowed others… well, when there are hundreds more cases of women who … by not having that emphasis at the level of… the state, of the social classes… and the *pact* that this engenders, well then we reproduce the stigma and, and that classification of cases that can be given greater importance and [those] which don't warrant it." (Interviewee 20, 11.02.14)

Similarly, deploying the powerful trope of "*gente legitimizado*", one feminist photographer and social justice activist proposed that Cristina, (or, perhaps more appropriately, the figure of Cristina):

> "represents *legitimised people*, those legitimised by their social status… for reasons of class and race… And this reveals, to an extent, who [is seen to] deserve justice" (Interviewee 29, 25.02.15).

If we acknowledge that in addition to political-policy imperatives, a moral economy steeped in racial, class, and gender norms works productively to represent Cristina as a meaningful subject of *violencia intrafamiliar*, as it does to exclude and differentiate others, then the question of how and why femicide victims come to "matter" cannot be ascertained through superficial reference to a family's "commitment" to procuring justice. By definition, every femicide victim had/has a family— whether or not that kin circle is able to mobilise on behalf of the victim might be determined by a myriad of other "imperatives". These imperatives or constraints might be material (needing to work to support other family members), fear-based (of violent reprisals for reporting a perpetrator, a commonly cited fear), or circumstantial (a lack of literacy or proximity to institutional sites linked to the police, PPO or justice system)—and these are only some examples (Interviewee 10, 30.01.14). As one feminist lawyer framed these

concerns, "justice is far, far away for most victims and their families" (Interviewee 10, 30.01.14); thus, to emphasise the role of the family (and thereby implicitly erase the responsibility of the state, for example) produces a "secondary victim" in these cases (Interviewee 27, 19.02.15) in the form of the family, social, or kin circle of a femicide victim who, for whatever reason, are unable to engender political or societal support for their cause. Such a reading runs parallel to narratives of "blame" that circulate for victims of "public" femicidal violence, who, as I discuss in the proceeding chapter, are discursively represented as (at least partially) responsible for their deaths. But rather than "blaming victims" in an attempt "to absolve state responsibility", the family imperative that emerges within the domain of *violencia intrafamiliar* articulated femicides situates "the push for justice" on the shoulders of victims' families (Interviewee 26, 18.02.15). Significantly, in both formulations, the role of the state in procuring justice, or indeed, in failing to prevent such violence and thus protect (potential) victims, is obscured.

Against the backdrop of these constraints is a structural violence which unequally manifests itself in the institutional inequalities faced by victims such as Adela Chacon-Tax (and her sister, Rebecca, who is re-victimised throughout the course of Adela's case), or by Candeleria Lopez, whose family we learn very little about. In the former's case, the family imperative is clearly necessary in the struggle to obtain a successful conviction, but I suggest that without the documentary film that tracks it, this femicide would (have) fail(ed) to emerge in any domain of representation. The "response" that Rebecca's immense efforts mobilise is enclosed in a particular domain of representation that is outside the purview of the mainstream media and the state. And, in the case of Candeleria Lopez, the young mother featured on the front cover of *Nuestro Diario*, how can we possibly ascribe the likely impunity with which her case will be left to a "lack of effort" on the part of her family or social circle? The symbolic violence (Scheper-Hughes and Bourgois 2004) of the "family imperative" formulation lies not only in the nature of what it obscures, but, moreover, in how it enacts a privatising-depoliticising framing of femicidal violence whereby the responsibility for pursuing justice rests with victims' family members. Thus, within the notion of a "family imperative" deployed in the context of "El Caso Siekavizza", I propose that the VIF frame comes full circle in differentiating femicide victims

according to a dubious conceptualisation of why victims (fail to) emerge in domains of political and cultural relevance.

"Hierarchies within the exception": (Re)reading the Violence of "El Caso Siekavizza"

In opening up "El Caso Siekavizza" to critical analysis, my line of examination has conceptually proceeded through critical feminist understandings of bodies as "performatively produced" through relational and power-laden practices, which are necessarily political (Butler 1993a; Wilcox 2015). The point of such an analysis has been precisely to question what political *work* the figure, (absent) body, and life/death story of the victim at the centre of this case is *doing* when it gets deployed within a wider field of discourses and regulatory practices around (gendered) violence, particularly femicide. While, in mapping the VIF political-policy framework and working through a field of hegemonic discourses, I have likewise incorporated the interventions of critical interlocutors, in this final section I draw out what I consider an especially interesting conceptual thread which emerges from critical discourses on "El Caso Siekavizza".

Specifically, what disrupts any *unilateral* emphasis on the productive force of racial and class politics in this case, and upon the norms which work to 'qualify' Cristina as a victim of femicide "that matters" (Butler 1993a), is the recognition amongst interlocutors that despite the 'privileges' accorded to her by particular ideological markers, Cristina's life was nonetheless "undone" by the normative violence of Guatemala's gender norms and culturally sanctioned patriarchy (Interviewee 2, 15.01.14; Interviewee 15, 05.02.14). Indeed, a recurring qualification offered throughout this chapter centres around the need to think analytically about why, amongst the vast field of un-accounted for bodies of femicidal violence, (*"how many other Cristinas?"* Interviewee 4, 03.02.14), Cristina's *death/disappearance* registers as politically and culturally meaningful, without obscuring that *her life*, as a (middle-upper class *ladina*) victim of *violencia intrafamiliar*, was not insulated from the normative violence that authorised her eventual "undoing". As one interlocutor offered, we can interrogate the politics of "the other Cristinas" while still articulating "the interconnection between… [these] bodies" (Wilcox 2015: 163)— bodies that,

even if regulated by different normative frameworks, emerge representationally as "objects in life and in death" (Interviewee 29, 25.02.15).

"El Caso Siekavizza" gives form to the ideological constraints put upon gendered bodies—suggesting the normative violence that puts limits on what a "liveable life" looks like for women across a range symbolic locations (Boesten 2010a). Albeit, as suggested by the range of other femicide cases explored above, such constraints are necessarily *relational* and thus *differentiated* depending on the gendered body in question, since some bodies are *more* "hostilely marked" (Nelson 1999: 128). The bodies of victims such as Candeleria Lopez, Adela Chacon-Tax, and Mindy Rodas, for example, are produced through a nexus of violent restrictions owing, precisely, to their material and symbolic location as economically poor and/or indigenous/ racialised women. This is not to dismiss the way in which Cristina's body was/is (also) marked by patriarchal violence and gender norms. On the contrary, it is precisely in recognising how the figure of Cristina is performatively constituted along the lines of the white-*ladina* ideal— a wife and maternal figure at the centre of the ideal nuclear family, whose body and sexuality is regulated through racialised, classed, and gendered discourses pervasive within Guatemala's cultural imaginaries— that we forge a pathway for understanding the productive power of her case, and its emergence as politically significant and culturally emblematic *relative to "las otras"*.

Thinking theoretically about what the (re)readings of "El Caso Siekavizza" along such lines invokes, I propose that an especially pertinent trope comes from Boesten's articulation of a "hierarchy within the exception", in relation to her discussion of intersecting inequalities and intimate partner violence in 'post war' Peru (2010a: 15). While following a Butlerian framework of gender performativity and normative violence, Boesten (like Butler) also draws upon Agamben's notion of the "state of exception" (2010a: 7). As Boesten explains (2010a: 8), the latter refers to a "state of ontological suspension" occupied by the figure Agamben infamously referred to as "bare life" ('*homo sacer*') (Agamben 1995)— or a subject stripped of political status or legal protection. However, whereas Agamben's formulation of "bare life" assumes a figure "outside" of, and thus "abandoned" by political power (Wilcox 2015: 162), Boesten (2010a: 14) leans on Butler's notion of "normative violence" to reinsert the

productive power and *relational* force of (gendered, racialised, and class) norms in constituting "stratifications" of bare life/lives. Crucially, she proposes that while

> "[t]he notion of bare life is powerful as it invokes processes of dehumanization and the possibility of horrendous violence perpetrated upon bodies… [however] it does not allow for *subtleties* that may keep people at the margins of the polis, in the permanent uncertainty of becoming subject to such extreme exception" (2010a: 8, emphasis added)

The nuances of Boesten's formulation of intersecting violences and inequalities allow me to maintain a productive tension in relation to Cristina's case—which, as interlocutors precisely highlight, demonstrates the enduring role of patriarchal regulatory practices and sexist exclusions in Guatemala. Indeed, as one interlocutor powerfully noted, Cristina may have emerged representationally as an upper-middle class *ladina*, with a family whose material and symbolic resources have allowed them to engender (discursive) support at the level of the state and society for her case; however "she had other kinds of needs… other things that she lacked" (Interviewee 2, 18.11.13). In this critical intervention, I suggest that the figure of Cristina comes to embody the "ideal woman" within Guatemala's racist nation-building discourses. This gendered figure occupies a space that Nelson cogently described as

> "[t]he violence of the restricted economy of education, property ownership… citizenship rights… domestic violence… [and] the intense and voluptuous romanticization of heterosexual love [and reproduction] that saturates [white/ladina woman's] coming of reproductive age." (Nelson 1999: 216-7).

The notion of "hierarchies within the exception" is both a conceptually useful way to (re)articulate "El Caso Siekavizza" within a framework that articulates how race/ism and class/ism operates through this case (in relation to "the others"), while still drawing attention to the norms that provide the conditions of possibility for otherwise 'privileged' women to be "undone" by femicidal violence (Boesten 2010a: 8).

In attempting to reorient the hegemonic narratives in relation to the meanings and implications of the case, feminist and social justice interlocutors often returned to the issue of what such a highly visible case of domestic violence femicide *within* the domain of the middle-upper class ladino elite might (inadvertently) highlight. Several

interlocutors noted that "El Caso Siekavizza" inserted the historically silenced and normatively obscured problem of *violencia intrafamiliar* amongst the ladino-elite into mainstream discourses (Interviewee 2, 18.11.13; Interviewee 8, 29.01.14; Interviewee 29, 25.02.15). One interlocutor alleged that since the emergence of the case, incidences of domestic violence reporting amongst "upper and middle class women has increased" (Interviewee 8, 29.01.14)— a claim which, although unable to be corroborated by the limited available data (Musalo et al. 2010), was echoed in other exchanges and encounters during fieldwork (Interviewee 2, 18.11.13; Interviewee 10, 30.01.14). Indeed, according to the latter accounts, the stories that have emerged regarding Cristina's experiences with a controlling and abusive husband have helped destabilise the (certainly not Guatemala-specific) myth that domestic violence and femicide is only committed by a (racist and classed) stereotype of indigenous and poor ladino men (Equipo Regional 2013: 10; Ramirez et al. 2014). Revealingly, while reflecting on the "insertion of femicidio" into mainstream political narratives, one interlocutor suggested that "El Caso Siekavizza" had helped increase the cultural "legitimation" of the Law Against Femicide: "before Cristina's disappearance… nobody thought the Law Against Femicide was needed" (Interviewee 21, 27.10.14). The implication, not lost on feminist interlocutors, is that several years after Congress passed this divisive law, it took the disappearance of a middle-upper class *ladina* woman to lend weight to the law's object of intervention (namely, femicidal violence against women in Guatemala) (eg., Interviewee 3, 21.01.14).

The government and mainstream media's production of "El Caso Siekavizza" *as culturally emblematic* is thus understood to have (perhaps inadvertently) mobilised national conversations about the "reach" of domestic violence and impunity (Interviewee 2, 18.11.13). Interestingly, by articulating *violencia intrafamiliar* within the racial and economic circles normatively constituted as exempt from the violence ostensibly located within bodies and spatialities marked by poverty and race/ism (Ferriera da Silva 2012: 382), we might infer that "El Caso Siekavizza" undermines essentialist discourses that criminalise economically and racially marginalised men as 'natural' perpetrators of *violencia intrafamiliar* (although, as the next chapter discusses, such discourses are powerfully articulated in domains of "public" gendered violence). In drawing out the implications of "El Caso Siekavizza" to a wider field of *violencia intrafamiliar* victims*,* these critical narratives might partially consolidate the

hegemonic emphasis on the conceptually limited domain of *domestic* violence within the context of a heterosexual-couple and nuclear family unit. Still, I propose that these interventions are nonetheless important critical (re)readings, or counter-hegemonic discourses, since they reinsert questions of institutionalised inequalities, power relations, and ideological norms into discussions of this violence (Wilson 2015: 820-824). By integrating these themes into the discussion of "El Caso Siekavizza", and domestic violence more generally, the depoliticised-privatised approach of the VIF framework is, I suggest, productively destabilised. To paraphrase Butler, such a disruption to the dominant frames guiding interpretations of violence, can create the conditions for wider challenges to the norms and practices that "produce certain subjects as "recognisable"", while dehumanising, differentiating, or occluding others (2010: 6).

While femicide and gendered violence against racially and economically-marginalised bodies marks the historical and contemporary topographies of impunity in Guatemala (CEH 1999; Ertürk 2005), a (re)reading of "El Caso Siekavizza" underlines how embedded patriarchal regimes authorise violence against women otherwise accorded certain privileges on account of racial and class norms. Certainly, while *Cristina* does not materialise as a "disposable woman" (Wright 2006a)—a nameless or faceless victim of gendered violence (next chapter)— "El Caso Siekavizza" discloses how, despite the "differentiated marginalities" that more readily normalise violence done to bodies marked as worthless, "social class or ethnicity" does not prevent femicide against subjects 'like Cristina', but rather, may "produce different outcomes" in the field of representation (Boesten 2014: 59).

What gets illuminated within the domain of critical discourses around "El Caso Siekavizza", and, indeed, what I hope to have illuminated through my own analytical interrogations of Cristina's discursive representation, is precisely the interconnections between the production of gendered bodies (and violences) that matter, and those that seem to matter less, or that fail to matter, or even register (Butler 1993a; Wilcox 2015). Foregrounding how Cristina's body materialises through a complex nexus of norms and regulatory power that help organise the parameters of other femicide victims, establishes the need for a *relational* engagement with ideologically and contextually differentiated bodies of femicidal violence. To generate critical

(re)readings of "El Caso Siekavizza", and of the VIF framework through which it emerges, the accounts within this chapter gesture at the indispensability of drawing upon a field of cases with distinctive subject, spatial, and temporal coordinates.

Conclusion

Building on the analysis in chapter 4, this chapter has identified important links with, on the one hand, the efforts to mobilise and consolidate a VIF frame under the Patriot Party government, and, on the other hand, the emergence of "El Caso Siekavizza" as a politically 'recognisable' and socially 'emblematic' femicide in Guatemala. Through a discussion and analysis of these links, I was able to identify and elucidate the ways in which the discursive and policy recognition of VIF-related femicide is ideological and, furthermore, hierarchical.

The hierarchal nature of the VIF formation—and the complexities within that hierarchy – became a point of focus when I explored how those femicide victims who fail to meet the identity-criteria within the VIF formation are obscured and/or differentiated by way of textual and visual normative codes. Linking the VIF discursive-policy formation to the emergence of the emblematic case of Cristina Siekavizza helped illustrate the ways in which subjective, spatial, and temporal markers work productively to help reconstitute the racialised, gendered, and classed boundaries that hierarchically differentiate other femicide victims. Drawing on the narratives of feminist and social justice interlocutors in Guatemala alongside the hegemonic narratives from the Patriot Party government and mainstream media, I suggested that there are important discursive limits in relation to the political space that a contemporary domestic violence femicide (contained within the terms of the VIF frame) might provide to articulate a historical and structural reading of Guatemala's violence. This is particularly true where femicide cases and femicidal violences are represented as isolated, and, crucially, depoliticised events, removed from on-going social processes and relations of inequality. As I move into the next chapter, I contemplate femicide victims whose bodies, and cases, materialise in the spatial domain of the "public", and according to a distinct, albeit interrelated, discursive formation of "(in)security".

Chapter 6 – "*La basura de la sociedad*"[23]: The Spatial Politics of "(In)security" and the Staging of "Public" Femicides

"The counterinsurgency strategy is operating today here in Guatemala… during peacetime. Obviously it isn't named as such. Now, how is it named? It's called 'eradication of citizen insecurity', right? Today it's called… 'better security for the people', right? Today it's called… well, 'mano dura' [iron fist]. *That's what it's called."* (Interviewee 3, 21.01.14)

Introduction

Luisa Fernanda Ramos Guidel, a 14-year-old student, was the victim of a femicide that occurred in January 2015. A part of her dismembered body was found in a garbage bin in Mixco, Guatemala City, where the adolescent lived with her grandmother. The rest of her remains were found scattered around the city. The report, as published in *Prensa Libre*, came accompanied with a photo: the body part in question covered with a tarp and surrounded by male authorities. In addition to describing the overkill exercised against her body, the article explained that friends and relatives were unsure whether Luisa had a boyfriend or if she had received "gang threats" (Patzan 2015b). In the newspaper's only immediate follow-up coverage, her murder was crystallised as "gang-related" (Alvaro et al. 2015). Luisa's murder happened three years into the tenure of an administration that was brought to power, at least in part, by its promises to end violence and citizen insecurity (Grivalja 2015). Moreover, it transpired approximately two weeks after President Molina delivered the government's annual report, in which he asserted that violent deaths of women had declined, and, that 2015 would be the "year of no violence". In an interview shortly following the presentation of the annual report, Molina was asked about the 488 "violent homicides" that had been registered in Guatemala for the month of January, to which the President responded that this violence was occurring between "gangs" and "delinquents", who were responsible for throwing the country into disarray (Molina 2015).

This chapter departs from the sphere of the "private" in relation to regulatory representations of femicide, and thus moves away from questions of domestic violence within the context of a couple in the nuclear family home. While the politics of *"violencia intrafamiliar"* continues to be implicated in the discussion, the present

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[23] (Interviewee 3, 21.01.14)

analysis considers a parallel formation within the discursive economy of gendered violence in Guatemala. Broadly speaking, it contemplates the hegemonic regulatory discourse of *"la inseguridad"* (the "(in)security" framework) during the Patriot Party's tenure. What interests me in this chapter are the dialectics between government and popular notions of public insecurity and crime, the regulation of gendered violence and its alleged perpetrators, and the interpellation of victims of femicide (found) within *public* spatialities. I propose that the (in)security formation, like the VIF framework, is expressed within both political-policy imperatives and cultural-moral regimes which structure the interpretation of bodies of violence. Whereas the government's VIF framework ostensibly regulates insecurity within the private sphere of the home through an explicit reference to victims of domestic violence (and "the family"); the (in)security framework maps and regulates a range of violences across "public" spatialities of Guatemalan social life. And, although violence against women is not the only form of violence explicitly addressed within this "public" framework, femicide and other forms of gendered violence are emerging as key sites where meanings of, and responses to, the country's misleadingly named "new violence" (recall chapter 3) get constituted.

This chapter therefore contemplates the intersections between discourses and policies linked to public "(in)security", on the one hand, and the so-called "garbage of society" ("public" femicide victims), on the other. In order to explore the discursive-material logics that circulate for non-VIF femicide victims, I highlight some of the policy and representational practices that regulate crime and (in)security in the public domain. Crucially, building off the previous chapter's analysis, I begin with the assumption that any victim of femicide addressed in this chapter is precisely not *another* Cristina Siekavizza (or President Molina's "*muchas Cristinas*"); she is, owing to the coordinates of the event of her death, and by way of how her embodiment materialises, *an other to* Cristina. The various sites considered here—such as a ravine, a ditch next to a highway, the street outside a public school, or a motel in the city—are not where we will 'find' a victim like Cristina. The subjects/bodies of violence cited in this chapter do not materialise representationally along the same subject coordinates that produce Cristina, and victims like her, as a *marked loss* to the body politic. Nor are these victims, or cases of violence, interpellated in relation to a policy framework of domestic violence, as such— even where a(n) (past or current) intimate

or familial relation with the perpetrator is ascertainable. However, it is not just that the victims cited in this chapter are *not marked as losses*; nor is it that they emerge within a hierarchy where *their deaths fail to matter*, or even register, leaving them largely *invisible* to mainstream discourses (eg., Mindy Rodas, Adela Chacon-Tax, Candeleria Lopez). Instead, a key point of analytical interlocution emerges from my observation that these "public" victims *are marked*, *are visible*, and that they *do matter*— but seemingly, only insofar as their bodies are absorbed within a wider insecurity formation in which the destruction of "undesirable" subjects can be implicitly read as social and moral gains for the body politic.

If, as chapter 4 proposed, victims of "private sphere" femicide are interpellated through the ideal of the wife/mother within the nuclear family, and according to the assumption that security (and violence) "begins in the home", what becomes of the victims of violence outside of this supposedly private spatiality? In mediating "public" violence through a framework of "(in)security", how does the field of (in)visibility and (mis)recognition get restructured for femicides in this domain? As part of my efforts to address these questions, I explore how the spatiality of these "public" acts, or events, of violence codes, and is coded by, racialised, classed, and gendered markers that circulate within discursive and policy articulations of 'post war' insecurity and criminal violence. I am particularly motivated by my field observations, during which I noticed a distinct pattern of visual representation for "public" as opposed to "private" femicide victims (the deployment of body as opposed to facial images in media accounts). I also discerned that, across political and cultural discourses, "public" victims were often marked according to the logics and discursive codes that circulated for those conceptualised as perpetrators of public violence and insecurity, or as responsible for social disintegration—namely, through the tropes of "gangs", "delinquents" and/or "prostitutes".

I propose that femicides "located" within public spatialities, and victims whose bodies are called upon to mark their deaths, fail to fully "qualify" as victims. Instead, their deaths are situated in the domain of "criminality" and "social decay"— deployed within a wider ideological script of 'post war' violence that, as part of its internal logic, casts the material destruction of these bodies as the fault of the victim, deserved, or even as "gains" to the moral fabric of Guatemalan society. While less

explicitly focused on the object of femicide than the VIF framework, interrogating the parameters of the government's public (in)security framework is crucial to building an understanding of what happens to public femicide victims— to recognising the broader logics at work in the discursive representations of their bodies as the "disposable" aftermath of an insecure public spatiality.

In the analysis that follows, space, (public) violence, and (public) bodies are figured as "productive resource[s]" (Nelson 1999: 118) within a wider moral and political economy that instrumentalises, rather than obscures, phenomena like femicide. The ideological practices underpinning the (in)security policy formation, and which likewise work through other representational domains, suggest a racialising of space within the Guatemalan government's gendered necropolitics. Recalling a theoretical idiom introduced in chapter 3: "necropolitics" provides a critical corrective to Foucault's "biopolitics", opening a conceptual space to explore how "death structures" exercises of power against, and thus the conditions of life for, historically subjugated groups (Mbembe 2003: 39-40). My empirical emphasis on "space"— namely, on the so-called "public" and urban topographies of Guatemala City—builds on a still nascent literature that draws from critical human geography studies and the anthropology of space in addressing the "shifting coordinates" of crime and danger (Evans and Giroux 2015; McIlwaine and Moser 2004, 2007). This analysis is marked by the question of "[h]ow space [is] a key resource" in government interventions into forms of insecurity, and furthermore, in the cultural representations "that seek to clarify material and symbolic boundaries between differently positioned or valued groups of citizens" (Thomas et al. 2011: 10-11). Also motivating this discussion is precisely the noted scarcity of academic consideration as to how "public" articulations of femicide and gendered violence collide within a nexus of political, policy, and media discourses of urban violence in Guatemala[24] (Benson et al. 2008: 51).

My analysis also figures violence as a "productive resource" (Nelson 1999: 118) in the field of 'post war' insecurity. As field interlocutors reminded me, political citations of (that is to say, references to) violence can engender symbolic and material capital for the government's regulation of gendered violence (financial aid, for

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[24] This is a void that continues within some otherwise excellent recent edited volumes on the subject: see for example McAllister and Nelson 2013 and Thomas et al. 2011.

example, is seen to carry forms of legitimacy) (Interviewee 28, 23.02.15). I therefore also concentrate on how the policy regulation of "public" violence draws on historical practices in the mark of legitimising (re)militarised approaches to (in)security. Appreciating the way in which priorities at the level of political economy are implicated in the Patriot Party's (in)security agenda adds an important layer to how we might interpret the representational domain of "public" femicides. Specifically, it casts suspicion on the performative staging of this violence—on its political citation, or the cultural 'visibility' of (particular) bodies within media domains. One feminist interlocutor proposed that there is an "exploitation of femicide" in Guatemala (Interviewee 3, 21.01.14). Her intervention serves as a reminder that analysing political responses to gendered violence requires attending to the instrumental value that violence carries to the imperatives of an(y) administration that leans on the country's (sense of) insecurity to (re)activate the legitimacy of hegemonic powers (El Observador 2012).

Although I once again situate my analytical focus on the Patriot Party administration, I trace the genealogy of discourses linked to "(in)security" within other 'post war' administrations, and highlight the precursors from Guatemala's counterinsurgency war, particularly the on-going political mobilisation of a fluid, and yet stubbornly racialised "internal enemy". As I discuss, the *marero* or *delincuente* figures as the contemporary "internal enemy" through which fears and anxieties about criminal violence are channelled. I suggest that this discourse helps mark boundaries between "good citizens" and "undesirable bodies", in a narrative that intersects with, and informs, the meanings that emerge for public femicidal violence. In tracing the Patriot Party's (in)security practices, I pay particular attention to the logics operating in relation to the government's idea of "at risk" youth, as well as their spatial "mappings" of "insecure" areas; I suggest that these practices performatively constitute *marginalised* bodies and spaces as (inherent) sites of (future) criminal violence. In order to support these claims, I draw from government policies and speeches made in the mark of "security". In an important departure from the VIF framework, the logic within the insecurity formation produces the bodies (and spaces) requiring intervention as perpetrators (and sites) of violence, and thus as targets of militarised-state force, rather than as (potential) victim subjects of state protection—

even as this form of "protection" is, as chapter 4 in particular showed, more rhetorical than substantive.

I propose that the dyad of the perpetrator of public violence as the "marginalised" *marero* or *delincuente*, and the *marera*, *prostituta*, or so-called "public woman" as (his) victim, is most productively approached as a nexus for racialised, gendered and classed regulatory articulations of space and bodily meaning. As I demonstrate through a series of "public" femicide cases, because *both* the (alleged) perpetrators and victims of this violence are discursively tied within a normative imaginary of criminality, moral decay, and urban violence, the boundaries between the two groups dissolve, and victims' bodies "bleed" into a domain of blame and disposability (although, crucially, not invisibility).

Towards the end of the chapter, my focus shifts towards representations circulating in mainstream media accounts of "public" femicidal violence. As in chapter 5, I situate the mainstream commercial media as a communicative sphere within which norms are reproduced, and, therefore, as a central governing technology for the consolidation of "state-desired scopic regimes" (Evans and Giroux 2015: 136). I examine the performative staging of a selection of cases that I locate within the "(in)security" framework, where social imaginaries linking pervasive violence to the menace of "gangs", "delinquents", "crime", and "moral decay" help constitute the field of interpellation for victims of "public" femicide. In contrast to my analysis of "El Caso Siekavizza", which drew from extensive material, my ability to detail the coordinates of cases in this chapter is constrained by the (revealing) fact that representations in the mainstream media are often limited to once-off coverage of a case, and interpellation by government interlocutors is scarce. Still, because the bodies of "public femicide" *do* emerge representationally—that is, they are visible bodies, but not recognised victims—this analysis explores the idea that "public" bodies are performing an important role in relation to the government's insecurity formation. This discussion leads me to reflect on the complex relationship between (femicidal) violence and visibility—questioning, in particular, how the reproduction of (normalised) violence leans on forms of "seeing", and how disposability is realised *through* forms of political citation and cultural visibility. Exploring how femicide emerges within this field of public violence suggests that the political interpellation of 'post war'

insecurity has highly gendered consequences—both in relation to policy interventions, and in relation to the spectrum, or *forms*, of femicidal (in)visibility and (mis)recognition.

Situating Fears of Violence and Insecurity

During a conversation one evening with the housekeeper of the family residence in Guatemala City where I stayed during fieldwork, the topic of violence and insecurity came up. It was February 2015, and the country's many political parties had pre-emptively started campaigning, with leaders making anticipated appeals to what is widely regarded to be one of the most prominent concerns amongst Guatemalans: the lack of security and the fear of (criminal) violence (McAllister and Nelson 2013). Since Guatemala's democratic-transition, election years have been notorious for seeing elevated rates of violence, in the already pervasively violent country (Benson et al. 2008). Any citation of the "increases" in violence needs to be interrogated, however. Indeed, efforts to "contextualize" Guatemala are complicated by the fact that "[a]nalytical strategies of contextualization are… inextricably tied to systems of representation" (Posocco 2014a: 24). As some observers caution in relation to the so-called "increases" of violence during election years, it may be more apt to posit that it is the *reporting and political citation* of violence that actually increases during political campaigns: interlocutors suggested that political parties regulate and even commission forms of non-state/criminal violence in order to procure fear amongst the public, and thus to mobilise political capital for militarised and "iron fist" approaches to crime (Interviewee 25, 11.02.15; Interviewee 4, 23.02.15).

In the aforementioned exchange, the housekeeper, Andrea*[25], was speaking of the fear she constantly carries of being robbed or physically attacked by "*mareros*" [gang members] on her weekly bus commute between Guatemala City (where she works all week) and the department of Chimaltenango (where she spends every other weekend with family). When I asked her how often attacks take place on these buses, she responded that every one of the women who work as housekeepers in the condominium had been victimised at least once. She then recounted that a "white

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[25] Pseudonym.

taxi" driver had killed one of these women a few months ago[26]. About a month later, the private home where this woman had worked was robbed; initial investigations suggested that this had been the work of the taxi driver and his accomplices, who had stolen her keys, and then murdered her and left her in a ditch off of a main street. Andrea pointed out that in addition to most of the belongings in the house where this woman had worked, that the dog was also stolen; Andrea suggested that this might have been for the purposes of extracting a ransom from the owners. When I enquired as to whether she knew if the woman's murder had received any investigation, she shrugged and replied, "I don't think so … poor thing" (Author Field Notes, 11.02.15).

In the context of the present analysis, two key aspects of Andrea's account are paramount: first, the seeming *total-ness* of the violence that had impacted the housekeepers working in this condominium. Whether in the form of extortions and abuse on their bus rides, or learning that one of these women had recently been killed, and that there seemed to be more knowledge about the robbery at her employer's home a month later than as to the outcome of the case of her murder— the violences illuminated by her account are both extreme and yet quotidian. What is perhaps more relevant to highlight, however, is that prior to Andrea's accounts of violence, we had been discussing the visibility of militarised-police across public spaces in Guatemala City. Whereas I expressed feeling *less secure*, even *threatened*, by the presence of armed men when I navigated through the streets of the city, Andrea had offered a contrary perspective: she had explained to me that she feels safer and calmer when she sees armed police or soldiers. She preferred this to walking alone in the streets, or, even worse, to encountering armed "*mareros*" or "*delincuentes*" [delinquents].

Returning to the above exchange, I realize how my differential—and indeed, privileged—positionality (Smith 1974), is implicated in my perceptions of violence and state responses to it. Thinking through these "paradoxes of violence" in "peacetime" Guatemala with a sensitivity that acknowledges (without uncritically accepting) people's "understandable desire no longer to live with insecurity" (Benson et al. 2008), I take cues from Nelson's approach to her ethnographic encounters in Guatemala (1999, 2009) in avoiding simplistic assumptions that those who support

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[26] In Guatemala, "white taxis" are known for being cheaper but more dangerous than "yellow taxis". This is partially because, unlike the more expensive yellows taxis, they have no central controllers.

populist authoritarian politics and militarised state responses to (perceived) violence are "illogical" or "duped". Here I am furthermore influenced by McIlwaine and Moser's study of urban poor perceptions of violence in Colombia and Guatemala, which highlights "how fear of violence is not experienced solely by the middle and upper classes as is often assumed" (2007: 117-8). These are particularly important considerations when, as in the exchange cited above, sympathy with those policies is expressed by an interlocutor who is genuinely more vulnerable to this violence on account of her social and symbolic location as a female, indigenous, domestic worker.

Situating fears of violence and feelings of insecurity in Guatemala necessarily requires engaging with the country's history (as discussed in chapter 1), but doing so is also an empirical question that demands working through the contemporary coordinates of 'post war' governance under the PP. Indeed, why has the most popular response to violence involved electing an ex-military General to the Office of the Presidency, arming branches of the state with the intellectual and material force of the military, and public demands to overturn the ban on capital punishment, expressed most clearly in public lynching? (Burrell 2013). Why, in 'post war' Guatemala is "the military involved in *everything*"? (Author Field Notes, 23.02.15). The comment about the military's involvement "in everything" emerged in a personal exchange during fieldwork, after I expressed curiosity as to why a soccer field for youth in Guatemala City had a large sign of the Guatemalan military over it—and it should not be discarded as colourful hyperbole. Indeed, it is inflected by wider (conflicting) sentiments (of support, repudiation, indifference, or silence) across the body politic about the "place" of the armed wing of the state in civil society (O'Neill and Thomas 2011; Wilkinson 2002). Not far from where this exchange took place, I noted some graffiti along a highway known as "*la carretera El Salvador*", which read: "the Guatemalan military works for everyone", and, underneath this line was one of the PP's slogans, "Security, Justice, and Peace" (Author Field Notes, 23.02.15). While these examples speak to the notion of the pervasive presence of the military, there is societal tension in relation to whether this is a good or a bad thing. But if "public" violence and insecurity—particularly femicides within this spatial logic— tends to be exercised against subjects/bodies that fail to "matter" within hegemonic imaginaries, why is the "obsession" with regulating violence shared by the very people whose lives *do* "matter", or by a government that is organised to respond to the desires of the

latter? (Batres 2012). As many have noted, while Guatemala is marked by pervasive urban violence, it is also marked by widespread popular perceptions, and fear of, that violence (eg., Moser and McIlwaine 2004, 2007); there is indeed an important representational angle to this 'violence versus perceptions of violence' dynamic (Torres 2014). "[I]mages of bloody corpses and bullet-ridden cars dominate the mass media" (Benson et al. 2008: 39); the reality of violence is thus translated into repetitive political and media performances that inundate citizens with citations of violence. Andrea's account seemed to locate *mareros* and *delincuentes* as the key sources of her feelings of insecurity— but her reading resonates within a broader discursive field of Guatemala's 'post war' crime and violence.

Genealogy of *"La (In)Seguridad"* and the *"Enemigo Interno"*: Counterinsurgent Histories

While it is important to consider the "practices and representational frames that have [symbolically] produced" (Posocco 2014a: 26) Guatemala as a space marked by violence, it is nonetheless pertinent to note that the country—and Latin America more generally— is indeed plagued by some of the highest indices of homicide and violence against women for so-called "non-conflict" zones, in the world (Auyero 2015; Moser and McIlwaine 2004). It is precisely against this "contextual" backdrop that the trope of "(in)security" has propelled itself to the forefront of political discourse, popular discussions, and policy-agendas (El Salvador et al. 2014; Thomas et al. 2011). Indeed, *"la seguridad"* was the principal campaign promise of Molina's Patriot Party in the run up to the 2007 and 2011 elections. As one interlocutor interpreted it, the second campaign in particular "was based on violence" and the social imaginaries that Molina, in particular, utilized were steeped in a "military logic" for how to deal with violence, and in a "military vision of the future" (Interviewee 28, 23.02.15)— (the PP's symbol is literally a clenched fist). Relatedly, a constellation of retired military men, 'old' money oligarchs, and 'new' corporate (often cited as including "*narco*", or drug-trade linked) businessmen has integrated the PP since they entered office (El Observador 2012). For many onlookers, this signals the strategic interest of the military faction to reconsolidate its position at the frontlines of governance over public life in Guatemala— and to realign with oligarchic powers after this historic alliance split in the wake of the 'post war' transition (Rettberg 2007).

The visible and invisible "movement of military personnel within this government" has been called a "pact of impunity" in relation to historic violences— (see chapter 7) (Interviewee 28, 23.02.15; Interviewee 4, 23.02.15). But the (re)alliance has also been deemed a strategic move to consolidate an institutional and ideological framework that allows government, military, and business elite to protect political-economic interests— namely, within the mark of the (in)security framework for public violence one finds "the culmination of decades-long trajectories of mixing national security with profit making" (McAllister and Nelson 2013: 31). As one feminist activist put it, "national security policy is… military security… violence against violence… [it is] a construction that… favours their military industry" (Interviewee 7, 23.01.14). The issue is not merely that the PP is understood to have actively (re)militarized civil society through policy approaches that integrate soldiers into police task forces, but, moreover, that ex-military personnel active during the counterinsurgency war have integrated government and public positions:

> "in all the key positions of government… there are military. Well, military or ex-military… and pro-military people… It closes democratic spaces that existed." (Interviewee 17, 06.02.14)

> "Security companies are the property of military or ex-military-personnel… [they] manage them. And so of course there is a remilitarization. That is crystal clear with the leadership of an ex-General [Molina]. And it's also the form that it takes. Militarization is at all levels. They're giving media positions to them… [to] ex-military personnel. We're going back to how it was in the fifties and sixties… who were the teachers? The wives of military men. That's where we are." (Interviewee 2, 18.11.13)

According to critical circles of civil society, the (re)alliance between the military and oligarchy is partially based on their "united front" against judicial trials seeking to set precedents against impunity for historic violence (chapter 6). In relation to the public "(in)security" framework, however, this alliance is historically significant in very particular areas of the country's political and moral economy. As several interlocutors reminded me, the logics at work within the PP's institutional expressions of "*mano dura*" policies (such as *"escuadrones militares"*, or "military squads"), and in the discursive construction of an "internal enemy" allegedly responsible for all 'post war'

violence (the "*mareros*" and "*delincuentes*"), reverberate with the ideological grammar of Guatemala's counterinsurgency war (Interviewee 4, 23.02.15; Interviewee 28, 23.02.15). The sociopolitical processes through which a notion of an "enemy within" have been generated, and indeed, extended and re-signified, are part of a long historical genealogy that cannot be fully accounted for here (see CEH 1999; Landau 1988; ODHAG 1998). However, it is crucial to foreground the roots of the "internal enemy" construct within a National Security Doctrine (NSD) that was articulated through densely racialised, classed and gendered variables (Oglesby and Ross 2009: 27). While it is true that "[t]here has never been any shortage of *enemigos internos…* in Guatemala" (Posocco 2014a: 29), there is a limited variation in the tableau of subject(ive) coordinates said to embody the figure of the "enemy" of the nation— moving from the (perceived) guerrilla or communist sympathizer of the internal armed conflict ("the Maya"- an over-simplified catchment for the indigenous population) to the (alleged) source of contemporary criminal violence within political and popular depictions (the *marero* or *delincuente*)— one notes that (s)he is suspiciously marked by "undesirable" race, class and gender norms (Camus 2009).

Despite the particularities of Guatemalan racism and the revolutionary-phobias of the country's elites, it is important to recall that the notion of the "internal enemy" arrived on Guatemalan (and, more generally, Latin American) soil by way of dense Cold War geopolitics, rather than in a vacuum of purely domestic interests in destroying the (perceived) "support base" of the armed guerrilla struggle (Oglesby and Ross 2009: 27). Indeed, the United States was a crucial player in generating the ideological and material foundations for Guatemalan elites' successful mobilisation of the "spectre of communism" as a rationale for overt state necropolitics against those constructed as internal enemies (Gramajo Morales 1995; Schirmer 1998). It is well documented how a storm of elite-business-military interests within Guatemala, as well as the interests of its geopolitical superpower to the north, triggered the country's counterinsurgent violence. Between the mid 1950's and 1980's this violence metastasized from targeting labour and peasant union leaders, to educated and progressive urban intellectuals and politicians, and culminated in an extensive genocidal campaign of terror against the country's indigenous majority (Carmack 1988; Perera 1995; Smith 1990). As the contemporary landscape of (in)security politics demonstrates, the "internal enemy" has moved into a 'post war' terrain fertile with violence and fear,

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even if the coordinates of these phenomena have shifted (Thomas et al. 2011). Through political and mainstream media discourses, the "internal enemy" label has found its home in the "tattooed, cold-eyed faces" of *mareros* (McAllister and Nelson 2013: 39), who are seen less as the vestiges of a once revolutionary future shattered in the wake of counterinsurgency terror and neoliberal "aftermath", and more as the absolute expression of Guatemala's criminal violence, moral decay, and social "pathologies" (Levenson 2013: 195-6). This imaginary has important consequences on the bodies of those who—by way of spatial and subjective contingencies—are absorbed into a narrative of "peacetime" criminal violence that is at least partially channelled through the "problem" of femicide (McAllister and Nelson 2013: 7).

'Post war' Social-Racial Criminalising Narratives

In the 'post war' milieu, the "*enemigo interno*" has proven a useful ideological vessel for Guatemalan politicians eager to deflect accusation and accountability for violence away from the state, military, and political-economic elites (Benson et al. 2008). Indeed, since long before Molina's administration, 'post war' regulations of violence through the production of an internal "target" have mobilised a series of "*mano dura*" policy platforms that "discursively delegitimate" the Peace Accords in calling for militarised responses to violence, in place of the urgently needed socio-structural reforms (Snodgrass Godoy 2005: 613).

For example, Samayoa's research highlights the way in which the first 'post war' regimes of Alvaro Arzu (1996 – 2000) and Oscar Berger (2000 – 2004), approached the problem of insecurity from a militarised perspective, (re)operationalizing the concept of the "internal enemy" with a view to "privatizing" the security industry so as to benefit their own interests (2009: 367). However, this is not just a construction grounded in political-economic calculations; it is deeply inflected by (moralising) norms that produce certain bodies as undesirable and/or threats to the body politic. As Sanford has argued (2003, 2008), the deployment of the "internal enemy" label has *never* been neutral in relation to gendered violence: whether mobilised by government, police, judicial, or media interlocutors, she shows how appeals to an "internal enemy" or "subversive" consistently produces highly gendered outcomes for (representations of) victims of (historical) sexual and (contemporary) femicidal

violence. In Sanford's discourse analysis of femicidal violence and impunity during the Presidency of Berger (2004 – 2008), for example, she suggests:

> "… there is a particular lexicon that we can trace from the 1980s to the present. In the 1980s, the military regimes blamed the victims by calling them subversives… in contemporary cases… [they] have dismissed the victims as less than worthy by calling them gang-members, blamed the gangs for all the violence" (2008: 119-20).

Under the PP's rule, the scapegoating of "gang members" continues. Indeed, as noted in the introduction to this chapter, President Molina's response to an unfavourable report on the country's violence in the first month of 2015—the same month that he declared 2015 to be the "year of no violence"—was to blame all homicides on inter-fighting between *"maras"* and *"pandillas"*[27] (Molina 2015). In response to the report, which noted that the month of January 2015 ended with 488 violent deaths, Molina "reassured that the better part of the assassinations that occurred... are due to the fray between gangs" (ibid.). His declaration both displaces the state's role as a perpetrator of violence, or as accountable for preventing it (a strategy we also saw in relation to the VIF framing of "private sphere" femicides), and, moreover, implies that the dead represented within January's statistics are "only" gang members, and therefore inconsequential (Interviewee 7, 23.01.14). Indeed, the coup achieved by his administration's consistent linking of the numbers of the dead with "undesirable" members of the body politic, (who are ostensibly responsible for their own fates, and further still, for the criminal havoc wreaked on "good Guatemalans"), is precisely that it "disappears" (Stanley 2011: 5) both the quantitative and qualitative contours of the country's violence so that few "real", or at least "unambiguous" victims (Boesten 2014: 89) remain.

But the deployment of the "gang" label works not only through the assumption of the criminal and violent nature of its subject—it is also an inescapably racialised frame that works through an ideological nexus that articulates youth males within bodies that are considered "more poor, [more] informal, and [more] Indian" (Camus 2009: 352). As Camus explains, the ethnic representation of gangs is intimately tied to their

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[27] Another word for "gangs".

spatial-cum-ideological positioning within urban poor communities— therefore, whether they are *"ladino", "indio"*, or *"mestizo"* (2009: 352) obscures the substantive point about how race gets produced through social status, class, gender, and the alleged activities of subjects linked to "gang" or "criminal" violence. Indeed, recalling a point from chapter 4, taxonomic orderings around race in Guatemala materialise on an "extremely slippery" terrain that is always already embedded in gendered and class formations (Gonzales Ponciano 2013: 313). Discourses that articulate young men within urban poor areas as *"mareros"* are therefore embedded in the same significations that articulate them as racially inferior (Camus 2009). Crucially, if racialisation proceeds by way of these types of coordinates, this hints at how discursively tying the bodies of victims of "public" femicide to "gangs" or criminal violence is productive of political and societal responses that are qualitatively differentiated from those that the (faces of) victims tied to a nuclear family and home appear to solicit.

It is significant that the Molina administration has articulated the construction of its "internal enemy" (the *"marero"* and *"delincuente"*) within a highly regulated governance framework that insidiously marks its brand of "iron fist" politics as "iron fist *but within the law*" (López Bonilla 2012). Interestingly, Molina actually appears in a documentary that explores the politics of extra-judicial killings under the Berger administration's particular brand of *"mano dura",* which is considered to have included practices of social cleansing and widespread corruption. In the film, Molina (now sitting President) refers to Berger's government as taking actions that "exceeded itself [its power]... [going] outside everything that is prescribed within the law" (Siglo Veintiuno 2014). Implicit within his formulation is that his own administration is a foil against this "excess", fighting criminal activity *within* the confines of legality.

A feminist who works within both civil society circles and the Ministerio Publico suggested that Molina's is a less explicit "social cleansing" narrative than Berger's. She explained that the PP's "diverse ways" of addressing (in)security is indicative of this administration's strategic approach to "public" violence, which, unlike Berger's administration, makes it relatively "easy for [Molina] to place the discourse of violence against women" within the agenda for public security (Interviewee 27, 19.02.15). During an exchange with a group of feminists active in civil society

organisations, the matter was put more bluntly: violence against women was framed as a "neural point" through which the administration's political platform is differentially articulated—emerging as a "thematic focus on domestic violence and domestic femicides", on the one hand, and "a militarized focus" on public expressions of gendered violence, on the other (Interviewee 13, 02.02.14).

What appears to be novel about the PP's framework of "public (in)security", is how much it implicitly relies on the framework linked to the private VIF frame examined in chapters 4 and 5. The so-called "diversity" between the ways of addressing issues of "(in)security" leans profoundly, if not hinges upon, the spatiality of the violence— and thus on the *forms* of violence being mapped, and the *types* of victims/perpetrators being interpellated. Thus, while a distinctive governance framework is produced for subjects of violence in the private sphere as opposed to subjects of violence in the public sphere, the two are logically tied together— especially, I claim, where femicide is the object of intervention. Even as the government's regulation of the "private" domain reaches a closer approximation to the problem of femicide through the VIF framework, the regulation of violence in the public domain is discursively intertwined with the regulation of the private— *both* are thus highly gendered. Certainly, the public insecurity formation leans on a policy framework of spatially "mapping" public violence, (amongst which femicide is explicitly included) as well as on conceptually mapping the alleged perpetrators of this violence. Exploring this nexus is therefore crucial to understanding why victims of this violence get discursively located within this field of "criminality" and social decay.

Bodies of/in Violent Spaces

How might we theoretically inscribe the nature of this relationship between the spaces of gendered violence, or the interplay between the "contextual coordinates" of violence, and meaning-making across political and cultural sites of power? Gregory (2013) has cogently addressed the issue of how subjects and spatialities are discursively tied within the dialectics of counterinsurgent and military interventions into sites of non-state, or "illegitimate" insurgent violence. In his discussion of the "neo-orientalist scopic regimes" formed through practices of US military campaigns in Afghanistan and Iraq, he suggests that the ideological move of articulating, or "mapping" together, particular "types" of (dangerous) subjects to particular

spatialities allows for the collapsing of all visible subjects, or those "found" within those marked (dangerous) zones, into a nebulous idea of "risk" that must be eradicated (175). Underscoring "the performative role of what Foucault once called 'the nomination of the visible'", Gregory observes how US military logic conceptualises "insurgent" forces in these Middle East wars through a kind of "oncological metaphor". This insidious formation, he argues, generates the slippages whereby the killing of "innocent bodies" within those same spatialities is rationalized through recourse to the potential "spreading" of the "tumour" onto those bodies (the risk of more insurgent bodies), or by framing the destruction of "innocents" as collateral damage to "sav[ing] the body politic" (175). Gregory's insight regarding the dialectics of meaning in relation to violence, space, and bodies is crucial to my own analysis, as are Butler's recent observations concerning the power of hegemonic racist modes of interpellation—wherein, from urban pockets in the United States to the Gaza strip, subjects who might "appear" ("to us") as unambiguous victims of violence get (re)cast as threats (to valuable lives, or to valuable ways of life) (Butler 2015).

Now, it is important to caution against directly translating these observations, particularly Gregory's "oncological" analogy (2013: 175), to the context of military and state responses to public insecurity and gendered violence in Guatemala. There are important nuances that can be obscured in the process of such analytical transfers across spaces marked by distinctive temporalities and histories of colonial and imperial violence (Mbembe 2003; Smith 2005; Thobani 2007). And yet, I maintain that both Gregory's and Butler's analyses hold great resonance to the current discussion. Indeed, in Guatemala, as in other parts of Latin America where fear and "talk of crime" saturates daily life, the contemporary "nomination" of the gang member as the "visible" perpetrator of public violence and crime within government and popular discourse *has become* largely "inseparable from a series of truth claims" about *subjects linked to* this internal "target" (Gregory 2013: 175)—namely, the bodies of women violated, killed, or overkilled by acts of femicidal violence (again, irrespective of whether their deaths are proven to be at the hands of "*mareros*" or not).

But the issue is more complicated than this still: the contours of representation circulating for "public" femicide victims are not merely generated in relation to the

racialised male youth bodies that fill the social imaginary of "*mareros*" in Guatemala. Instead, societal hierarchies of gendered violence and its victims are (re)enacted by way of the discursive, aesthetic, and political representations of not just the (ostensible) *perpetrators* of violence, but of differentially located *victims*. Indeed, that the gendered bodies of public insecurity violence, represented through the dyad of "unworthy" victims and "targetable" perpetrators, are *both* conceived as "threats" (morally, if not also materially), should prompt consideration of the "meaning that is taking hold" (Butler 2015) within the logics of interpellation of gendered bodies who circumvent this "threat" narrative when they are framed as victims of private domestic violence. As Wilcox emphasises, while regulatory power helps produce and mark "certain bodies as killable yet ungrievable… the political work needed to strip [those] bodies of subjectivity" underscores "the interconnection between bodies" (2015: 162-3). I maintain that the discursive parameters for the "disposable" bodies of women conceived as "the garbage of society" (Interviewee 3, 21.01.14) are drawn by way of the ideal Guatemalan woman's face/body—a light(er) skinned heterosexual wife-mother subject more akin to Cristina Siekavizza— an ideal that is "required to circumscribe the domain of the [non-ideal] subject", however (un)stable and (in)coherent such formulations are (Posocco 2014a: 30-5).

That certain victims of femicidal domestic violence respond to a series of racialised, classed, and gendered interpellating calls cannot be understood in isolation from the figure(s) of *"las otras"*— subjects who are produced *as others* precisely through forms of interpellation that assume qualitative distinctions between victims. As Posocco has suggested, "[t]he social and cultural production of human disposability has long, profound and complex local histories" in the Guatemalan context (as it does elsewhere)—"zones" of "social death" occupied by disposable subjects thus depend on on-going "processes of expulsion or exclusion and [on] the redrawing of boundaries of belonging and unbelonging" (2014b: 81). From this perspective, the performative dynamics of designating meaning in relation to femicide victims are deeply relational (Butler 1993a). Whether embedded in policy interventions or within the narrative logics deployed by government or media interlocutors to reference cases, technologies of differentiation between ostensibly "private" as opposed to "public" acts of gendered violence help mark divisions that far exceed questions of space, since any spatialities are already over-determined by racialised, classed, and gendered

markers (Hanhardt 2013; Wright 2011). Crucially, then, representing a victim of domestic violence femicide as a "devoted wife" or "good mother", as opposed to designations of a "public" femicide victim as a "gang member's girlfriend" or "prostitute", are far from neutral descriptions. Rather, these are discursive tools that can (fail to) mobilise meanings about the (lack of) value of the (lost) life in question (Butler 2015). During a group discussion, one feminist offered a reflection on the policy implications of such discursive distinctions, as they get transferred into modes of political (in)action and investigations:

> "if they find a young girl with a mini-skirt, with a tattoo, she's a *marera* and there stops the investigation. If they find a woman wearing jeans… [this is linked to] blaming women who work outside of the home… because she is a *maquila* worker… And you find that those stereotypes exist within the very mechanism of investigation. And so, the PNC [National Civil Police] and the Ministerio Publico don't succeed in investigating these cases… there are a series of stereotypes that limit the possibility for a formal investigation… one without stereotypes, without prejudices." (Interviewee 14, 02.02.14)

Later on in the course of the same discussion, another interlocutor added that in cases of femicidal violence, what such political and ideological differentiations often boil down to pertains to victim-profiles— frequently embedded in notions of a case's "impact". She suggested that there are cases implicitly understood to be about "*la gente a pie… la gente común y corriente*" (literally, "people on foot… ordinary people"), on the one hand, and those of "high media and political impact", on the other (Interviewee 15, 02.02.14).

Reflecting on the norms that help constitute the nexus of meaning between victims who confirm, or elude, the "ideal" victim of femicidal violence in Guatemala, one feminist mobilised the example of "El Caso Siekavizza" as illustrative of the way in which a politically "meaningful" or "high impact" case such as the latter, not only confirms meanings about similar victims that materialise representationally according to gendered regulatory ideals, but that they confirm the insignificance of victims that occupy the space of "*las otras*" ("the others"). The domain of "*casos emblematicos*" ("emblematic cases"), occupied by "recognisable" subjects like Cristina Siekavizza,

Claudina Velasquez Paiz, and Rogelia Cruz (cases from distinct temporalities of Guatemala's recent history, referenced in the previous chapter), compellingly illustrates the performative effects (Butler 1997: 5) of designations such as "high impact" or "emblematic" in the field of political discourses of femicidal violence. As another feminist interlocutor noted:

> "… We are talking about society's disposable women, right? But [with Cristina Siekavizza] we are talking about a woman who is not disposable. In this… commodified interpretation of the media. And yet, this is also an economically exploited news story. She is not a disposable woman… as the figure, the story… the process… is commodified… and, of course… rightly so, this has generated a discussion in various spaces, a demand that many women are making on behalf of all those *casos engavetados* [shelved cases] that are given no follow up… this is the inequality gap that exists in relation to accessing justice for Guatemalan women." (Interviewee 3, 21.01.14)

Perhaps, then, the "exclusionary matrix by which subjects" (Butler 1993a: 3) of femicidal violence get "splattered" (Nelson 1999: 206) into zones of recognition, abjection or invisibility in Guatemala proceeds by way of seemingly benign citations of the spatialities of violence, which are inflected by a series of deeply (differentiated) racialised, classed and gendered meanings. This suggests that the forms of political representation and visibility of the wife/mother within the framework of a "Healthy Homes and Safe Families" policy linked to the *violencia intrafamiliar* framework, for example, has a performative role in how gendered subjects who emerge within the logic of the "(in)security" framework and its calls to "fight crime" and "social decay" are rendered visible. It is not as straightforward as suggesting that "private" femicide victims matter and "public" ones do not: the contours of disposability narratives are, as I continue to emphasise, much more complex than such an either/or axis. Even if the victims/subjects of "public" femicide fail to register as (either) recognisable (or) victims, this discussion of bodies and spatial meaning hints at how their "public" bodies *do matter*, and to why their *visibility*, rather than occlusion, is crucial to the government's formation of 'post war' insecurity.

Gendering Blame

In Guatemala, a logic of blame linked to the "internal enemy" construct and to assumptions around gender and public spaces, circulates: as one feminist lawyer explained, for public investigators, police, politicians, mainstream media, and the wider society, cases of public femicidal violence are "what it is most difficult for people to see, as such"—meaning, to see *as femicides or gendered violence*, rather than as criminal acts between delinquents or within blame-worthy social circles (Interviewee 10, 30.01.14). A parallel tendency has been identified in research examining state and societal responses to femicide in Mexico (Fregoso and Bejarano 2010; Gaspar de Alba 2010; Monárrez Fragoso 2002; Weissman 2005; Wright 2006a, 2006b, 2009, 2011). There, too, the activities of the victims are scrutinized—couched in moral terms that contain sexist, racist, and classist overtones[28]. Wright, in particular, has tracked a discourse of a "public woman" that she finds operating in the field of political and cultural rhetoric. She notes that this discursive tool works productively to constitute a "disposable woman" (2006a) by repeatedly citing these spatially-specific murders within a framework of "social decay":

> "… victims are not legitimate victims… due to their allegedly illicit activities as "public women"… the woman who is found on the street, in the office, at political events, and any other place construed as "nondomestic"… [she] has her most famous representative in the figure of "the prostitute," the consummately public woman who makes her living by selling her body on the street. This discourse also draws a link between public women-prostitutes and social decay." (2006b: 682)

Despite the saliency of Wright's observations with respect to the discourse of "public women", I find that in Guatemala, the "(in)security" framework of Molina's administration works somewhat differently. Specifically, in drawing out state and elite's responses to citizen's anxieties over what is deemed "drug-related" violence and murders, Wright's analysis of Mexico's political responses to femicide victims is

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[28] Boesten (2014) makes similar links in part of her discussion of sexual violence in post conflict Peru. She fixes her analytical attention on the term "*chola*", a racialised—and indeed, spatialised—label deployed in reference "to women of indigenous descent who are simultaneously perceived as being outside of indigenous communities" (58). Boesten demonstrates the way in which so-called "*chola*" women—located within the normative imagination, if not actually materially, within the public spatialities of the city—are (re)produced as racially and socioeconomically inferior *through* the repetitive performance of sexual violence across war and peacetime temporalities (59-62).

more suggestive of the kinds of practices under Oscar Berger's administration (2004 –
2008) as it pertains to the circulation of "social cleansing" narratives[29] for public
gendered violence (Drysdale Walsh 2008: 61; also see 2006 BBC film *Killer's
Paradise*).

Under the PP's rule, however, it is perhaps the insidiously construed regulatory
framework of "(in)security" that has facilitated a policy approach that ostensibly
targets only the alleged *perpetrators* of violence, and which discursively places
violence against women, or, as described by one interlocutor, "women's safety", at
the forefront of its priorities (Interviewee 27, 19.02.15). While there are the
occasional slippages within the government's political rhetoric, whereby victims are
implicitly blamed; officially, women and girls are conceived as "vulnerable within the
Patriot Party's imaginary… [of course] the response [then] is that they need
militarized men [for protection]" (Interviewee 20, 11.02.14). What is troubling about
this formulation, then, is precisely that the government *does* formally address
gendered violence and its victims in public (and private) spatialities, mapping and
targeting "zones with the highest incidences of crime" (Gobierno de Guatemala
2014d). This is not, as Butler would say, a "refusal of discourse" in the field of
femicidal violence (2004a: 38), since, "discursively... this government has women and
violence as two of its priorities" (Interviewee 13, 02.02.14). Indeed, the PP's plan in
relation to its security agenda makes "special reference to femicides" and to
disarticulating "delinquent groups" that are considered responsible for this violence in
the public domain (Gobierno de Guatemala 2014d). This suggests that we need to
attend to the implicit logics of this policy framework, and to identify practices within
other sites of hegemonic regulatory power, such as the mainstream media, that
reproduce logics of disposability in more explicit forms.

Before turning to the specificities of this institutional-policy framework, however, let
us briefly return to the question of how blame is discursively produced in relation to
"public" femicide and gendered violence. Rather than laying a blanket of culpability
upon femicide victims found in the public domain, as Wright suggests occurs in the
Mexican context, I suggest that a potentially fluid field of meaning envelops the

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[29] For analyses of similar discourses within the Brazilian context see for example: Ferreira da Silva
2012; Hume and Wilding 2015; Scheper-Hughes 2006.

bodies of "public" femicide victims in Guatemala. However, owing to historically entrenched narratives of which subjects "matter" in Guatemala, this meaning is constrained by cultural hegemony. While the spatiality of gendered death is crucial to how victims emerge representationally, their materialisation also proceeds by way of how the perpetrators (*mareros*), as the "internal enemies", are produced within a nexus "loaded with classism and racism" (Interviewee 27, 19.02.15). The visible marking of the perpetrator of "public" violence as a necessarily blame-worthy "gang member" or "delinquent" young male, thus cannot produce a neutral outcome for the victims of "public" gendered violence who are discursively produced within the same framework.

One of the 'successes', so to speak, of the PP government's comprehensive security agenda (whether in the home/family or across public spaces) is that, in (rhetorically) prioritizing violence, and even femicide, they have opened a legitimate "or *legitimised*" policy pathway for mapping the subjects, types, and spaces of violence "in the mark of protecting" citizens in general, and women in particular (Interviewee 3, 21.01.14). As I show in the next section, however, what has emerged within the institutional geography of "(in)security" is a (re)militarised response to "public violence"[30]. In tracking discourses of, and political responses to, urban violence in Guatemala City, Thomas et al. (2011: 14) suggest that these responses are rationalised through a "spectre of danger": one that is "preconfigured in terms of dominant representations of the youth, the criminal, the gang member… the anticitizens of a neoliberal social order". Within the framework of the PP's (in)security formation, I suggest that a nebulous idea of what is "undesirable" within Guatemalan social life, or contrary to the interests of "most citizens" and the nation, gets located within the bodies of socially marginalised subjects (Interviewee 17, 06.02.14). Because femicide is specifically mapped within the policy framework that responds to this so-called "spectre of danger", it has important implications in relation to how the bodies of "public" victims become sites for (re)producing hierarchies of gendered life and death.

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[30] This is mirrored in the wider Central American context, as well as across South American countries, such as Brazil, whose precarious place within the global neoliberal economy has come in tandem with "everyday scripts" of urban gendered violence that push for hard-handed and conservative-morality derived state responses to crime (Hume and Wilding 2015).

The Institutional Geography of (In)security Politics

"… one of the basic promises of our campaign was security, and some have asked us "What happened with 'mano dura'?" And to those people I want to say that, while some thought that 'mano dura' meant that we would act at the margins of the law… that we would perpetuate social cleansing, executions and disappearances… precisely 'mano dura' is to do what the law commands us to do, respect the justice institutions… and although sometimes, some people… said that a retired army general and with an officer directing the Ministry of the Interior, that here we would have social cleansing. Today I say to you with total solvency, we have reduced acts of crime always abiding with the law and we are going to continue doing so in that way. This is the 'mano dura' that we refer to." (Gobierno de Guatemala [Molina] 2015)

The Patriot Party's institutional framework for security structures the field of responses to violence and crime in the public domain in general, while making specific reference to femicidal violence within particular policy initiatives. The political scene of "(in)security" across Guatemalan social life is thus highly regulated by a series of agendas, intelligence initiatives, as well as special task forces which are outlined in the government's platform, the "Agenda for Change" (Partido Patriota 2011), as well as within the "Security, Justice, and Peace Agreement" (Ministerio de Gobernación 2012a). As mentioned earlier, this administration has insisted that its particular brand of '*mano dura*' politics forms one of two strategic pillars—the other being 'the law'—which informs its security agenda for the country. On the one hand, the framework builds off of previous national security strategies from administrations across the 'post war' period, and actually makes explicit references to the strengths and weaknesses of various policies within these (El Observador 2012). Yet, on the other hand, I also seek to elucidate the (at times barely) implicit references to counterinsurgency practices from the war period that are embedded within the Molina government's agenda for tackling insecurity, and to thus consider how these inform representations of, and approaches to, gendered and femicidal violence.

It is useful to think of the PP's security agenda as a "grid of intelligibility" (Foucault 2009, 1980, 1970) in which a complex constellation of powers and knowledges frame political-policy approaches to ostensibly 'post war' violences such as femicide (Carey and Torres 2010). Armed with the legitimacy that democratization and the Peace Accords delivered (Nelson 1999: 74), under Molina's tenure the "apparatuses of security" are produced through practices of governmentality that work productively *alongside* (legitimized) expressions of military power (Butler 2004a: 51-62). Nelson

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has described the techniques of political governance in the context of 'post war' nation-building Guatemala as decidedly interwoven with forms of sovereignty (military rule) and fragile neoliberal democratization—she insists these are neither inherently contradictory, nor distinctive, fields or practices (1999). Similarly, Gonzalez-Izas writes that "formal divisions between the state, economy, and society", (and to these I would specify the military, private security sector, and 'popular' forms of security), "disintegrate under empirical scrutiny". Indeed, she continues, we must "rethink what it means to re-form a state… that has always served as an instrument of inequality, militarization and violence..." (2013: 263). In analysing the gestures that regulate violence across public spatialities within the "(in)security" framework, it becomes apparent how the government's knowledge claims about 'post war' violence work to generate support for militarised state responses that recall counterinsurgent methods, while simultaneously normalising the cultural-ideological targeting of particular bodies for control (and even destruction).

The "Agenda for Change" and "Security Agreement"

The PP's platform for 2012 – 2016, the "Agenda for Change" (2011), which was introduced in chapter 4, is a useful entry point to address the broader ideological constellation within which the (in)security framework emerges. In the document, the key axes of the government's strategic focus are laid out, of which the first, and arguably foremost, is "Security, Democracy and Justice". Other axes include "Economic Development and Competitiveness" and "Social Inclusion" (where, to recall the previous chapter, the principles of "Healthy Homes" and "Safe Families" are integrated) (Partido Patriota 2011: 49). Significantly, the domains of "public" and "private" violence appear to have been conceptually separated from the start. Whereas the "Security" axis outlines issues of insecurity, crime, gangs, and delinquency, alongside proposals for "Task Forces" to fight femicide, and military-police units to ensure "Safe Spaces" (13-15); the areas of domestic and inter-familial violence get articulated under the axis of "Social Inclusion", and in the mark of ensuring security in the private sphere of the home. This suggests that, from the outset, a distinctive set of governance tactics were contemplated for the regulation of gendered violence— with the spatial (and I would argue, subject) coordinates of the violence structuring the field of potential government, military, and police intervention.

Despite the proposed institutional-policy separation implied for addressing cases of "public" as opposed to "private" violence or femicide, there is, already within the discursive logic of this document, a shared—or certainly complementary—ideological terrain in which the subjects of violence seem to materialise. For example, the interpellation of children (or "youth") runs in two directions depending on the spatiality of the violence invoked. Under the umbrella of "Social Inclusion", "safe families" and "educative mothers" are cited in a kind of preventative role for raising "prepared children" (Partido Patriota 2011: 46-7). On the other hand, a range of militarised "Task Forces" designed to fight violence and crime under the mark of "Security" are cited in a largely interventionist capacity—to "neutralize" the "delinquent groups", "organized crime" and "gangs" responsible for public insecurity (13-14). Is it a leap to suggest that the "delinquents" cited in this latter framework are the matured embodiments of the children of *failed* families and homes, ill-prepared to contend with, and resist, the lure of gang activity? And, if this is indeed a shared ideological terrain, how does the focus of political-policy intervention shift between the state and its citizens in relation to violence perpetrated on the streets, or other areas of pubic life, as opposed to within the home? If we bridge the policy contours with the political rhetoric, the seamlessness with which Molina's discourse on "(in)security" moves between "youth" as a site of vulnerability and prevention, to "youth" as a site of criminality and thus potential (military-police) intervention, seems quite meaningful:

> "In our government, delinquents are and will be detained, we fight crime head-on, no one is above the law. On the other hand, we have undertaken strategies for the prevention of crime because we are betting on building a culture of prevention in all spheres of social activity in the country. In that respect, we have carried out preventative activities directed to the young and adolescent population, considering that it is in this age group where the greatest number of victims and perpetrators are concentrated. To this end, we succeeded in the education of close to 37 thousand youngsters and adolescents, in violence and drug use prevention…and we provided tools for opening new life opportunities to more than 600 vulnerable boys, girls, adolescents and youngsters."
> (Gobierno de Guatemala [Molina] 2014a)

The implicit ideological overlap within the governance frameworks for "public" and "private" insecurity is further illustrated in a passage from the "Safe Families" section

of the "Social Inclusion" axis. Below, in what reverberates with the "conservative conceptions of the family" common to social policy in Latin America (Boesten 2014: 132-5; Gideon and Molyneux 2012: 297), we can observe the way in which the protagonists of violence suggestively emerge out of the failures of the private home:

> "… we are very worried about the debilitation and under-appreciation suffered by the family as a bastion of development of the individual and of society, [which carries] unimaginably negative consequences for the country. At the same time we're worried about family disintegration caused by emigration, alcoholism, [and] violence, all of which has translated into a vicious circle that has caused underdevelopment and insecurity… [we must] strengthen the family as the basic structure of society (Partido Patriota 2011: 49).

Given what is known about the marginalised socioeconomic status of "delinquents" who participate in criminal or so-called "gang" activities across Central and South America (Ferreira da Silva 2012; Hume and Wilding 2015; Levenson 2013), and, indeed, the noted racialisation of marginalised youth in Guatemala (Camus 2009; Gonzales Ponciano 2013), is it really the *general* population of adolescents that Molina is addressing? What are the subjective contours circulating in this interpellation of "youth" who are considered vulnerable to delinquency— that is, to becoming the very perpetrators of crime, or the victims of public forms of violence?

Despite research demonstrating how "children [and 'the family'] are increasingly seen as in need of state protection" in the creation of gender-related policies in Latin America (Gideon and Molyneux 2012: 296), the PP's formulation suggests that not all children are equally "vulnerable" or "at risk" for becoming perpetrators or victims. In other words, not all children and youth are (potential) subjects of *public* violence and insecurity. Unlike within the VIF framework, there appears to be an implicit interpellation of *marginalized* children and youth in the "(in)security" framework, one that proceeds through ideological assumptions linked to the social status of potential subjects of violence— "social status", as we saw earlier, is a deeply racialised, gendered, and classed articulation. Furthermore, the concept of "social status" likewise gestures at an idea of "the family"; as an "ideal" unit structuring the private sphere, however, "the family" clearly stands in tension with the concept of marginalisation as developed here. Therefore, identifying how notions about the

'integrity' or 'failure' of the family unit emerge in discourses about (in)security might help us understand why particular subjects, and particular types, of violence are emphasised as requiring state targeting as opposed to state protection; or, more specifically, why "public" femicide victims are obscured *as victims*, even while their bodies are visibilised.

Social Circle Failure

To explore the dialectics between the PP's notion of "marginalisation", "risk", and "insecurity" and the meanings that emerge in relation to *public* femicidal violence, I now draw on the cases of two "double femicides" that occurred in April 2014 and February 2015. In both incidents, the two female victims were related to each other (though not to the perpetrator). The first, "Caso Palala Pocía" (Case #8), involved two young sisters—13 year-old Kerin Gemima Palala-Pocia and 15 year-old Yailin Celeste Palala-Pocia—whose bodies were found on a dirt hill in the municipality of San Pedro Ayumpuc, Guatemala. In a *Prensa Libre* article covering the murders, the girls were immediately cited as having links to a gang, according to the police—an accusation said to have been confirmed by their mother who "admitted that [they] smoked marijuana with… anti-socials". What is most significant in this case is how the mother's awareness of the girls' involvement with a gang is addressed. When asked why "she accepted" the activities of her daughters, she explained that she had no capacity to personally "take care of them" due to the time constraints of her work (Lara 2014).

The second case involved the assassination of a mother and her young daughter in a motel room in Zone 1 of Guatemala City ("Caso Mother and Daughter Motel Room Zone 1", Case #9). Both bodies were discovered inside the room: the mother, beheaded and partially naked in the shower, while the daughter was laid out on the bed with signs of having been poisoned (Andres Oliva 2015). Photos of the bodies of both victims were reproduced in the print and television media (albeit, slightly blurred) (Canal Antigua Noticias 2015). The mainstream media fixated attention on a note that was left on the door of the hotel room, presumably by the perpetrators, which read *"nos debes dos muertes este mes, somos 18"* ("you owe us two dead this month, we're 18"). The signing of "18" implies that the notorious "Mara 18" committed the crime. The official commentary on the case centralized on the

"sinister" note left by the gang at the scene of the crime. However, in tracking some of the online public commentary in response to the news story, a general narrative seemed to emerge that was directed towards explaining—or, rather, explaining *away*—the murder of the young girl (rather than the predictable, though no less problematic, justifications that are offered when a woman, such as the mother in this case, is linked to a gang). Two commentaries are worth sharing, for they illustrate the productive power that "gangs", as a "limit point" within the discursive-policy framework of "(in)security" carry onto social understandings of the victims of public femicidal violence:

> "the sin of the girl was to be born between two anti-socials."
>
> (Author Field Notes, 15.02.15)

And, in response to the above comment, another individual noted:

> "They are all social scourges, including that girl imagine that
> girl in 15 years just another criminal... poor thing not at all…
> each person gets what they deserve." (ibid.)

When considered together with Case #8, a pattern seems to emerge whereby the mother is central to the wider narrative that envelops the event of violence, and the meanings produced out of it. Moreover, this pattern can also be identified in the VIF framework discussed in chapters 4 and 5. Indeed, just as a gendered figure in the form of an ideal mother/housewife is foregrounded in the interpellation of the women *and children* represented as victims of "private" sphere domestic violence, here too, in the context of "public" sphere femicides, the mother of the victim is central to the construction of meaning. Implicit in both of the cases cited above, is that the *mother* is to blame for the murder of her daughter(s). In the "Caso Palala-Pocia", the fault is distributed between the two femicide victims, on the one hand, and their mother, on the other. By being implicated with "gang" activity, the sisters are criminalised and are thus seen as partially responsible for their own deaths. However, their mother is also culpable because she failed to perform her duties to care for her daughters, duties that include instilling "good moral values" and knowing the whereabouts of one's children (Gobierno de la Republica 2012). In the case of the young girl murdered in the motel room with her mother, the scene of the crime leaves a mark that, in the interpretation of the mainstream media, unmistakably casts the mother as the partner of a *marero* from one of Guatemala's most notorious gangs (Levenson 2013).

Extrapolating from some of the public commentaries on the case, blame is either directed entirely at the mother and the "gang" she is assumed to have been integrated with, or, perhaps more disturbingly still, the girl's death is read through her *future agency as a marera*—a future presumably guaranteed by the social circle she gets marked within.

This latter observation powerfully gives material form to Butler's theoretical contemplations on the "matter of bodies as the effect of a dynamic of power" (1993a: 3), and to the caution she encourages in relation to violence and visibility. In disarticulating what is "seen" from what is "read", in cases as seemingly distinct as the police killing of unarmed black males in the United States and the Israeli army's killing of Palestinian children, Butler identifies the way in which racism structures the field of visibility to "transvalue... agency" to victims of state, cultural, and military violence (Butler 1993b, 2015). Just as hegemonic forms of organizing meaning in relation to what is "seen" might produce, for example, a violent threat to public order (the unarmed black male) or a future terrorist (the Palestinian child), the lifeless body of a young girl whose mother is presumed guilty of consorting with gangs is similarly "read" through the (racialised) threat that she was "always about to deliver" (1993b: 19). Thus, while I may have "seen" the body of an innocent girl whose life was prematurely extinguished due to a range of structural and symbolic violences that render her vulnerable to this fate, others (and arguably the reading that saturates the hegemonic framework for public gendered violence) "see" the same image, or hear the same story, but "read" a subject who is both a future material threat as a gang-member (Interviewee 27, 19.02.15), and, indeed, a symbolic threat to the gendered ideal that is understood to sustain the moral fabric of Guatemalan society. The commentary that imagines this young girl as a future *marera* is bursting with social cleansing logics structured through "desires for more necropolitics"— where the targets are 'undesirable' subjects (McAllister and Nelson 2013: 43). As I show later on, these racist, classist, and sexist modes of "seeing" get coded within a "repeated and ritualistic production" (Butler 1993b: 16) of the central "object" of this gendered violence, locking in the "disposability" and "garbage" narratives that circulate for public femicides (Interviewee 3, 21.01.14).

Returning to the centrality of the maternal figure in organising meaning in the "public" cases of femicide cited above, I propose that a logic that is akin to—but not entirely the same as— the "family imperative" introduced in the previous chapter, is also at work here. If we recall this formulation from my discussion of how the "Caso Siekavizza", as compared to two comparatively obscured cases of femicide ("Caso Adela Chacon-Tax" and "Caso Nuestro Diario"), operates, the notion of the "family imperative" pertains to how the role of a victim's kin gets foregrounded in government and mainstream media discussions. Here, the family, friends, or general "social circle" of the victim are perceived to be instrumental to procuring justice by mobilising state action and media coverage. As I argued, this imperative is heavily imbricated with race, class, and sexuality, since the capacity to mobilise the symbolic and material resources actually required in order to obtain the interpellation of these hegemonic sites of power is obscured by a recourse to the "dedication" of a victim's social circle.

However, the "family imperative", as such, is not operating within the discursive framing of these "public" femicides. Instead, I suggest that what is palpable in cases such as those referenced above is a "social circle imperative", or rather, a kind of "social circle *failure*". Indeed, President Molina has consistently responded to "public" femicides of young women and girls by calling on parents to be cognizant of the whereabouts of their daughters, so as to prevent them from getting involved with "delinquent" circles (Interviewee 7, 23.01.14; Interviewee 14, 02.02.14). The two concepts, although differing in important ways, call attention to the role imposed on the family, but especially the mother, as pertains to the fate of the victim, or the fate of the case within the discursive economy of femicidal violence (and thus arguably within the justice system too) (Interviewee 27, 19.02.15). In working out meaning and responsibility in relation to "public" as opposed to "private" gendered death, the notion of "social circle failure" moves in a different direction than the "family imperative". Instead of commentary proceeding along the lines of what role the parents have in procuring justice (a "Caso Siekavizza"), the question gets turned around to produce a gendered accusation against the (failed) mother for procuring the death of her daughter(s). Moreover, while the logic of the VIF framework (potentially) produces victims in the form of the wife/mother and children, the logic of the (in)security frame seems to consistently produce subjects of 'blame' (if not

criminality). One feminist interlocutor, who works in a partially state-funded domestic violence shelter in Guatemala City, explained it in the following terms:

> "if the death is in the public sphere they are blamed, they are criminalised. She is blamed because, 'why was she there?', or she is criminalised because 'surely she was involved in… the *pandillas…* you find that [logic] within the very mechanism of investigation." (Interviewee 14, 02.02.14).

It is my contention that this logic not only produces the culpability of femicide victims and their (failed) mothers, but also, the state once again "transcends accusation" (Benson et al. 2008: 50).

Security Task Forces

The most evident *policy* articulations of the spatial-ideological distinctions within the public (in)security framework are the inter-institutional forces outlined in the PP's "Agenda for Change" and the "Security, Justice and Peace Agreement" (Ministerio de Gobernación 2012). Importantly, some of the government's proposals for how to respond to public insecurity gesture at how spatial designations have performative effects in relation to the racial, class, and gendered meanings that emerge within sites, or events, of "public" femicidal violence. Both the "Agenda" and the "Security Agreement" delineate the central role of the military and police: they are cited as responsible for "mapping out" and responding to a series of "themes" of violence, with special reference made to certain "geographical zones" where violence has the "highest incidence" (Gobierno de Guatemala 2014d). It is important that two of the most visible policies to emerge out of the public security agenda— the already cited "Security Task Forces", and the programme for "Safe/Secure Spaces"— include highly gendered articulations such as the "Femicide Task Force" and "Safe Schools Squads" (Ministerio de Gobernación 2012a). The policy framework carves out prominent roles for the military and police so that these task forces can

> "take control… and… recuperate territory… where the law does not exist… [where there are] no norms, rules, [or] laws [because] delinquents and organized crime control the population" (Ministerio de Gobernación 2012b).

What logics are at work when a state 'searches' for femicide, or tries to 'map' areas with 'high rates' of violence? The exercise of combing spatialities of civilian life for crime and violence is never neutral. As Gregory (2013) and others (Ferreira da Silva

2012; Hanhardt 2013) have shown, mapping violence is a highly racialised, classed, and gendered practice shaped by complex relations of power. 'Looking' for gendered violence and femicide—its statistical rates, or its victims/perpetrators— is therefore a deeply political act that helps shape regulatory practices. Therefore, when gendered violence is "mapped" by military or militarised-police forces, the exercise should invite our critical attention. Indeed, it is pertinent to step back and question how the government 'finds' the (vulnerable or dangerous) subjects/bodies, (failed) family units, or (insecure/unsafe) communities that require state intervention. And, in a related vein, it is important to consider how the normative calculation for social marginalization—and, by extension, for risks linked to crime and public insecurity— might be engendered by wider assumptions about *where* particular manifestations, or subjects of violence, are 'found'.

According to government documents and the statements of officials, the strategic plans for the Security Task Forces—such as which zones, or neighbourhoods, are selected for their stationing—are created with the use of military and civilian "intelligence", which helps the administration, PNC, and PPO map violence and crime and thereby optimise inter-institutional coordination between these branches of the state (Partido Patriota 2011: 14). Over the years of the PP's administration, new task forces and units have continued to surface, noticeably concentrating themselves in socioeconomically impoverished zones within Guatemala City, reifying the assumed link between *racialised*[31] poverty and criminal and gendered violence. But, despite the formal articulation of roles for the PPO, it is notable that the PNC and military are consistently given the most prominence within speeches and during visual stagings of the inauguration of security measures such as the Task Forces and Security Squads (Partido Patriota 2012).

In a 2014 report evaluating the initial two years of the PP's rule, and the creation of the first ten "Security Task Forces", the human rights organisation "Mutual Support Group" noted that these forces have been structured along geographic and thematic lines (GAM 2014). When discussing this report with members of the organisation,

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[31] These forces have also been stationed across rural areas that are sites of deeply felt conflicts between indigenous communities and the state over extractive development projects— a subject I cannot take up within this thesis.

they highlighted that the topographical areas covered by the Task Forces are notable for being sites of poverty and symbolic marginalisation (eg., Interviewee 4, 23.02.15). The seven areas of thematic coverage likewise paint a picture of how public (in)security policies are informed by broader assumptions about who is victimised by crime, and thus who requires state protection; and, when examined in relation to the geographic areas selected for 'special' policing, hint at the demographics that are assumed to be the perpetrators of crime, and who are thus conceptualised as requiring intervention or neutralisation. Specifically, the "thematic" Task Forces are designed to fight: targeted assassination, kidnapping, extortion, car theft, cellular phone theft, drugs, and femicide (GAM 2014: 9). Research has shown how stereotypical linkages drawn between violence and marginalised subjects and communities are effected through deeply ideological assumptions about who is at risk, and for what types of violent crime, and therefore whose security imperatives warrant state responses (eg., McIlwaine and Moser 2007). Crucially, however, the explicit identification of "marginalised" subjects (and, indeed, spaces) does not, as a rule, translate into a social protection impetus from the state, especially where those subjects and spaces are racialised (Wilson 2015: 811).

In a speech inaugurating one of the government's "Security Task Forces" in the department of Mixco—a socioeconomically deprived area notorious for violent "gang-related" crime, and where, to recall the opening of this chapter, 14-year-old Luisa Guidel was killed — issues linked to gender implicitly ground President Molina's discussion of public insecurity:

> "This force will be mobilized in the different sectors, streets and avenues to ensure that in Mixco, honest and hard-working Guatemalans may live in peace, as is God's will, but the participation of the citizens is needed because 'safe homes' begin in the home by giving children a good example, without domestic violence, respecting women, working and being responsible." (Ministerio de Gobernación 2013b)

His statement seems to reactivate the connections between gendered violence and what I have referred to as the "family imperative" and "social circle failure". Furthermore, within the context of this "public insecurity" speech, there are discernible class and racial undertones inflecting Molina's formulation of "safe homes"—the unit through which "ideal" victims of "*violencia intrafamiliar*" are

addressed. To recall chapter 4's discussion of the instrumentalism embedded within "social investment" frameworks (Gideon and Molyneux 2012), such a narrow reading of domestic violence collapses women and children into the domain of the family. Thus, it is "the family" as an ideal norm, and to an extent, the children, that are understood to require state *protection*.

However, I am not convinced that the subjects interpellated through the VIF framework, and who are understood to require forms of social protection (or indeed, to warrant the status of 'victims'), correspond to the "vulnerable" and "delinquent" youth or "debilitated" families addressed in the various passages above in the mark of "public (in)security". While there does seem to be a shared ideological terrain at work here—one informed by conservative notions of "the family", and in which (domestic) violence and crime are conceptualised as moral decay— it is difficult to see exactly how the "*marero*" or "*delincuente*", as formulated in the (in)security framework, corresponds to the child from the ideal nuclear family home, as formulated in the VIF framework. Put differently, within the discursive logic of the (in)security framework, it seems plausible that the "youth" articulated as (future) perpetrators, or even as (future) victims of public violence, are children whose socioeconomically and racially (re)produced marginalisation forecloses their possibilities for being included in the domain of the "prepared future citizens" discussed in the mark of "Social Inclusion" and "Safe Families".

In an impressive account of how forms of raciality "unravel" the ethical limits on state force and authorise violence against marginalised (and simultaneously criminalised) bodies in Rio's *favelas*, Ferreira da Silva (2012: 367) argues that practices of murderous military-police violence against these populations fail to "unleash an ethical crisis because these persons' bodies and the territories they inhabit always-already signify violence". According to this reading, state violence against the marginalised black subject, or "enemy within"— (a term she references in the context of Brazil, but which recalls articulations of Guatemala's "internal enemy")— gets rationalised by recourse to the *de facto* violence embodied within racialised "aberrations in the body politic" (Posocco 2014b: 80). Significantly, echoing my earlier discussion of the "social circle failure" around subjects of public gendered violence, Ferreira da Silva notes that political and cultural readings of the moral and

material threat presented by black (male) bodies in the *favelas*, *extends* to the wider community, racially "prefiguring" the "types" of families and social ills "found in these territories (2012: 381). The articulation is so unmistakably founded upon racialised assumptions around space, class, and gender, that the mere citation of crime and drugs statistics, or more implicit references to "youth marginalisation" or the prevalence of "female-headed households", can mobilise readings of these areas as "indigenous zones of violence" (2012: 382). Her analysis thus directly resonates with the matter of victims of "public" femicide, for whom political and media representations elude anything resembling their substantive recognition as "legitimate" or "unambiguous" victims of gendered violence (Boesten 2014: 89). In a particularly effective passage that could reasonably be made in reference to the politics of "(in)security" in Guatemala, Ferreira da Silva explains that:

> "Because [black and brown subjects] exist in the *moral*
> in/difference raciality inscribes in [marginalised urban
> regions], anyone, everyone, any *person*, the (ethical-juridical)
> entity, residing there does not figure the subject of ethical life,
> the self-determined *persons* the law and the state protect;
> before these juridical structures, these racial subjects are
> nobodies." (2012: 382, emphasis in original)

Tellingly, the stated priority of the aforementioned Security Task Force in Mixco is to prevent homicides and infighting between gangs. According to one interlocutor, the PP government makes similar arguments in the mark of justifying all of their Security Task Forces— suggesting that militarised police force is only used to prevent and eradicate gang violence (Interviewee 4, 23.02.15). The claim about the purpose of the Task Force simultaneously obscures the gendered dynamics of the violence it allegedly seeks to curb (Wilding 2010), while articulating a politically convenient link between any violent (future) deaths within the public domain and the (always available scapegoat of) *mareros*. Indeed, in the act of installing military and police personnel across public spaces frequented by allegedly delinquent youth, the government is claiming to actualize its commitment to providing security to the residents (Interviewee 4, 03.02.14).

As this point we can note the segregated shaping of spatial interventions and the splintering of citizenship according to those perceived as deserving "protection", and

those perceived as requiring "neutralization" or "intervention". Revealingly, Molina has emphasised that the military and police officers scattered on the streets of Guatemala City are there to look after the "good Guatemalans, and not the delinquents" (Ministerio de Gobernación 2012b). Such a statement suggests, if somewhat nebulously, that distinctions are operating in the government's framework of (in)security—distinctions organised, at least in part, by spatial and subject coordinates. As several feminist interlocutors explained when asked about the differentiated normative framework that operates in the domain of public, as opposed to private violence, the youth addressed by the discourse of public (in)security are being contemplated as *targets* of state *force*, rather than as *subjects* of state *protection* (Interviewee 2, 18.11.13; Interviewee 19, 11.02.14). This differentiated logic of intervention as protection, on the one hand, and intervention as force (against), on the other, seems to hinge on the spatialities under the government's consideration, as well as on the bodies and types of violent crime (presumably) prevalent within specific areas. The PP's logic of linking militarised forms of intervention to the prevalence of (certain articulations of) violence, and thus to certain demographics, extends far beyond the family unit to encompass whole geographic spatialities, or "zones", of Guatemala[32].

The Visual Economy of (In)security

Crucial insights also emerge by looking at the "visual economy" that circulates during the installation of the security forces outlined in the PP's agenda. In a striking display of the disaccord between the demilitarization of civil society called for within Guatemala's Peace Accords, and the 'post war' regulation of civilian life in the public domain, government footage of the inauguration of the first Security Task Forces in 2012 shows heavily armed men staunchly positioned across Guatemala City's deprived urban neighbourhoods (Partido Patriota 2012). A potent example of what Snodgrass-Godoy refers to as the "institutional deformation of the public security apparatus" (2005: 603) emerged in the video footage of the inauguration of the "Maya Task Force" North of Guatemala City (covering the communities of zone 18—known as a site of gang violence). In what was read by many interlocutors as a perverse

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[32] Similar practices have been charted in relation to ideologically and materially segregated localities throughout the world, such as in "megacities" like Sao Paulo, Mexico City, and Mumbai (Caldeira 2001; Thomas et al. 2011: 15-6), across gentrified pockets of the United States (Butler 2015; Evans and Giroux 2015) and within the Occupied Palestinian Territories (Azoulay 2013; Weizman 2013).

inversion of the kinds of social interventions that might bring about substantive security (such as secure employment or affordable electricity) (Interviewee 12, 02.02.14; Interviewee 19, 11.02.14; Interviewee 7, 23.01.14), two young girls are shown playing on a swing set while surrounded by what looks like several hundred armed military-police (Gobierno de Guatemala 2012c). In showing residents eagerly speaking with President Molina and greeting military-police personnel, the visual scene suggests that the echoes of counterinsurgency that can be read within this event (a reading that most feminist and social justice interlocutors I spoke with shared) might be disjointed from the sentiments of those actually living within the community. To recall Andrea's* account in the opening of this chapter, such displays of armed state security forces might respond to legitimate fears of "gang" or "delinquent" violence and feelings of insecurity, particularly for those citizens for whom other forms of more substantive security or protection (such as owning a car and thus not having to take a bus) are not available.

As McAllister and Nelson (2013) remind us, public support for *mano dura* policies is a highly nuanced and complex articulation of fears and desires structured by people's lived experiences with everyday, symbolic, and structural insecurity. It might therefore make little difference whether a strategy of deploying heavily armed military-police across a neighbourhood actually reduces violent crime— as the Guatemalan human rights organisation "Mutual Support Group" noted, despite more than four hundred femicides registered between January and July 2014, the Femicide Task Force *detained one individual* in the same period (GAM 2014). Therefore, while the Vice Minister for Security's claim that "safe spaces have been generated" and "peace and tranquillity have returned" to zone 18 since the installation of the "Maya Task Force" (Ministerio de Gobernación 2012c) is indeed questionable, what urges consideration is what the *gesture* of 'security' communicates to residents of a neighbourhood where (fear of) violence is quotidian.

Such highly public theatrical gestures, wherein states designate their responses to (allegedly) violent areas along militarised lines are certainly not unique to Guatemala, and it is important to flag the wider resonances of the practices being explored. For example, Gregory has foregrounded similar logics operating in relation to the US military imaginary in its post-2001 interventions in Iraq: in drawing attention to the

discursive economy of military practices, he emphasises, precisely, that there is a "visual performance of the social field rather than [merely a] social construction of the visual field" (2013: 182). More recently, still, Evans and Giroux have deployed the notion of "the spectacle of violence", which serves as a node through which to frame the normalization of (scenes of) militarised state presence within urban spatialities conceptualised as sites of violence (2015: 7, 32). Reflecting on the U.S. context, Evans and Giroux cogently articulate the racialised schema that work to imbue such scenes with a sense of normality or, indeed, *necessity* (2015: 82). In one especially relevant passage, the authors' evoke a scene that could reasonably serve as a description for the governing practices being charted in the Guatemalan context, gesturing at the wider scope of the militarization and socio-racial marginalization nexus:

> "[e]ntire neighborhoods inhabited by low-income families of color have been turned into war zones by paramilitarized police, reinforcing violence and criminalisation as the default approach to all encounters with the inhabitants of these zones of disposability." (Evans and Giroux 2015: 82).

Since the PP's security task forces were first inaugurated, there have been many instances of public support amongst residents of communities where these are installed (Interviewee 3, 21.01.14). While it may be difficult to account for "[t]he continuing appeal of *mano dura*… politics, often among those who bore the brunt of counterinsurgency" (McAllister and Nelson 2013: 42) it is crucial to try and grasp the extent to which other routes towards security have been foreclosed in the 'post war' neoliberal milieu (Levenson 2013).

Militarised "Security" as Femicide's Aftermath

And yet, actually witnessing the strategic placement of hundreds of armed young men from the military and police across socioeconomically marginalised (and highly gendered) sites such as public schools— lends insight to the widespread concerns of feminist and women's rights interlocutors expressed to me during fieldwork. The sentiment of one feminist I spoke with was revealing in its simplicity: of such 'post war' examples of regulating violence in the name of 'peacetime' she stated, "we are totally lost" (Interviewee 2, 18.11.13). Indeed, throughout my visits to Guatemala City, I have noted the degree to which my visual encounters with Security Task

Forces evoke scenes of "wartime". For example, in one instance in February 2015, I walked by a school for adolescent girls in zone 1 of Guatemala City, the "Instituto Normal de Señoritas Centroamérica INCA", and saw one of the government's "Safe Schools Squad" parking its trucks at the entrance. At the particular school in question, soldiers and armed police (all men) were patrolling the steps through which students accessed the building. Significantly, this is the same school where in April 2014 two students—sisters by the names of Nancy (14 years old) and Karla Oscal Perez (17 years old)— were gunned down by young men in what was immediately represented by the government as a "gang-related" crime[33] (Ministerio Público 2015). The paradoxical nature of how "peace" and "order" are allegedly re-installed within sites where acts of public femicidal violence have transpired, are evident: in addition to the government's immediate articulation of the girls to gang activity, and the subsequent arrests of several young "*marero*" males for the crime, the 'solution', less than one year later, was to situate a military-police squad outside of the school (Interviewee 27, 19.02.15; Interviewee 25,11.02.15). According to one feminist whose offices were located near the school at the time of the murders, the trajectory of events underscores the "tragedy of this version of security", within which the political acknowledgment of events such as these can actually serve as a legitimising pathway for (re)militarisation (Interviewee 28, 23.02.15). The "Caso INCA" gives form to how the (in)security formation leans, at least to an extent, upon the "public bodies" of victims in order to justify the policies that follow. As Wright powerfully phrases this paradox in relation to the Mexican context:

> "[t]he dead provide the raw materials… their bodies, their gender, their location, and their scars and mutilations are the basis for weaving tales… Their deaths are politically significant for the government's justification of its measures… as necropolitics meets biopolitics." (2011: 726)

Indeed, a widespread sentiment across feminists' interpretations of "security measures" such as the "Femicide Task Force" and "Safe Schools Squads" is that such mechanisms are "absolutely contrary to any democratic form of confronting the problem"—a superficial display of "action" on gendered violence that is embedded in a "reactive" "military logic" (Interviewee 19, 11.02.14; Interviewee 13, 02.02.14).

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[33] "Caso INCA" (#10)

But how exactly are these militarised responses legitimised through the political citation or visibilisation of femicidal violence? What "proof" (Wilcox 2015) did the bodies of the Oscal-Perez sisters provide for the government?

One of the most poignant criticisms to emerge in the course of my interlocution with feminists in Guatemala was articulated through the notion of the political "exploitation of femicide" (Interviewee 3, 21.01.14). Connecting the analysis of the dynamics of state intervention into topographies of gendered violence with considerations of race and political economy, this interlocutor—an indigenous feminist land and human rights defender—framed the government's articulation of its (in)security agenda in relation to public violence, femicide, and the "protection" of vulnerable groups as an entirely (symbolically and materially) instrumentalist endeavour. In her view, the PP's policy of embedding femicide within a wider strategic agenda around security invites deep suspicion, particularly when Guatemala's (and indeed, President Molina's) counterinsurgent history—steeped in (the denial of) sexual and femicidal violence against indigenous women (CEH 1999; Consorcio Actoras de Cambio 2009; ODHAG 1998)— is kept on the horizon of analysis:

> "one of [the]… promises that [Molina] made… was precisely to offer to increase the military budget. Because by increasing the military budget he said he would offer the Guatemalan population greater citizen security. And what would he offer the foreign investor? To take care of his investment… He framed it like, 'Ok gentlemen, clearly, I am aware that Guatemala is a violent country right now, and I will not deny it... But look, here is the entire menu… here it is, everything that Guatemala offers, natural resources and more…look, now see, if you want to invest, if you want to help…the Guatemalan people and improve their development… come to my country, invest, and what I offer is to generate a specific budget to increase the military spending … not only to offer greater security to the citizens, but to protect your investment'." (Interviewee 3, 21.01.14)

Later on in the same encounter, this interlocutor further highlighted the way in which the PP deploy gendered violence instrumentally:

> "… there is an economic exploitation of femicide in Guatemala. Because this stance of announcing in front of the world that Guatemala is an extremely violent country, and

> [announcing] the statistics of violence against women and femicide… serves the state because they receive money from other countries to strengthen programs and public policies in favour of women… but that money is not being translated within the code of the women's or feminist movements. That money and all of the actions around public policies are now being translated and interpreted within the code of the official political party." (Interviewee 3, 21.01.14)

Her narrative suggests that President Molina invokes "insecurity" in order to do certain hegemonic "work" within the moral and political economy of violence; it furthermore implies that we should not conceptually divorce the government's performative articulation of violence and insecurity from the instrumental value that violence, or citations of violence, carry (Nelson 2015). This is especially true for an administration that has leaned upon (representations of) Guatemala's violence and insecurity in order to legitimise the state's use of the military in the mark of reducing violence. Her final comments relate to criticisms, widely shared by women's and feminist interlocutors I interviewed, that key institutional sites such as the Presidential Secretariat for Women (discussed in chapter 4) and the Indigenous Women's Defence Institute have been both co-opted and undermined by the PP. The "economic exploitation of femicide", however, speaks directly to the notion of violence as a "productive resource" (Nelson 1999: 118), and draws out the importance of approaching discursive-policy frameworks on gendered violence and insecurity from a critical distance. Such an insight is especially useful for interrogating the practices, or the range of discursive and aesthetic performances, that bring femicide into the domain of visibility and political relevance. It suggests that we need to consider the contextual source of articulations of femicide and gendered violence, the "relationships that are forged" between other issues in the practice of that articulation (Hall 1985), and thus the wider political-policy imperatives within which these articulations gets embedded.

From one perspective, the implementation of security forces in marginalised areas might suggest that the state is responding to the fears and insecurities of the urban poor, thus gesturing towards a notion of the inhabitants of violent neighbourhoods as victims or citizens with rights, rather than perpetrators. But when looking at how the government actually approaches the country's "crime-ridden" urban spatialities,

public security gestures like the inauguration of the Task Force of militarised-police in Mixco, seem reserved for precarious areas where crime is considered to thrive; they appear less as tactics for protecting subjects within these "zones of social abandonment" (Biehl 2005), and more as strategies for materially and ideologically targeting subjects (and thus whole families and communities) conceptualised as (producers of) perpetrators. It is questionable that a similar "war-like" scene with hundreds of militarised-police would emerge in a middle-upper class neighbourhood like San José Pinula, where Cristina Siekavizza suffered years of domestic violence in the home she shared with her husband and two children (Interviewee 8, 29.01.14). Indeed, as we saw in chapter 4, the normative framework circulating for subjects of "private" family violence provides an opening for recognising women (however patronisingly) and children *as victims*—and thus, as possible objects of state protection, but not "intervention" in the same sense being charted here in relation to "public" violences. It is my contention that by targeting marginalised spatialities where racialised and socioeconomically populations (are understood to) reside, and by simultaneously identifying particular groups for "neutralisation", the insecurity framework activates a (probable) reading of the criminality of subjects of public gendered violence— crucially, as I have emphasised, for victims alongside (alleged) perpetrators.

As several interlocutors noted, the notion of "delinquent groups", or more generally "social decay", commonly referred to by key government actors within the insecurity rhetoric, fails to convincingly differentiate—or, rather, disarticulate—the victims of this public violence and crime, from the perpetrators (Interviewee 7, 23.01.14). At a policy level, it may be theoretically valid that public security measures are designed to target the "criminals" that perform acts of gendered violence (of course, this would still be a problematic approach because of how poor and racialised youth males are produced as "dangerous" (Camus 2009: 352)). In "focusing intervention in specific territories", as the Vice Minister of the Interior and President Molina put it, the government claims to be increasing protection for "good Guatemalans, and not the delinquents", with the aim to "recuperate spaces" where "crime controls the population"—namely, within areas that the administration has "mapped" as particularly violent (Ministerio de Gobernación 2012b). However, the discourse that gets deployed in relation to public security measures for crime-ridden areas implicitly

leans on a social imaginary whereby "marginalised" neighbourhoods, families, and individuals are conceptualised as racially and socioeconomically inferior—this, in turn, mobilises a criminal (rather than victim) label, which I suggest reaches *beyond* any actual or perceived perpetrators of violence. Ethnographic studies of deprived "*barrios*" in Guatemala that suffer from high levels of violence (and indeed, elsewhere in Latin America and across the United States) confirm that the political and societal "reading" (Butler 1993b) of deprived topographies inflects notions of culpability and disposability onto the wider population of the neighbourhood (Camus 2009; Evans and Giroux 2015; Ferreira da Silva 2012; Hume and Wilding 2015). Such security gestures that theatrically stage the implementation of militarised-police task forces thus "perform a vital task" (Evans and Giroux 2015: 45) in providing a grammar of public insecurity whereby racial, class, and gender anxieties are channelled into particular spatialities, and thus subjects/bodies, of blame.

These latter observations illuminate some of the normative logics that produce disposability narratives for women who are victimised by femicidal violence within public spatialities. Although the explicit targets of the insecurity discourse are delinquents and gangs—the "tumour", to put it crudely (Gregory 2013: 187)— I propose that the act of designating an entire area violent, and placing it under the auspices of militarised-police "protection", engenders a criminal reading of victims of violence that get discursively tied to those targets. For example, when addressing the residents that had gathered for the inauguration of the Task Force in the department of Mixco, Molina explained that he chose the "Colonia El Milagro" for his public address because "reducing the crime rates in the [area] is not merely a promise but a commitment" for both himself and the mayor. Furthermore, he stated that the Task Force for Mixco was named "El Milagro" ("the miracle") because his administration is praying that God will give them the strength to perform a miracle—namely, to "bring down criminality" across this crime-ridden area of Guatemala (Ministerio de Gobernación 2013b). Leaving to one side the non-secular imperatives within his narrative, it is notable how the area now under the security control of this task force is identified as so pervasively violent and crime ridden that "a miracle" in the form of 700 agents from the PNC and military, as well as 16 security checkpoints, is required. The articulation of political rationalities along these lines reinforces my suggestion that within the discursive logic of public insecurity, ideological assumptions

differentiate citizens (or potential subjects of violence) by way of their geographical location. In contrast to the "vulnerable" children interpellated within the terms of "private" or "interfamilial domestic violence"; the public insecurity discourse's interpellation of "at risk" youth writes criminality and blame onto the families, communities, or wider social space, within which subjects of gendered violence materialise.

The implications of this distinction on the social and political "reading" of victims of femicide in the public domain is not lost on feminist and social justice interlocutors in Guatemala. Many note that the various possibilities for interpretations of gendered violence "in a social space… outside of that family structure… [are] undercut" by a discursive-policy framework that "automatically blames, or criminalises" victims who are killed outside "the four walls of their homes" (Interviewee 13, 02.02.14). My assumption, however, is precisely that the "four walls of the home" refers to a notion of the nuclear family that forms the basis of the interpellation of victims of domestic violence within the government's VIF framework. Logically, of course, those marginalised neighbourhoods that get targeted by government policy as sites of public violence and insecurity undoubtedly count with families that fit some of the requisites of this nuclear ideal, such as containing a heterosexual couple and children.

But the picture is more complicated than this. As I have emphasised throughout, the spatial (public or private) and subject (family or gang member) coordinates of gendered violence have a productive role in racial, class, and gender meanings that emerge—and thus, in the differential political policies and social representations that surface in response to that violence. Here, once again, I suggest that it is crucial to foreground the notion of "social circle failure", and particularly the figure of the mother that emerges distinctly in relation to femicidal violence committed against women in public spatialities and ostensibly at the hands of gangs or delinquents, (as opposed to femicides framed within private spatialities at the hands of 'morally-bankrupt' husbands). Whereas the main subject(s) being addressed within the logic of the government's VIF framework is the heterosexual wife (and implied children), facilitating (though not guaranteeing) her recognition as a victim of gendered violence, I would argue that the primary subjects being interpellated within the public insecurity framework are (predominantly male) "delinquent" youth and criminal gang

members—gendered labels which fail to insulate victims from accusation. Further still, while the former approach searches for (potential) *victims* by way of the woman/housewife/mother's location within the private domain, in targeting "at risk" youth, I propose that the latter approach searches for (potential) perpetrators-cum-disposable victims by way of their location in public, often marginalised, spaces.

These spatialised distinctions speak to the racialised and classed nodes through which gendered accusations proceed. In the mark of public articulations of femicidal violence, a victim's "social circle failure" is, as I have suggested, oftentimes the mother's failure, and more commonly still, it is produced as the failure (or culpability) of the victim herself. Indeed, if we recall the two cases of "double femicide" cited earlier, it becomes evident how, in cases of gendered violence marked outside of the VIF framework, the catchment area of blame swells from the alleged authors of these crimes, onto the body of the victim and/or her (failed) mother. In the "Caso Palala-Pocia", where two teenage sisters were found dead on a dirt hill, their mother is implicitly accused of failing to perform her duties when she is questioned on her awareness of her daughters' links with delinquent groups in the neighbourhood. Although the sisters emerge as culpable at least in part due to the fact that they are cited as using drugs and knowingly associating with "*mareros*", in highlighting the mother's absence from the home, the mainstream media's account suggests that she shares the blame for the girls' murders. Similarly, referencing back to the case of the woman and her adolescent daughter who were presumably killed by members of "Mara 18" in a motel room in Guatemala City, some of the troubling social responses to the violence exercised against the girl— to say nothing of the implied sexual violence and overkill by beheading committed against the mother—demonstrate how the public insecurity framework has the productive capacity to "transvalue… agency" according to a "racialised [and classed and gendered] episteme" (Butler 1993b: 16). Whether the young girl gets conceptualised as a victim whose death is the fault of her mother and the gang she was "involved with", or if she is produced as a "future *marera*" whose death is a desirable outcome for the social body, what is significant is that her femicide is not interpreted as the failure of the state to provide her with protection. Following the hegemonic political and social reading that emerges in this, and similar cases of public femicide, it is the girl's social circle—that is, the mother

and the violent criminals with whom she was associated— that ultimately failed her and authorised her death.

As Hume has argued in relation to the comparable context in El Salvador, discourses that conceptualise gendered violence through recourse to "social and moral decay", and policies that target particular bodies as the ultimate sources of that violence, "change the focus of… intervention, shifting the responsibility from the state to its citizens" (2009: 69). Hume's observation illuminates how notions of accountability emerge dialectically in relation to different modes of sociopolitical intervention. Spatial boundaries and gendered ideologies deployed in the political regulation of femicidal violence produce paradoxical, yet mutually imbricated, articulations of accountability for violence. Whereas *prevention* of *violencia intrafamiliar femicidio* is framed in relation to "morally robust" patriarchs, devoted (or "resilient") wives/mothers and stable nuclear families, any potential *intervention* in relation to femicides within the public domain, and in the mark of "crime" and "insecurity", arrives in militarized form through the targeting of (often marginalised) bodies, and the political marking of the wider communities that they are imagined to occupy (recalling colonial patterns of regulating "ungovernable" lands and "undesirable" subjects). In both formations of "private" and "public" *femicidio*, the consistent outcome is the insulation of the state from substantive critique, or, indeed, of any wider historical and structural factors from political interrogation.

Disposability "through the eyes": Reading Femicide's Public Bodies

"… these women are disposable women, they are female pariahs of society, they are women that… aren't worth anything. And any woman that is assassinated in this country and ends up this way [as a body in the news media]… it's because she is the garbage of society. And look at how garbage ends up. It's a very moral message… that is to say, [that message] also enters through the eyes." (Interviewee 3, 21.01.14)

By situating analytic focus on the site (or "sight") of these bodies, we are impelled to consider "[w]hat type of people" and what kinds of gendered subjectivities "are produced when violence brings about their very realization?" (Evans and Giroux 2015: 77). The very public "presence" of the bodies of particular femicide victims within the visual economy of Guatemala's predatory "insecurity" formation makes casting analytical attention towards these bodies an "impossible necessity", despite ethical reservations one should have in "rewriting" or re-viewing such violence

(Stanley 2011: 5). Following in the thought of Eric Stanley, who, in recounting cases of overkill of queer subjects in the United States, admits that "[w]riting death tends to reproduce a pornography of violence", I am likewise reluctant to recite femicidal deaths, but aim to critically breakdown, or at least unsettle, the performative effects of the frames guiding mainstream representations (2011: 5). In moving towards the visual economy of these femicides, I consider how "public" femicide victims are (re)cast as moral and material threats through a frame that logically ties them to the contemporary "internal enemy" (the "marero") and to an imaginary of "social decay", which, as I suggested earlier, are conceptualised as causes of the country's 'post war' crime and insecurity.

Without denying the vulnerability of hegemonic frames to ruptures, reversals, or even transformations, I propose that discourses articulating public femicide victims within the terms of racialised, classed and gendered spectres of "*mareros*" or "*sexoservidoras*" ["prostitutes" or "sex workers"] are likewise mobilised within the mainstream media's performative staging of these events, so that "the threat that [these victims] embody" collapses further into "the threat that *is their body*" (Butler 2015). I do this to demonstrate why visual "evidence" of a dead body might fail to communicate notions of victimhood; or precisely, why it *succeeds* in communicating the redundancy, or even desirability, of such deaths in Guatemala. Indeed, in contrast to some of the domestic violence femicides charted earlier, I suggest that the "gendered scripts" (Hume and Wilding 2015) at work here serve to strip "public victims" of their "immunity" (Butler 2015) as subjects of violence, through a series of visual and textual codes that reinforce the idea of redundancy that circulates for these subjects in life and death. Although the institutional geography of "public insecurity" policy might reveal some of the more explicit contours of the government's protection and intervention logics (such as the selection of marginalised urban zones for patrolling by the "Femicide Task Force"), the visual topographies of public femicidal violence bring us "face to face" (or "face to body") with the question of what it might mean when something—or *someone*—that is considered disposable within the wider political and social milieu, is destroyed.

While rooted in the constant undercurrent of "disposability" that circulated in my field encounters and observations, such a claim about processes of

visibility/invisibility is somewhat generalising, and demands qualification in the form of empirical accounts that might "speak" through the theoretical tropes I have deployed throughout this chapter. Paramount here is the observation that those femicides absorbed within the framework of "(in)security" in public spaces emerge representationally in media accounts through the vessel of their (lifeless, violated and even overkilled) *bodies*, rather than through their (liveable) *faces* (recall the recurring facial image(s) deployed to represent Cristina Siekavizza, for example). That this visibility gets enacted through the body is, I argue, formative to how these femicides get "read" (Butler 1993b) by society, and to why they are instrumental to the government's wider "insecurity" inflected regulation of public violence. As Butler reminds us, "there is no simple recourse to the visible" (1993b: 17)— to what, as one interlocutor phrased it, enters "through the eyes" (Interviewee 3, 21.01.14). Indeed, the visual field is an ideologically saturated terrain that is not merely "seen" but "read"— this reading can reinstall hegemony or can be a site for the articulation of counter discourses (Butler 1993b). Visual encounters are thus highly mediated, and inescapably *relational*, events: they "presuppose other faces, other encounters of facing, other bodies, other spaces, and other times" (Ahmed 2000: 7). Both the discursive and visual codes through which these femicide victims are interpellated are saturated by class(ist), and gender(ed) normative ideals. These norms, in turn, work within hierarchies that are "strongly racialised" (Boesten 2014: 4) and are thus productive of the notion that subjects linked to this violence are "the garbage of society" (Interviewee 3, 21.01.14).

Recalling earlier discussions from my theoretical framework chapter, the concept of "normative violence" is likewise crucial for understanding how practices of "inclusion and exclusion, or incorporation and expulsion" (Ahmed 2000: 6) are always already operating in the scene of public femicidal violence to obscure and/or limit the recognition of (destroyed) life (Butler 2010; Wilcox 2015: 9). Thus, we might think of how forms of marginalization implied by the representations circulating in the cases already discussed—for example, the gendered poverty suggested by way of the single-mother's absence due to work-demands, when her two daughters are killed in the "Caso Palala-Pocia"— "act as… precursor[s] to the [physical] violence we are more familiar with" (Wilcox 2015: 9), and yet mark those

deaths through notions of blame, inevitability, or even desirability, rather than through ideas of victimhood or injustice.

If "insecurity" is considered the foremost concern for Guatemalans, and continues to be framed as the governance priority for consecutive administrations in the 'post war' period (if most pronounced under the PP) (Benson et al. 2008), how is this social imaginary reconciled with the "abjected" bodies of femicide victims like Luisa Guidel and "the others" cited thus far in this chapter, who are "produced in [these] moments as lifeless flesh, as corpses"? (Wilcox 2015: 13) What do these figures reveal, or obscure, about the "boundary producing practices" that the state and its apparatuses deploy in relegating who will be "objects of protection", of "active intervention", or, indeed, who will simply be "refused" direct interpellation? (Evans and Giroux 2015: 135). And, finally, why do the bodies emerging within public articulations, and re-presentations of, public femicidal violence suggest that such violence is being disproportionately levied against marginalised women in Guatemala? An engagement with feminist and other such critical theorizations on "the historical specificities of embodiment" (Haraway 1991; Wilcox 2015: 138) thus opens a crucial pathway for tracking the production of hierarchies of gendered death within the contemporary formation of 'post war' insecurity.

Gendered Scopic Regimes
In order to grasp how these "abjected" bodies (Butler 1993a) are re-produced/re-presented *as abject* in media accounts, it is useful to supplement feminist and critical contemplations on embodiment (introduced in chapter 3) with concepts emerging from visual culture studies. Mirzoeff explains that "the first move" in examining the "space" of the visual as a site of meaning-making is to recognise "that the visual image is not stable but changes its relationship to exterior reality at particular moments" (1999: 7). He argues that the "coding" of a photograph, for example, proceeds by way of a dialectic "because it sets up a relationship between the viewer in the present and the past moment of space or time that it represents" (8). This formulation is crucial to his broader conceptualisation of visual culture, which he defines less in terms of the specific "apparatus" or "technology" behind the image (for example, the camera/lens), and more in terms of the "visual event" (13) constituting the interaction of the photo with the wider culture from which it emerges, or "to

which it belongs" (3-4). It is this latter concept that I find especially useful for thinking through the visual re-presentation of public femicide victims' bodies in media accounts. Summoning the notion of the "event" allows me to probe such visual narratives as central sites in the production of normative frameworks linked to gendered violence.

While we might be open to accepting that the visual is an analytically relevant terrain— that photographs, and images more generally, "matter" (Butler 1993a)— what is it exactly that structures this field of vision and interpretation? Building on theorizations of embodiment and taking these into the domain of visuality, feminist cultural theorists such as Mulvey (1975) have highlighted the way in which visual economies of representation are "of enormous political consequence because of their performative power "to place people in particular positions" (Sassatelli 2011: 124-5). Visual interpellations generate "subjective effects", and are thus key techniques for the differentiation of subjects under the politics of gendered death (Butler 1993b). In other words, "the aesthetic (and the affective) is social and therefore political": this sets up the enquiry into the way in which women's bodies, or "bodies of [gendered] violence" emerge in the representational domain (Sassatelli 2011; Wilcox 2015). Such accounts likewise link to more recent discussions of the performative effects of various "framing mechanisms" deployed in the context of global terror wars. The now infamous images released of sexual torture and humiliation by US soldiers of Iraqi prisoners in the Abu Ghraib facility have become the object of critical enquiry by several scholars who have contemplated how the circulation of a tortured, and often still living, body, operates through vectors of power to normalise the violence captured within the frame, while "disqualifying" the life being subjugated within the image (Butler 2010: 4; Evans and Giroux 2015: 138; Palacios and Posocco 2011). We can use these discussions to think about the way in which bodily re-presentations of femicide victims, and the regimes within which they are deployed might help generate notions of disposability.

The "scopic regime", introduced in an earlier discussion, is also a useful trope here: the concept is used to "distinguish the cinematic from the theatrical way of staging and seeing the world… and denotes culturally or techno-culturally mediated ways of seeing" (Gregory 2013: 152). Feldman furthermore situates the idea of the scopic

regime in relation to state hegemony, describing the former as an "ensemble of practices and discourses that establish… truth claims" by delineating forms of, and boundaries to, visibility in relation to violence (Feldman 2000: 49-52). Deployed as a critical corrective to "the idea of vision as a purely biological capacity" (Gregory 2013: 152-3), the notion of scopic regime was rearticulated through the notion of a "gendered scopic regime" by Mulvey in her discussion of the patriarchal coding of Hollywood film form (1975). Her analysis pays particular attention to the symbolic place given to the "female form" within the cinematic system of representation. The gendered scopic regime that presents women as mere images to be consumed or imposed upon, is structured through a "male gaze", which connotes patriarchal "ways of seeing and pleasure in looking" (804). Crucially, Mulvey suggests that "[t]he image of woman as (passive) raw material for the (active) gaze of man" structures the representation of the visual field so that the female form is bound to stand as "signifier of the male other" (804). The "silent image of woman" in film form thus provides visual material for producing and confirming cultural narratives of gender difference and hierarchy (804). More relevant to the current discussion, still, is the distinction Mulvey draws between two visual modes that apprehend the female form through the patriarchal "male gaze"—one avenue which she identifies as a form of "voyeurism", and another as "fetishistic scopophila" (1975: 811-12; Sassatelli 2011: 124). In the case of the "voyeuristic" gaze, Mulvey notes an "association with sadism… [since] pleasure lies in ascertaining guilt… asserting control and subjecting the guilty person through punishment; whereas the pleasure of seeing associated with "fetishistic scopophila" "builds up the physical beauty of the object, transforming it into something satisfying in itself" (1975: 811-12). Despite the conceptual limits yielded by Mulvey's empirical focus on Hollywood film form, the latter "woman as image" dyad, in particular, overlaps importantly with the "femicide as image" dyad— where the distinction, I suggest, emerges by way of the facial or bodily representation within the visual field. This reading of "voyeurism" resonates with how I suggest "public insecurity"-related femicides emerge representationally, whereas the practices of "fetishistic scopophila" recall the ways in which Cristina Siekavizza's face and life have been shaped by mainstream narratives. Indeed, Mulvey's formulation opens up critical ground for "reading" media accounts of femicides in relation to its "private" and "public" formations, because, as Carey and Torres have noted in their historical analysis of media representations of gendered violence in Guatemala, the hegemonic

tendency is for victims to be portrayed as either "in need of rescuing" or as "threats" (2010: 155). Such distinctions likewise recall the insights of postcolonial feminists who note the tensions and differential outcomes produced through the nexus of gender, violence, and nation-building (eg., Alcarón et al. 1999; Anthias and Yuval Davis 1989). Narratives "grounded in ideas about women's role as reproducers of identity", for example, but especially about "women's sexual bodies…[as] more raced than male bodies" (Boesten 2014: 147-50), disclose paradoxical normative frameworks whereby women can be both "overprotected and controlled, but can also become targets" of state and non-state violences (Boesten 2014: 21; Rosser 2007: 399).

Understandably, then, addressing a field of violence so encumbered by a *racialised*, and not merely gendered, symbolic order, suggests that Mulvey's "gendered scopic regime" needs to be reworked to account for the ways in which racist modes of interpellation might simultaneously structure the visual field. If the wider political framework of "insecurity" does in fact provide the ideological scaffolding for ascertaining differences between subjects of violence worthy of "protection" as opposed to those requiring "intervention" or "neutralization", then it is worth considering how images linked to this policy framework are visually coded to confirm the differences within the scopic regime of gendered and racialised violence. As Casaus Arzú (2007) and others have convincingly argued, "in Guatemala, bodies do matter… phenotype and blood… figure largely": therefore, there is not only a gendered, but a "racial grammar" that structures the field of recognition so that certain bodies will matter more, or will matter differently, than others (Nelson 1999: 210-12). Indeed, several of the feminist and social justice interlocutors I spoke with in Guatemala made a point of insisting on the importance of appreciating the extent to which racist tropes "rooted in political distinctions that appear self-evident" (Evans and Giroux 2015: 135) inscribe bodies with markers of "suspicion and presumed guilt" (Interviewee 20, 11.02.14; Interviewee 3, 21.01.14). As a crucial additive to Mulvey's formulation then, Butler's discussion of "schematic racism" (1993b) is especially relevant in that it foregrounds how the visual field is racially saturated. Drawing on the example of how visual evidence presented during the infamous Rodney King trial was interpreted by the jury, she observes how society's "readings" of violence against racialised (and gendered) bodies are structured through hegemonic

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norms that inherently limit "ethical responsiveness" to those bodies (Butler 1993b: 594). Like Mulvey's suggestion of the patriarchal structuring of the "scopic regime" and "male gaze", what Butler refers to as "the racial production of the visible", suggests that the visual field is performatively constituted through technologies of visualization that are repeated "to enforce particular views and particular subject formations" (Evan and Giroux 2015: 138; Torres 2014: 22). Thus, it is not a question of Guatemalan racisms "imposing" upon the visual scene of a femicide victim's body: rather, there is a "racist organization and disposition of the visible" that is there, already operating in the scene, and, in fact, I would argue it begins prior to that scene, in a newspaper's *decision* to deploy the image of a body (Interviewee 10, 30.01.14; Interviewee 26, 18.02.15). The modes of sexism, racism, and, indeed, classism that circulate within these scenes of femicidal violence "take place neither inside nor outside the image, but through the very framing by which the image is contained" (Butler 2004a: 148).

Embedded within the title of this section—"disposability through the eyes" and "reading public bodies"— is the suggestion of an "optic" or aesthetic imperative anchoring (public) femicidal violence and the forms of (differentiated) (in)visibility that circulate around the subjects of such violence. But asking how those femicides that are ideologically located within the constellation of "insecurity" and "crime" are visualised is precisely to trouble such positivist paradigms that "fetishize the visible" (Winter 2012: 196). When approaching the photographic depictions of femicide that circulate within "everyday" exercises of "social morbidity" in Guatemala (Interviewee 7, 23.01.14), the point is necessarily to challenge the association of violence with only that which is visually accessible as physical injury to a body (Winter 2012).

As others have emphasised, the violence done to bodies that are always already conceptualised as zones of violence, or as sites for the reproduction of violence, fails to register as (unethical or illegitimate) violence (Ferreira da Silva 2012: 382). Thus, perhaps the more pertinent question is to consider by what logics "disposable" victims materialise within these commercial news domains, and to explore the relationship between these representations and the political and policy logics operating within the same ideological formation.

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The Guatemalan Media's "work" on Femicidal Visibility

Significantly, the ubiquity of depictions of violence in general, and gendered or femicidal violence, in particular, within popular dailies became a familiar axiom of critical interlocutors I spoke with in Guatemala. Rather than disparaging the "lack" of content on the subject matter in newspapers, television, and radio coverage, concerns were geared towards the nature of the content—how the mainstream media could "show" so little by showing so much:

> "…for example they publish an article where there is the body of a woman that has been found…sometimes they show the body, and they give the details of the place where she was found…it is an irresponsible approach to the problem of violence and femicides…that is, they only see that women die, that the bodies are there, that the statistics are there"
> (Interviewee 10, 30.01.14)

Evans and Giroux's recent interrogation of "spectacles of violence" across contemporary neoliberal formations articulates this notion of "seeing", while obscuring, violence through Walter Benjamin's discussion of the violence of imagery. In the latter's analysis of "the affective force of aesthetics", images can become the site of "fascist spectacles [which] use the force of sensations… to privilege the emotive and visceral at the expense of thoughtful engagement" (2015: 168). Under such a reading, the force of a violent image lies not in its ability to render a subject of violence visible, or to trigger contemplation of the various forms of violence left out of the scene captured by a photograph, but rather, it lies in its ability to occlude through this very "showing" (Winter 2012). This is especially true because the subjects that tend to be portrayed within explicit or "shocking" images of (bodily) violence are those who are already disqualified within the social order through the operation of normative violences (Evans and Giroux 2015). Boesten has elaborated a notion of "racialised sexuality" to explain how gendered hierarchies are reinforced through the performance of sexual violence across war and peacetime Peru (2014: 57), articulating the dialectics between how perceptions around race, class, and sexuality are "used to justify [physical] violence", while such physical violence likewise helps (re)produce the differences between gendered subjectivities. But while femicidal violence itself is indeed central to how historical hierarchies and social

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divisions get reconstituted in Guatemala (Consorcio Actoras de Cambio 2009), by the same token, I would argue that the discursive-aesthetic representations of such violence also plays a crucial role in the performance of these normative gendered hierarchies. Hence, the politics of *seeing* the aftermath of violence exercised against marginalised women's bodies is actually a central component for *re-establishing* hierarchies drawn on racial-ethnic, class, and heteronormative lines (Boesten 2014: 63).

A primary example of the hegemonic effects of the mainstream media's techniques of reporting on "public" femicidal violence was expressed by one feminist interlocutor as two-pronged: the account not only "ratifies that 'this woman' deserved to die", but that she deserved to die " in *that* way", through exercises of sexual violence, torture, and often overkill (Interviewee 20, 11.02.14). Further still, despite the presence of her weekly column in the most widely-circulated daily, *Prensa Libre*, a journalist active around women's rights suggested that the representational practices governing mainstream media reports on femicide "actually obscure it [the violence]" more than anything (Interviewee 26, 18.02.15). Indeed, the constant barrage of "*notas rojas*" (or "red notes" (used to insinuate the sensationalist accounts of physical violence), is met with responses that range from indifference ("people have lunch while watching the news and looking at the dismembered bodies" (Interviewee 20, 11.02.14)), disdain (such as social commentary reducing victims to "undesirable" excess within the social body) (Interviewee 7, 23.01.14), and even with satisfaction (a sense that victims' deaths are not only warranted, but are part of a necessary social cleansing of those who are morally suspect) (Interviewee 3, 21.01.14).

A feminist photographer suggested to me, that when we enter the field of femicidal violence, "showing the bodies of women" is a practice deployed by the mainstream media not in order to "reveal", but "in order to terrorise" and to obscure the on-going weight of racial, class, and gender hierarchies in the politics of 'post war' violence (Interviewee 29, 25.02.15). Indeed, the practices that are involved in editorial decisions to feature a victim's body are performances fraught with wider ideological narratives and political imperatives linked to the framework of 'peacetime' (in)security.

The ambivalent nature of the relationship between violence and (in)visibility (Winter 2012) goes some way toward explaining why visual representations of femicide cannot be taken for granted as worthy interventions that "bring to light" the victims of such destructive violence. Because the "visual evidence" of death, violation, and overkill is made available through coverage of gendered death in Guatemala; and, indeed, because it consistently proves insufficient to ensuring the emergence of "unambiguously" innocent victims (Boesten 2014: 89), we perhaps need to consider how "disposability" might be effected, not by an outright "refusal of discourse", but "through the production", not of the face, as Butler suggests (2004a: 141), but through the production of the bodies of femicidal violence. While my argument locates both notions within the same figure of the "public femicide victim", there is an important conceptual distinction to be drawn between the idea of a *visible body* and an *invisible subject*. Indeed, suggesting that victims of "public femicide" are depicted within media accounts and yet are not recognisable as "legitimate" subjects of gendered violence, highlights a central paradox of "seeing" the aftermath of death or destruction of those who are considered "(no)bodies" (Ferreira da Silva 2012): they occupy a "field of invisibility [which] is not simply an absence or lack of visibility" (Winter 2012: 198). If narratives of "disposability" are enabled by the re-presentation of bodies, media images of the latter serve as a crucial analytical entry point for identifying how social imaginaries of 'post war' insecurity get structured around fears and desires (Fischer and Benson 2006: 15).

"Spectacles of violence": Visual and Textual Codes of Disposability

As I explained in chapter 2, I cannot proclaim to know the precise number of femicide cases, or violent deaths of women, that I learned of/heard of/re-viewed in media or other accounts over the course of fieldwork. However, I selected cases that I suggest are representative of the discursive and visual framing of public femicides more generally, owing to the repetitive nature of how these materialise in media accounts (CERIGUA 2013). Of course, by definition I cite cases that *do emerge representationally,* even if only by "flicker[ing] into momentary presence" (Gregory 2013: 154) during an interview, passing conversation, a newspaper footnote, or, especially pertinent to this section, in a photographic image. Notably, even when a body materialises through a dehumanizing or "derealising" frame (Butler 2004a: 148), and even where the victim is faceless or nameless, the visual and discursive re-

presentation of a body is qualitatively somewhat distinct from the total absence of that body from public or political discourse (ibid.). Writing about the "spectre of missing, lost, [and] disappeared bodies" in Brazil, Scheper-Hughes deploys the powerful idiom of "empty spaces", to refer to the absences that haunt unmarked deaths (2004: 20). Her intervention serves as a reminder that even though the practices that bring "public" femicide bodies into the realm of sociopolitical interpellation are problematic, they "leave substantial losses outside the frame" (Butler 2010: 73). As outlined in the Appendix, I *purposefully* analysed thirty-six femicide cases[34], with twelve of these cases (Case #'s 8 – 20) involving twenty-nine victims whose deaths emerged representationally in media accounts. In nearly all of the reports, *Prensa Libre* published photos of the cadavers of the victims: either with parts of the victim's body actually appearing in the image, or the outline of the body when partially covered by a sheet. These cases form the corpus of the images and texts analysed for the purposes of this final section.

The visual and textual performances addressed here are integral to the production of meanings (Evans and Giroux 2015); they are thus key points of analytical interlocution for understanding the gendered contours of the government's insecurity formation. Although invisibility is one condition that makes violence possible, the practices by which mainstream media representations adjudicate scenes of femicidal violence through visual images suggests that violence can likewise be rendered *too* visible—or, that visualised violence can just as effectively inscribe readings of disposability (Winter 2012). Indeed, as critical feminists highlight, "hypervisibility" can obscure as much as it reveals (Mulvey 1975; Rosser 2007; Wilcox 2015).

It is worth reiterating that it is rare that days pass without coverage of violent death— often with photographic accompaniment— in the pages of Guatemala's mainstream newspapers. In a recent report analysing ten years of mainstream reporting on violence against women in Guatemala, the agency CERIGUA, which is headed by a journalist, and self-proclaimed feminist who I interviewed, found that "while the photos are not *as explicit*" as they have been in past historical periods, "women's

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[34] This figure does not include the victims and/or survivors of femicidal and sexual violence addressed for the historical trials in chapter 7.

bodies… dead or alive… are [still] used to sell everything" (Interviewee 26, 18.02.15):

> "The tendency to publish the theme of violence against women in a discriminatory way, approached with a load of sensationalist and alarmist journalism and morbidity, persists in the news. [Nevertheless, when] the press releases about assassination or violent deaths of women [do occupy] relevant spaces in the media… that "importance" depends, on many occasions, on the brutality or viciousness with which the crimes were committed." (CERIGUA 2013: 24)

Indeed, speaking about the continuum in the "mediatization of femicide", the director of CERIGUA explained to me that the shift between depictions of victims' bodies when the study first began in 2003 and now, is that (sometimes) sheets are used to cover the cadavers. However, she added that it is not uncommon for police or other state agents at the scene of a crime to "lift the sheets used to cover the bodies so that photographers can take pictures" (Interviewee 26, 18.02.15). The impetus for re-presenting bodies is necessarily fraught by imperatives at the level of sociocultural ideals *and* by political economy (Torres 2014). The latter, recalling the notion of the "economic exploitation" of femicide in Guatemala (Interviewee 3, 21.01.14), is considered to boil down to the logic that the mainstream media "report on violence because it sells" (Interviewee 2, 18.11.13):

> "the instrumentalisation of the bodies of murdered women has a price. It is not the same to have a news story without a photograph… If you have a photograph with more characteristics of cruel violence… of bloody [violence], it will have a higher economic value. That sells more. The economic potential that the mainstream commercial media generates to economically exploit femicide is brutal in this country. And I say '*mercantalizar*' because there is literally a competition between newspapers for these photographs." (Interviewee 3, 21.01.14)

Moreover, the drive for deploying such images is compelled by hegemonic imperatives, which are structured around fears and desires, and thus to "sell" technologies of security to Guatemalan citizens (Fischer and Benson 2006). In fact, while partially conceding to the idea that Guatemalans are de-sensitized to violence— or to portrayals of violence— several feminists rejected the idea that this "socially morbid" imaginary is merely reproduced by the mainstream media as an economic calculus of "giving the people what they want" (Interviewee 27, 19.02.15;

Interviewee 29, 25.02.15). They emphasized that the dialectic between the normalization of violence and hegemonic scopic regimes of violence is much more complicated. While the aesthetisation of femicide in media accounts may, for example, satiate consumerist ends, there is a necessary historical link with respect to how the state and commercial media have instrumentalised gendered violence "in order to terrorise" by inculcating fear, and in order to reinstall normative hierarchies (Interviewee 29, 25.02.15). Such a reading of the "terrorizing imperative" behind the reproduction of images of femicide resonates with Trujillo's analysis of the politically expedient function of femicides (2010). In her view, the "evidence of cruelty found on the corpses of the majority of the assassinated women", is part of a wider narrative that "has kept Guatemalan women in a state of alert and terror" (132). Torres' (2014) recent historical analysis of the drives behind the Guatemalan newspaper media's aesthetic choices for portraying violence also endorses this view of the sociopolitical function of "terrorizing women". Also using *Prensa Libre* as her empirical reference point, Torres acknowledges that "the primary determiner of content… was (and always has been) the predilections of readers who determine newspaper sales figures" (2014: 15). But she likewise questions this one-sided view on the audience's (and profit's) role in directing the drive for violent content. Drawing from Moeller's argument that "photographs cannot initiate a moral or political stance, but… can reinforce one" (1999: 52), Torres notes:

> "one cannot help but ask if the need to consume violence was truly audience-driven or if Guatemalan audiences were trained to enjoy the consumption of *La Violencia*… [that these] [i]mages of violence were actively represented and consumed… The prominence and frequency of images of violence suggests that they mattered or were *made to matter*…" (2015: 15-6, emphasis added).

Notably, when addressing the display of "public" femicide victims, interlocutors made a point of highlighting that the coding of these bodies is not merely gendered, it is profoundly racialised: the narrative is not merely that "she deserved it", but that "*los indios lo merecen*" (Interviewee 26, 18.02.15; Interviewee 3, 21.01.14). Indeed, what is textually and photographically "visible" about these public femicides is part of a "racial production" (Butler 1993b: 16) that is also articulated through class, gender, sexuality, and nation. When understood in these terms, there is an inescapably ideological narrative being threaded within the contemporary performative stagings of

femicide victims' bodies for public consumption: a racially inflected and deeply gendered account that *"they deserved it"* (Interviewee 26, 18.02.15). These are narratives fraught with notions introduced earlier such as "social circle failure", "moral decay", and "danger" that write undesirability, blame, guilt, and ultimately, disposability, onto the bodies of victims. Indeed, as several scholars have noted on postcolonial contexts, gendered and racialised bodies have always "haunt[ed] the project of nation formation" (Nelson 1999: 210); they are thus central to creating and maintaining a sense of political and cultural "clarity" as to the hierarchies that shape the 'post-colonial' or 'post war' social body (Mohanty 1985; Smith 1996; Smith 2005). The contemporary "determiner of content" (Torres 2014) in relation to coverage of (gendered) violence should thus be understood as a deeply ideological *and* economically-driven calculation.

In the following accounts, I suggest that explicit textual citations of torture, violence, and cruelty, and the visual re-presentation of a cadaver, help mark the subjects not as "pure victims", as such (Boesten 2014: 89). Instead, through a series of codes linked to the insecurity formation, "the scars of violence" actually work performatively to "inscribe qualities of complicity, shaming, inferiority, and, of course, disposability" (Evans and Giroux 2015: 137). Crucially, of course, these are not un-marked or invisible/less visible femicides (like some of "the others" discussed in chapter 5, eg. Adela Chacon-Tax or Mindy Rodas): on the contrary, these bodies *are* cited, marked, and visible, but it is the terms of their visibility that I suggest works productively to effect disposability, and, implicitly, even gestures at the desirability of their deaths for the social and moral security of Guatemalan society. What is actually going on in these scenes of representation, and what might they reveal about the wider "adjudication" of 'post war' violence?

Sexualised Subjects and Disposability

Let us now turn to some specific examples of the kinds of "boundary-producing practices" (Wilcox 2015) and disposability narratives that have circulated in recent mainstream media accounts of public femicidal violence. As I did with Cristina Siekavizza's (absent) body, I proceed by asking: "to what set of interpellating calls" (Butler 1993a: 124-5) do the bodies of "public" femicide respond? How is their visibility enacted—textually and aesthetically? And how might the technologies of

the visual economy of re-presentation intersect with the political rationalities and ideological assumptions underpinning the government's insecurity practices?

Four of the cases and five victims considered here are cited as "prostitutes" (Appendix Case #11, 14, 16, 19). All four news reports included photos of the cadavers. In the following accounts, I suggest that these labels, positioned alongside a visual deployment of a body image, are part of an interpellation grounded in "racialised sexuality" (Boesten 2014: 57), which produces these "public" femicide victims as socially inferior. Although not necessarily represented as physical threats (in the way that marginalised young men often are within the framework of insecurity), I claim that their positioning as sex workers produces them as *moral threats*, both to the "ideal" of Guatemalan womanhood, and to the moral fabric of Guatemalan society. The deployment of the "sex worker" label alongside a body image is thus a performance that becomes integral to the regulatory practices linking gender and sexuality to class and race. Indeed, ideological narratives operating within such scenes of gendered violence against women who are represented as "sex workers" appeal directly to normative tropes that over-determine victims in other ways. As a *"trabajadora del sexo"* or *"sexoservidora"* she is articulated within a nexus of class marginalization and thus, crucially, also racial inferiority (Interviewee 26, 18.02.15). As "public women" (Wright 2006b, 2011b), who transgress the boundaries of the "ideal woman", these victims have thus entered an urban spatiality that is ideologically occupied by the "internal enemies" understood to be perpetrating crime and violence in the 'post war' context.

The first visual and textual "event" emerges under the headline: "Violence leaves three women dead" (Case #11) (Marroquin 2014) and recounts two distinct incidences, the first of which is another "double femicide", in that the victims are presumed to have been killed by the same perpetrator(s) in the same act of criminal violence. The prominent visual image accompanying the late January 2014 story depicts the lifeless figures of two women, whose bodies are faced downwards, shown and described as "abandoned on the road". Also notable within the photographic scene are five agents from the PNC and PPO, surrounding one of the victim's bodies, with one agent aiming his camera lens over the body. The textual accompaniment to the story declares that the women were killed "*a golpes*" ("blows" to their bodies, one

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presumes), and makes reference to a series of what I have referred to as "contextual-cum-ideological coordinates", linked to notions of subjectivity and spatiality:

> "The cadavers of two women, with signs of torture, were
> abandoned on the highway, at kilometre 238, route between
> San Marcos and Quetzaltenango, where the judicial and police
> authorities arrived to identify them."

In what I would suggest is significant for its symbolic coding of the victims, the article continues by noting that the bodies were "unidentified":

> "Nevertheless, in the late afternoon they still remained
> unidentified. The victims were presumed to be between 25
> and 30 years old…Preliminary information suggests they
> could be sex workers, this account has not been confirmed."

The significance of the citation of the "unclaimed" bodies and "unidentified" victims should not be understated. Indeed, I would suggest that this discursive coding functions, in part, to sanction the journalist's repetition of the authorities' assumption that the victims were "sex workers", a claim made at the scene of the crime by authorities, despite the admission that there is no evidence to confirm this scenario. Of course, without friends or kin "claiming" the victims' bodies, the authority for the narrative about these women's lives rests with the agents of the state who are present at the site of the violence—a narrative that is subsequently crystallised in the media's recounting. Furthermore, the description of the site where the bodies were found (on the side of a highway) helps designate the public spatiality of the crime, and, critically, I would argue it performatively constitutes the public nature of the victims as well.

As discussed earlier, the stakes of such a representation of victims of gendered violence as "public women" has been persuasively articulated in research from Peru and Mexico—crucially, two other "Latin American countries with a large proportion of poor indigenous and mixed-race populations", suggesting the broader implications of historical inequalities in designating hierarchies of vulnerability to gendered violence (Boesten 2014: 150-2). Indeed, as Wright has argued in relation to the femicides in Ciudad Juárez, Mexico, discourses associating "public" victims with

prostitution and with the moral degradation of the family, community, and nation as a whole do not merely normalize the femicidal violence against particular victims more likely to be economically and racially marginalised, but, under logics of social cleansing, they even suggest the *desirability* of such deaths to the task of restoring "the moral and political balance of society" (2011: 713). Similarly, in her discussion of the racial and gender politics of designating women as "*cholas*" in the Peruvian context, Boesten argues that ideas of spatiality are paramount to the justification of violence: irrespective of their ethnic background, by occupying the "public" domain, a victim of gendered violence can be performatively constituted as racially inferior because of her location in the "commercialized public space of the city", and thus, "because of her [perceived] sexual availability" (2014: 58, 61).

Thus, in the case under consideration, alongside a visual scene that suggests the abandoned nature of the victims' bodies, the textual codes hint at the "publically available" and also *disowned* status of these women by way of the lack of kin or concerned family members coming forward to claim them as "their own". Indeed, here I would suggest that the scopic and discursive regime mobilises a reading of what I referred to in earlier cases as a "social circle failure", a notion that I proposed circulates for "public" femicide victims, who implicitly emerge as economically— if not also, due to normative assumptions about poverty, racially— marginalised subjects.

Turning to another case, cited in *Prensa Libre* under the heading "Woman suffocated in room in zone 1" (Case #14), the victim is described as a "*sexoservidora*", once again "according to the police" (Patzan 2015a). As in the aforementioned case, here textual details give form to the 'type' of violent death that was inflicted upon the victim: the body is described as showing "signs of having been suffocated" and, significantly, as being found "in the nude, wrapped in a sheet". Notably, the report includes details of the victim absent from the previous account: we learn that her name was Sara Maritza Villagran Garcia, that she was 26 years old, and that she leaves three children behind. This information presumably emerges by way of the friends, who, the article explains, contacted the police after the victim did not respond to knocks on her door. And yet, despite these details, which give what is admittedly a fuller account of the victim's profile, and even gesture towards the kin circle around

her, I suggest that this potential reading is undercut by the reference to her profession as a sex worker, a signifier that works to dehumanize victims globally (Wright 2011), and, crucially, by the inclusion of a photographic image of her body. The scene within the frame shows a very small room with a bed, a shelf with a few items including toilet paper, and one plastic chair: the body is seen laid beside the bed, and the head of a fire-fighter makes it into the frame just to the side of the body. This is an image of quintessential gendered urban poverty— only heightened when one considers that the victim had three children in her (implied exclusive) care. The economic marginalization implied within this visual scene, and made more explicit still with the reference to the victim's status as a "sex worker", is, I suggest, productive of a reading of the victim as racially inferior, despite the absence of any direct reference to her ethnicity. Indeed, the inclusion of the detail that she was found naked is, I would argue, linked to the notion of "racialised sexuality" (Boesten 2014: 59), and is thus part of a performative staging that is mobilised to confirm that she is a racially and economically inferior subject who does not merit societal respect, nor, therefore, mourning (Butler 2004a). A similar representational pattern is discernable in the reports of the killing of "Barbara" (Case #16, last name unknown) and Maria Yamileth Perez Arita (Case #19), both of whom are cited as "sex workers", and whose unclaimed bodies are described as having been found in the nude (Lara and Patzan 2015; Noticias Nacionales 2014).

One interlocutor, a feminist and journalist who works for an organisation that monitors press coverage of violence against women in Guatemala, explained how victims with "lower social status" are produced as racially inferior through "clues about their condition of poverty", and through citations that "sexualise the context" in which their bodies are found (Interviewee 26, 18.02.15), which once again highlights the intersectional vectors through which normative exclusions proceed (Butler 1993a). As I have emphasized throughout, gender, sexuality, and class are key sites of racialisation. When asked to expand upon what she considered the role of visual representations of violence against so-called "public" women to be, another feminist interlocutor emphasized that the bodily depiction, alongside textual codes of what this body's "place" is within the social milieu (for example, her role as a mother or a sex worker), is channelled through a wider narrative of "value"— of which victims "deserve" the violence exercised against them, as opposed to which victims "deserve"

that their case be investigated, and that justice be procured (Interviewee 7, 23.01.14). She also referred to the textual codes that circulate in these accounts:

> "… all the newspapers, that is to say all the media at that level is like that and that is what they are there for. Because lets say when you see the press releases about…about the assassinated women, the first, second paragraph, relates to how she was dressed. Everything gets related back to her sexuality, right? It is a justification in order for [society to interpret] it like this, that 'if they were whores, why? Why do they deserve our respect? Why does their case deserve action?'... the representation itself is an annihilation…" (Interviewee 7, 23.01.14)

Linking back to my earlier discussion of how notions of "social decay" are woven into the government's "insecurity" formation, especially in designating marginalised youth males as "internal enemies", I would suggest that the victims within these accounts—cited as sex workers, with markings of torture and sexual violence, and in sites that are suggestive of poverty—are subjects who get discursively tied to the "threats" represented as propelling the country's widespread urban criminal violence. But this reading also depends on the scopic regime that circulates alongside these stories. The visual economy of femicidal violence reflects the ideological injunction which compels "recognisable" or "worthy" victims to materialise representationally through the medium of their faces, while disposable subjects to emerge as mere bodies, "re-presented—both textually and photographically—for a national audience" (Carey and Torres 2010: 158). The spatial and subjective coding of these accounts of violence thus work alongside the bodily image to police boundaries, conditioning the forms of subjects' (in)visibility as victims of femicidal violence in relation to notions of moral decay. In other words, the bodies produced are not the bodies of civilians, as such, but figure instead as the bodies of those who present a *threat* to "good Guatemalan citizens" and to the country's "good" moral and public order (Ministerio de Gobernación 2012b). As Torres has suggested, images of cadavers are part of a performative staging that "completes or returns to culture processes" of dehumanisation (2014: 22). Indeed, taken together, the textual citations of torture, discursive codes linked to race, class and gender, and the visual deployment of a body form an account of femicidal violence that "completes the exercise of power that was begun on the victim's body" and "makes the body", and what that body ostensibly represents, "the focus of attention" (Carey and Torres 2010: 158).

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Criminalised Subjects and Disposability

The articulation of victims through the discourse of "gangs" or "delinquency" related crime is likewise part of a performative staging within a "necropolitical order that normalize[es] violence against public women" and aims to justify the state's selectively militarized practices in responding to public insecurity (Wright 2011: 716). In the coverage of the following cases, victims are likewise portrayed visually through the medium of their bodies, but they are furthermore discursively tied to the politically popular refrain of *"marero"*, *"pandillero"*, and *"delincuente"* violence, which I suggest both frames victims' deaths as "deserved", and aims to pre-emptively rationalize the condition of impunity within which such cases so often remain suspended (Erturk 2005). Victims marked within the terms of contemporary "internal enemies", are thus criminalised within this frame of representation (recall the "gang-related" cases cited earlier: Luisa Guidel (#13), "Caso Palala-Pocia" (#8), "Caso Mother and Daughter Motel Room Zone 1" (#9), and "Caso INCA" (#10)). Rather than assuming that the mainstream media's re-presentation of cases of ostensibly "gang-related" femicidal violence is part of a visual enactment to *mark losses* to gendered violence, this perspective highlights the instrumental nature of an articulation that links these "public" bodies to a wider politics of 'post war' crime and insecurity which channels blame through the trope of "gangs". Recalling earlier discussions of the PP's "Security Agreement" and "Task Forces", policy responses tend towards militarised interventions into marginalised spatialities—and, relatedly, against the racialised subjects (presumably) occupying them. In other words, I suggest that the bodies referenced here provide a kind of subtext to a broader narrative of what the state—and society—should (not) do to address public violence.

What is also notable is that several of the victims' bodies are reported as being "unclaimed", if not also "unidentified" (Case #12: 3 victims, #20: 1 victim). This is a designation that, as I have already suggested, communicates a notion of the social abandonment of the victim, and thus helps confirm her "social circle failure", the lack of ("appropriate") family or kin, and thus pushes her into the domain of disposability. Furthermore, in all of the reports that frame the violence in relation to the "gang" or "delinquency" trope, there are textual accounts of overkill or sexual violence that are used to describe the scenes of death.

In an account from the November 8th, 2013 edition of *Prensa Libre*, wherein a series of femicides are reported on under the title "Remains of females left in Mixco" (Case #12), two victims are described as having been found "wrapped in curtains" with signs of strangulation on both of their bodies, with one victim being further described as gagged (Lara 2013). In a detail that echoes an earlier cited case of the woman and daughter killed in a motel room in Zone 1 with a note left by "Mara 18", the news article highlights that the police found a note on both of these victim's bodies that read "to cover the extortion for another group" and "so that they no longer continue stealing from us", and is signed by "Mara 18". In a familiar image, the photo accompanying the report shows agents from the PNC and PPO dragging a body (wrapped in a sheet), off the side of a road.

Several details of this story warrant critical discussion. First, it is worth recalling that the municipality within which the victims' bodies were found—Mixco—is precisely the site where one of the government's Security Task Forces, "Fuerza de Tarea El Milagro", was installed one month before. Secondly, the citation of the note signed by the notorious "Mara 18" is significant for inscribing these victims' bodies with markers of suspicion, and thus immediately limits the ideological space for their recognition as victims in the way that I have suggested that domestic violence femicide victims have more potential to materialise within. Interestingly, such an interpretation converges with research on how blame has historically been read onto the bodies of victims of violence in Guatemala: by implying that those who were killed during the country's civil war were "involved with" bad things and people, or the "wrong" politics, the performative effect is to write off the death as the fault of the victim, if not as out-rightly warranted (McAllister and Nelson 2013; Nelson 1999). One interlocutor claimed that the staging of "public" femicides is unique in that "the first thing that gets interpreted when one 'sees' these femicides is that "this woman is linked to… or must have been involved with 'bad things'…. that this happened to her for involving herself" (Interviewee 3, 21.01.14). Thus, there is a potential for these victims' deaths to implicitly emerge as *desirable* outcomes for the body politic of Guatemala, especially in relation to urban insecurity and the social cleansing narratives discussed earlier. As Wright perceptively notes on the dynamics of this victim-cum-perpetrator imaginary in the Mexican context: "[i]f a public woman is the

source of the violence, then her murder provides a means for ending it. Her removal performs a kind of urban social cleansing" (Wright 2011: 715). Recalling the brutal femicide of 14-year-old Luisa Guidel cited in the opening of this chapter in light of this analysis, then, it is paramount to appreciate the limited ideological space that is left open for victim's when they are discursively tied to the contemporary "internal enemy" figure, and thus to an imaginary of insecurity that locates responsibility for public violence outside the explicit parameters of the state's (in)actions. Indeed, in visually and textually coding these sexualised and criminalised "subjects of disposability" according to the broader logics of the government's insecurity formation, I suggest that each of these victims becomes estranged—indeed, *hierarchically differentiated*— from the "mother" and "housewife" contemplated by the VIF-frame for forms of government "protection" and societal grief (however patronizingly and differentially this latter framework also produces its victims). Certainly, the on-going weight of historical narratives of blame gestures at the ways in which, in the contemporary context, the bodies of public femicide provide symbolic material for political narratives about 'post war' violence.

On Femicidal Violence and Visibility

An important question to pose is to what extent does it really matter, or weigh upon, the wider social and political scene when an "undesirable" subject is destroyed? (Butler 2015) Drawing upon observations of public mourning and grief for victims of violence, Butler has suggested that "[u]ngrievable lives are those that cannot be lost, and cannot be destroyed, because they already inhabit a lost and destroyed zone" (2010: xix). Indeed, although (regulated) invisibility is one of the conditions that makes it possible to cross the threshold of extreme gendered violence, and to normalize impunity for that violence (chapter 6 explores this link further), it is also important to appreciate how "violence can be rendered too visible" (Stanley 2011: 7). I suggest that the sensationalism of these "spectacled" accounts of public femicide helps "disappear" the enormity of the historical and structural nodes that have rendered such violence possible and normalized, if not, in certain articulations like those explored above, desirable. Winter's thoughtful contemplation on the complex relationship between violence and visibility is especially pertinent to the spectrum of femicidal visibility and discursive limits of subject recognition, as it operates within the Guatemalan government's insecurity formation:

> "I am not entirely convinced by the claim that for violence to be reproduced, it has to be hidden and concealed. Indeed, I wonder whether that claim rests on a mistaken view of the public sphere, a view that assumes that making evil visible will necessarily lead to its eventual eradication. It seems to me that the inverse is at least plausible… that it is not invisibility that allows violence to be repeated and reproduced but that repetition and reproduction make violence invisible" (2012: 202)

In establishing that the victims of "public" femicide are precisely that—visually accessible to the *public*, and articulated through government policies in the mark of "public" crime and insecurity—the question of these bodies "concerns not only *what*" their re-presentations "show… but also *how* [they] show what [they] show" (Butler 2010: 71, emphasis added). As Butler argues: "[t]he how not only organizes the image, but works to organize our perception and thinking as well" (ibid.). It is precisely the very visible presence of (some of) these bodies —across aesthetic and political domains in Guatemala—that hints at the complexity of the relationship between violence and visibility. If the problem of representation and dehumanization—in this case, of "disposability"—was merely a question of bringing "abjected" bodies into view, we might propose "a greater emphasis on "seeing" the victims" or the violence (Wilcox 2015: 164). This recalls injunctions made by feminists, international human rights observers, and even political leaders across particular domains, in their strategies for mobilising against, or "acting" on, issues of gendered violence in armed conflict (Domingo 2014). However, such an approach profoundly misconstrues the way in which regimes of racism, classism, and sexism saturate the field of vision for violence. Put differently, it assumes that "visual evidence" (the "material body") can circumvent regimes of discursive intelligibility—regimes that relegate certain subjects of violence beyond the "recognition" required to obtain victim, citizen, or indeed, human status (Ahmed 2000). To reckon upon the critical capacities of "vision" through recourse to the imperative of "seeing" femicidal violence, as if it is possible to ensure that the "correct" message will be relayed between the scene and the viewer (the message of victimhood or "grievable life"), therefore misses how images of violence, *especially* faces and *bodies* of gendered violence, are ideologically coded (Ahmed 2000; Benson 2008; Wilcox 2015). Thus, it is not, *per se*, that femicide victims articulated within the framework of public insecurity fail to emerge altogether within domains of representation (of course, many

do). Instead, it is that their materialisation occurs by way of technologies of differentiation used to instrumentalise gendered death "in radically different directions" (Butler 2010: 92), to that of the VIF victims cited earlier, albeit within a shared ideological terrain.

As Wilcox persuasively notes, "mere visual representation of bodies is not sufficient to make killing… psychologically and politically untenable" (2015: 6). Indeed, if the performative staging of public femicides proceeds within the framework of crime and "insecurity", and if victims are absorbed into popular notions of gangs and moral decay, visual depictions of destroyed bodies will do little to generate critical outrage for their deaths across the social body. On the contrary, as one interlocutor pointed out, the drive will be to deploy "more and more" photos of these bodies (Interviewee 26, 18.02.15) as a technique for reinforcing narratives of disposability that anchor the impunity for, and, paradoxically, the (violent) government responses to, the same violence being re-presented. We might then want to contemplate how the political citation and cultural visibility of the death inflicted by public articulations of femicidal violence *does matter*, but only insofar as these public bodies provide the "raw materials" (Wright 2011) to help ratify the very logic of disposability? Or, similarly, that these bodies provide a kind of "proof" that performatively locates the site of accountability for gendered violence within the (marginalised) figures and (marginalised) communities articulated as criminal and moral threats?

To paraphrase a feminist interlocutor I spoke with, it seems at least plausible that, by some inverted logic, the "hyper-visibility" (Rosser 2007) of femicide's "public bodies" actually serve as "a defence mechanism… a way to absolve state responsibility for the lack of substantive citizen security" (Interviewee 26, 18.02.15), since the framing of these victims serves to mark them as responsible for their own deaths. Or, precisely, the terms of this "insecurity" structured femicidal visibility might mark the destruction of these "undesirable" bodies as events that serve to *increase* security for the "good Guatemalans"— those whose protection (officially) matters.

Conclusion

This chapter has analysed how femicidal violence marked within public spatialities—the (re)citation and (re)presentation of this violence by government and mainstream media interlocutors—is a repetitive performance that is productive of the norms that help reinstall hierarchies of what I have called 'differentiated disposability'. In mapping generalised violence and femicide in the public domain, the framework of "(in)security" becomes a site for a series of policy interventions and cultural representations that I have argued instrumentalise, rather than invisibilise, articulations of 'post war' gendered violence. I suggested that this is part of a wider narrative that ratifies messages of disposability for "public" victims, but which also rationalises the government's spatially and ideologically differentiated responses to violence (militarised intervention instead of forms of protection).

In exploring the intersections between the government's regulation of public insecurity and violence, I noted the practices that help constitute a field of interpellation for victims of "public" femicide— ones that limit the ideological space for their recognition *as victims*. I began with an exercise of historical "contextualisation", whereby I sought to chart the genealogy of Guatemala's "insecurity" framework, and, relatedly, the "internal enemy" figure, which I emphasised has deeply racialised, classed, and gendered contours. I identified important links with, on the one hand, the contemporary marking of the *"marero"* and *"delincuente"* as the trope through which blame for Guatemala's 'post war' crime and violence is channelled, and, on the other, the PP's articulation of "at risk youth" and "marginalised spaces" within its policy mapping of "insecurity". By foregrounding the productive nature of violence and space, and the performative effects of spatial citations on the meanings that emerge in relation to "public" bodies of violence, I argued that subjects of violence do not materialise in an isolated vacuum of meaning. The "public" femicide victim is logically tied to the perpetrator figure of the "(in)security" discourse within an interdependent matrix of meaning. As I showed, because the racialised male figure of "insecurity" is produced through criminalising limit points articulated through spatial and subject coordinates, those on the receiving end of "public" gendered violence are often absorbed within the same mark of blame that envelops the (marginalised) bodies and spatialities conceptualised as sites "responsible for the reproduction of the [country's] violence" (Interviewee 2,

18.11.13). I also explored how gendered accusations against the mother of "public" victims proceed through deeply racialised, classed, and gendered assumptions about where responsibility, and "blame", for violence and insecurity should be located. I identified a "social circle failure" logic operating within the field of interpellation for "public" victims— one that parallels, but also crucially departs from, the "family imperative" discussed in the previous chapter.

Finally, I addressed a pattern in relation to the scopic regime that circulates in media accounts of "public" femicides: the deployment of a visual image of a body, alongside textual codes that articulate the victim within the same constellation of criminal insecurity and social decay that mark (racialised youth males as) perpetrators. I argued that we should critically interrogate the political "work" these bodies are doing, or what "proof" they are providing, within the wider "insecurity" formation, in order to warrant their re-presentation, given that so many other femicide victims go unmarked and are, for all intents and purposes, rendered invisible. Through this discussion, I then offered some tentative reflections on the relationship between femicidal violence and visibility, emphasizing that, within particular articulations of this discursive economy of violence, dehumanisation and disposability might be realised *through* regimes of visibility.

As I move into the final empirical chapter of this thesis, and its contemplation of cases of historical gendered violence, the significance of the (spatial, subject, and temporal) boundaries of femicidal visibility become all the more pronounced. Whereas the emergence of 'post war' bodies linked to the "private VIF" and "public insecurity" formations charted thus far suggest that the political and cultural citation of femicidal violence can help reconstitute regimes of exclusion, the proceeding chapter explores the potential for disruptions to this spectrum of (in)visibility and to the discursive limits of (mis)recognition.

Chapter 7 – Subjects of Historical Gendered Violence Disrupting Femicide's 'Disarticulated' Present: The Counterhegemonic Politics of the Genocide Trial and Sepur Zarco Case

"… when I think about, speak, or feel what I live, what I have lived, and continue to live in terms of violence against women, for being a woman… I don't see it... in isolation, just femicide, as something concrete. I have to look at it… articulated [articulado]. Not 'this is one form of violence and this is another', no… We're talking about this entire network that has impacts onto and through the lives of women in this country, of which femicide is, lets call it the maximum expression. Because… when one woman [today] is a victim of femicide, you look at this woman who died, who was killed, but one doesn't see… it's like a stone that falls in the water, and it produces waves. The implications of the murder of one woman in a country are so great… [but] we attack only the here and now. I think that in order to have the ability to look at, or to take an approach that allows us to link all of the different problems within the lives of women… we must talk about the historical-structural and [link this to] how we are living, our condition, as we are, today. (Interviewee 3, 21.01.14)

Introduction

Against seemingly impossible odds, the tenure of president Otto Perez Molina and the military-oligarchy-corporate re-alliance that has come to define the Patriot Party's rule (El Observador 2012), has coincided with a watershed in the frontier of criminal prosecutions for historical cases of human rights abuses committed at the height of the Guatemalan state's counterinsurgency war. On May 10th, 2013 a national court handed out a landmark ruling when former dictator and de facto president General José Efraín Ríos Montt was convicted of genocide and crimes against humanity and sentenced to 80 years in prison (OSJI 2013). In a judicially separate, but substantively related case ("Sepur Zarco") on June 14th, 2014 the country's Public Prosecutors Office (PPO) arrested ex-military commissioner Heriberto Valedez Asij and ex-lieutenant Francisco Steelmer Reyes Girón and formally charged them with crimes against humanity, for which the commencement of the trial is pending (Ministerio Público 2014b). The trajectories that led to these historic events, and indeed, to those that have followed in the time since, are dense with paradoxes which destabilize claims that struggles for justice are in any way linear processes. However, what is remarkable about both of these cases— the "Genocide Trial" and the "Sepur Zarco Case"— is that in addition to involving temporal folds whereby historical events are prosecuted in the present, (and within national courts), both explicitly bring the object/subject of gendered violences (as both *practices* and *bodies* targeted by forms of sexual and femicidal violence) into sharp view. Amongst the more than 90 Maya-

Ixil indigenous testifiers during the Genocide Trial, at least eight women narrated accounts of rape and sexual abuse against themselves, or of having witnessed such violence against their family members. Significantly, the identification of systematic sexual violence formed a central component of the court's verdict that genocide and crimes against humanity had been committed in the mountains of northern Guatemala (known as the Quiché region) during Montt's 1982 – 1983 rule (OSJI 2013). Relatedly, the Sepur Zarco case focuses on sexual violence and sexual and domestic slavery against 15 indigenous Q'eqchi women in a military base ("Sepur Zarco") located in El Estor, Izabal, also from 1982 to 1983. Between the 24th and 28th of September 2012, 14 of these women gave their declarations during a pre-trial testimony— a deeply symbolic moment given the one hundred per cent impunity enjoyed by persons responsible for committing sexual violence during the country's 36-year internal armed conflict. This was the first time in history that a national court heard testimonies of sexual violence committed within the same country of the court's jurisdiction (Alianza Rompiendo el Silencio 2013).

I propose that in a political terrain regulated by frameworks of violence in terms of gang or delinquent-related crime and public "(in)security" (chapter 6) or, when gendered or femicidal violence more explicitly enter the domain of these debates, within notions of "domestic" or "interfamilial" violence (chapters 4 and 5), these historical trials and the victims/survivors/bodies at their centre constitute challenges to the discursive limits within the spectrum of visibility and recognition for Guatemala's 'post war' violence. That these ideological boundaries are threatened by the emergence of the Genocide Trial and Sepur Zarco case as objects of sociopolitical significance, and, furthermore, by the legal recognition of the two cases' protagonists, can be discerned by the waves of rejection, denial, and de-legitimation from across a range of political and cultural sites of hegemonic power. Certainly, if, as I have argued thus far, the boundaries between bodies and types of gendered violences have a productive power in the normalisation, invisibilisation, or differentiation of subjects of violence, then the emergence of the Maya-Ixil and Q'eqchi women as "subjects of change" (Consorcio Actoras de Cambio 2009) narrating accounts of racialised sexual violence perpetrated by the Guatemalan state and its security forces, represents an important challenge to the country's substantively un-altered 'post war' structures and relations of power.

The gendered subjects of these trials are not the figures framed (only) as wives and mothers victimised by domestic violence in a depoliticised private spatiality of the nuclear family home; nor are they the figures framed as the disposable aftermath of an insecure (and deeply racialised) public spatiality—both of which I have suggested are undergirded by the political and policy terrain set by the Patriot Party and its institutional and cultural support networks. Instead, I suggest that these subjects of historical gendered violence disrupt those discursive limits, pushing towards a (re)reading of Guatemala's femicidal present. These trials not only bring what are historically silenced voices and obscured bodies (Sanford 2003; Zur 1998) into sharp relief, thereby challenging the subject boundaries of victim recognition— limit points which are set, at least in part, by the "private VIF" and "public (in)security" frameworks charted in previous chapters. Beyond this, these trials also disrupt the temporal and spatial restrictions reified by depoliticised and instrumentalist approaches to violence. As this chapter seeks to demonstrate, bringing the object of historical gendered violence to bear on contemporary formations of femicide is critical to the task of identifying how "inclusion and exclusion are (re)-created and maintained" (Radcliffe 2015: 867) even after a country transitions to peace. Significantly, in contrast to the case studies explored in the previous chapters, I suggest that the Genocide and Sepur Zarco cases gesture at a complex continuum of gendered violence across Guatemala's enduringly unequal gender, racial, and class relations—articulating both a genocidal *and femicidal* history.

This chapter therefore explores the way in which the historic Genocide Trial and Sepur Zarco sexual violence case, anchored in narratives of the Guatemalan state's racialised sexual violence, constitute meaningful disruptions to the country's disarticulated frameworks of 'post war' (gendered) violence. This chapter is divided into three sections. In the first section I trace some of the legal and political antecedents, as well as social struggles, through which both the Genocide Trial and Sepur Zarco cases emerged in Guatemala's national courts. Central to this discussion is an engagement with the transitional (gender) justice literature and empirical studies grounded in feminist analyses of the discursive limits of intelligibility for (gendered) subjects of (gendered) violence in post-conflict countries still reckoning with histories of violence. In order to remain consistent with the temporal focus of this thesis on the

political context of Molina's Patriot Party administration, the second section of the chapter addresses the discursive terrain within which these trials have been activated at a judicial level. I suggest it is revealing that politically and culturally hegemonic interlocutors within sites of regulatory power respond to the subject(s) of these historic trials with forms of denial and de-legitimation. I argue that these responses are aimed at reinstalling a *disarticulated* narrative of the country's violence. 'Disarticulation', in this context, refers to the ideological investment in an account of violence with a limited and differentiated spectrum of visibility and recognition—one in which societal debates around gendered violence remain securely within a 'post war' frame of reference. In order to substantiate these claims, I highlight some of the political-cultural responses that emerged in light of the Genocide Trial, and aim to situate these within the wider context of the government's platform around "Security, Justice, and Peace" (Ministerio de Gobernacion 2012a). I argue that this political framework is predicated on severing the past from the present, and furthermore, upon obscuring the structural and intersectional nature of the violence that has spilled over into the country's peacetime milieu. The final section draws upon my fieldwork and in-depth interviews with feminist interlocutors directly connected to the emergence of these historic trials. My central aim here is to think through the ways in which we might conceptually locate the Genocide Trial and Sepur Zarco case, and the subjects/bodies at their centre, as part of a critical rereading of femicidal and other forms of gendered violence in the present, and as a disruption of the boundaries through which particular subjects, bodies, and violences still fail to matter across war and peacetime Guatemala.

Historical Memory and Transitional Justice: Pushing a Gendered Horizon

"In addition to genocide, there was feminicide."(Consorcio Actoras de Cambio 2009: 142)

The notion of "reckoning" (Nelson 2009) with histories of violence conjures up issues of memory, justice, and accountability—all ostensibly in the mark of "responding to the past" in a way that facilitates the emergence of 'newly' democratic and peaceful societies after war and conflict (Sanford 2003). The latter, as Patterson-Markowitz et al. note, is precisely what the field of "transitional justice" wrestles with: "both an

emerging academic field of inquiry as well as… a normative program… prescribed for societies that have experienced conflict and/or state repression" (2012: 85). One of the key mechanisms through which processes of transitional justice have been channelled is by the establishment of truth commissions (TC), an especially popular tool in the Latin American context (Argentina 1984, Chile 1991, Peru 2000), but also, notably, in post-apartheid South Africa (1995) (Ross 2003). Rather than criminal or judicial prosecutions, which are considered less "victim-centred", TCs are often considered more "inclusive" models since they seek out testimonials from "historically marginalised" groups in the hopes of developing "new national narratives" and "breaking silences" (Boesten 2014: 72; Rosser 2007: 394; Theidon 2013: 105). As feminist scholars have noted, however, the TC model follows positivist approaches to violence, obscuring the processes through which knowledge about violence is produced and regulated, rather than merely "discovered" in an "unmediated" process of testimonial "revelations" (Rosser 2007: 395-6). Within the initial conceptual and normative debates around transitional justice, the "gendered relations of truth telling" were, perhaps unsurprisingly, not figured (Lykes and Crosby 2011). Indeed, neither the Argentinian nor Chilean TC's explicitly engaged with gender as a productive node through which to approach the collection of testimonials or through which to document violations of human rights (Patterson-Markowitz et al. 2012: 85). Over the course of the 1990s, however, developments at the international level elevated the profile of gender-based war crimes such as rape and other forms of sexual violence (Patterson-Markowitz et al. 2012: 85). These included the International Criminal Tribunals (ICT) for the former Yugoslavia (1993) and Rwanda (1994), after which violations like rape came to be defined as central processes of war and genocidal efforts, rather than peripheral "excesses". This position was only strengthened by a series of United Nations developments in the field[35] (Patterson-Markowitz et al. 2012: 85). Interestingly, while the Peruvian, South African and Guatemalan TC's are held up as "gender sensitive" because they "actively sought out women's experiences of violence", some scholars highlight that the process in Guatemala actually started out as "gender neutral"—the way in which (gendered)

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[35] These include, but are not limited to: the 1998 Rome Statute that propelled the creation of the International Criminal Court, the 1993 Vienna Declaration of Violence Against Women, the 1994 establishment of a UN Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women, and, most recently, two Security Council Resolutions (SCR) on Women, Peace and Security (SCR 1325, passed in 2000) and Sexual Violence in Conflict and Postconflict Societies (SCR 1820, passed in 2008) (Crosby and Lykes 2011: 462; Patterson-Markowitz et al. 2012: 85).

violence, or more appropriately, *sexual* violence (Rosser 2007), emerged into view was a somewhat fortuitous outcome of women narrating much 'fuller' accounts of their own (or often, their family members') experiences during the conflict (Patterson-Markowitz et al. 2012: 86). It is beyond the scope of this chapter to provide an exhaustive account of the debates within the field of transitional justice (see Arthur 2009; Hayner 2001; Teitel 2002), and of the critiques that have emerged in response to early transitional justice paradigms, particularly from critical feminist and transnational scholars (Franke 2006; Nesiah 2006; Patterson-Markowitz et al. 2012). However, what several feminist scholars have questioned in relation to the "gendered" TC's in Peru, South Africa, and Guatemala is the terms in which women victim/survivor's visibility is enacted and contained, and the extent to which TC's actually provide a basis for *transforming* the structures and relations of inequality that make gendered violences like rape both possible and normalised before, during, and after conflicts (Boesten 2014; Boesten and Wilding 2015; Ross 2003; Rosser 2007; Theidon 2007, 2013).

The terms of gendered historical visibility matter: the subjective and temporal limits through which victims/survivors, as well as the violences they experienced, emerge representationally and are (mis)recognised have important implications for how post-conflict societies (fail to) "reckon" with the past (Nelson 2009). If, as many critical feminist, postcolonial, and transnational scholars suggest, war-time gendered violences *extend upon* peacetime structures of exclusion (Anthias and Davis 1989; Blacklock and Crosby 2004; Boesten 2010a, 2014: 52-4; Kelly 1988; Smith 2005), then transitions that proceed by way of "reconstruction", rather than transformation, will necessarily fail to produce genuine peace and security for women (Valasek 2008). As Boesten and Wilding recently suggest (2015: 75-8), a crucial basis upon which critical feminist analyses should evaluate mechanisms or processes of transition is by the extent to which these measures recognise that "rape in war, weapon or not, is a product of the inequalities… that lie at the heart of the continuum of violence against women". Certainly, if this "continuum" goes unacknowledged, then there will be little scope for contesting processes of transition that (re)build upon gender, racial, and class inequalities, even if under ostensibly 'new' modes of sociopolitical and economic organisation (Radcliffe 2015; Wilson 2015).

Prior to the criminal justice cases of the Genocide and Sepur Zarco sexual violence trials, two TC projects collected testimonials and documented human rights violations committed in the 1960-1996 Guatemalan conflict. The first of these, a four-volume-report entitled *Guatemala: Never Again*, was produced by the Human Rights Office of the Archbishop of Guatemala (ODHAG) as a kind of "conceptual" "precursor" to the "official" UN-sponsored commission (Patterson-Markowitz et al. 2012: 88). Unlike the ODHAG's report, the UN's Commission for Historical Clarification (CEH) was created in the official mark of the country's peace process. Three years of investigation culminated in the CEH's publication of a twelve-volume report, *Guatemala: Memory of Silence* in 1999. Much has been made about the mandate of the CEH (McAllister 2013; Nelson 1999; Rosser 2007) and the processes through which it incorporated both "juridical and historical methods" to reach the conclusion that genocide had been committed by the state against its indigenous-Maya majority (Oglesby and Ross 2011: 25). A classification of the violence which, as I discuss further below, continues to constitute a "finger in the wound" of the country's sociopolitical relations (Nelson 1999). In terms of the gendered political terrain of 'post war' possibilities, the latter report arguably held more weight than the ODHAG report, since its UN-sponsored mandate directly figured into the contours of institutional re-construction and thus, relatedly, into (international) funding regimes for Guatemala's transition (Interviewee 4, 23.02.15; Interviewee 25, 11.02.15; Interviewee 27, 19.02.15; Interviewee 28, 23.02.15). As Oglesby and Ross also effectively foreshadowed, the CEH's findings would open up potential new "geographies of justice" for future criminal prosecutions (2011).

Trying to account for, and, indeed, literally "count" (Nelson 2015) more than 30 years of violations is a tremendous task rife with tensions and paradoxes (Nelson 2009: 290). In terms of its core findings, however, the CEH's report documented a total of 42,275 victims of violations of human rights, amongst which 1,465 acts, and 285 cases of, sexual violence were identified (Alianza Rompiendo el Silencio 2012: 9). Critically, the report also stated that 88.7 per-cent of the victims of sexual violence were Maya-indigenous women, a finding that would help congeal later processes—juridical and non-juridical—grounded in the claim of the centrality of racialised sexual violence to the Guatemalan nation-building project (OSJI 2013; Rosser 2007). And yet, as feminist and indigenous rights activists in Guatemala highlight, while the

CEH (and even the ODHAG) reports recognised the systematic nature of gendered violence during the war,

> "… neither report investigated the acts of sexual violence with the same level of depth as it did with other crimes [nor did it] make recommendations for the Guatemalan State to follow up on this crime against humanity as a necessary condition in order to be able to create enduring peace." (Consorcio Actoras de Cambio 2009: 3).

As suggested by one feminist interlocutor, this gendered lacunae matters: if "the state of Guatemala is responsible, [then] they should be accountable for what happened. This can't be separated" (Interviewee 7, 23.01.14). In other words, the CEH's articulation that the state was the key violator of human rights should not have remained suspended above the concrete recommendations that followed from such a report, since, ostensibly, the idea of such mechanisms is to identify and denounce abuses in the mark of ensuring their non-repetition in the future (Consorcio Actoras de Cambio 2009). The idea that TC findings should be tied to mechanisms of accountability and transformation (rather than mere transition) is especially marked in relation to the racialised sexual violence documented by the CEH (Rosser 2007). As part of a wider reflection on "why femicide in Guatemala is at is it today", one interlocutor suggested:

> "… it's that [unacknowledged] historical and structural continuum of violence, but especially as it manifests itself on the bodies of women today. Imagine, coming from a peace process, supposedly post-war, supposedly in a process of constructing, consolidating, and strengthening the peace! The contradiction is irreconcilable… within this [transition] process we never saw an analysis in relation to the place of, the situation of, women's bodies." (Interviewee 3, 21.01.14).

The lack of state acknowledgement of historical violence (or, indeed the state's lack of acknowledgment for its role as the central perpetrator of this violence), let alone its gendered and racialised articulations, is one of the central "links" between past and contemporary processes of impunity and normalisation in Guatemala and beyond (Consorcio Actoras de Cambio 2009: 5; Boesten 2014: 4, on Peru). This gestures at how denial and de-legitimation are tied to the production of 'disarticulated' narratives of violence, suggesting that the discursive representation of subjects of historical

violence are productive of the regimes of (in)visibility that help constitute the boundaries for victim/survivor/subject recognition in the present.

But if the CEH acknowledged systematic sexual violence in its findings, why was it side-lined from the report's central recommendations to the state? Reflecting on the gendered limits of Guatemala's "official" historical memory projects, Patterson-Markowitz et al. note, "[g]ender was not an *a priori* category of analysis, but rather surfaced during the process of testimony-taking" (2012: 88). Indeed, although the CEH is often cited within a wave of "second-generation" TC's that brought gender and women's experiences to the fore (Patterson-Markowitz et al. 2012: 86), many feminist scholars have questioned the extent to which the CEH was actually gendered (Crosby and Lykes 2011; Ross 2006; Rosser 2007). Most notably, Rosser's analysis proposes that the CEH's discursive limits of intelligibility work to "contain" women's bodies and experiences within the confines of "sexual violence", both obscuring the violations that are not based on the "sexed visibility" of rape, as well as disarticulating their narratives from the wider findings of the report— such as the crucial connections the CEH drew out between racial and class inequalities in peacetime, on the one hand, and the contours of rights violations in wartime, on the other (Rosser 2007: 395, 400).

The critique that TC's (perhaps inadvertently) reinstall subjective and temporal boundaries forms the basis of much of the feminist literature around transitional justice (Boesten 2014; Crosby and Lykes 2011; Ross 2003; Theidon 2013). Certainly, the normative limits of what it is assumed women's narratives will "reveal" in the context of a "gendered" TC, has, as some scholars note, made "gender" synonymous with "women's experiences", and furthermore reified "women's experiences" of war as *only* constituted by rape and sexual violence (Ross 2003; Rosser 2007; Theidon 2007). Commenting on the processes by which women and their experiences (are made to) emerge in TC's, Crosby and Lykes note:

> "there is a tension within truth-telling processes between… an occlusion of the cultural, historical and structural gendered dimensions of violence and… the hypervisibility given to the experience of sexual violence. The dualities of occlusion and hypervisibility contribute to the continued monolithic representation of women, and in particular racialised women, as victims." (2011: 463).

At the same time, many feminist scholars have questioned whether the temporal parameters between war and peace within a TC's mandate implicitly (re)normalise or invisibilise patterns of gendered violence and inequality that exist *before* and *after* conflicts, by failing to articulate the connections (or "continuum", Kelly 1988) of violence (Boesten 2014; Boesten and Wilding 2015; Patterson-Markowitz et al. 2012; Rosser 2007). Reflecting on the Peruvian experience, Boesten explains that the "rape as a weapon of war" thesis needs to be critically interrogated. As she rightly highlights, "wartime rape regimes" are mirrored in the formations of peacetime inequalities; thus, rape in war "should be seen as producing much more than war-related objectives" (2014: 20). Following Butler, Boesten furthermore highlights that rape and sexual violence are "repetitive performances" that are productive of the hierarchical divisions between gendered subjects "at a sociopolitical level"; wartime expressions of such violence thus extend upon and even "affirm other social divisions" (2014: 17).

As Rosser notes, while the CEH emphasised the racist and classist nature of Guatemala's nation-building project—relations that not only provided kindling for the conflict but which were deeply embedded in *pre-conflict* structures and processes— the report failed to articulate how gender works within this matrix of inequality, "rarely touch[ing] on the prevalence of sexual violence in peacetime" (2007: 405). Concurring with this observation, Crosby and Lykes note that Guatemala's "history of structural racism is also profoundly gendered and sexualized" (2011: 460). Neglecting to integrate this intersectional dynamic into the archives of historical memory is precisely what many feminists, women's rights, and social justice interlocutors suggest led to the gaping lacunae in the CEH's recommendations to the Guatemalan state: a failure to articulate the linkages between the racialised sexual violence in conflict which the report implicitly charted, and gendered violence in peacetime (Alianza Rompiendo el Silencio 2012). Certainly, as Guatemalan feminists and indigenous activists highlight, "impunity is one of the links" between femicidal and sexual violence across war and peace (Consorcio Actoras de Cambio 2009: 5). Therefore, from a critical gendered perspective, there are inherent limitations to transitional justice mechanisms, such as TC's, which reify the temporal boundaries of their enquiries, particularly when developing recommendations for the state. Doing so

obscures the way in which processes of normalisation and structures of impunity across periods of peace and conflict dialectically reinforce one another (Boesten 2014; Boesten and Wilding 2015; Chazaro et al. 2010; Trujillo 2010).

One project that responded to the lacunas of the CEH report and its recommendations was a landmark report produced by a consortium of feminist and indigenous women activists alongside victims/survivors in 2009: *Weavings of the Soul*. In a conversation with a feminist involved in the report, she explained that after the country started to shift from a 'post war', to 'post transition' (official) status,

> "the focus on violence was only on the 'now'. So we decided it was necessary to look again to the past. Because obviously there are links… [*Weavings*] was a pioneering work for visibilising sexual violence against women during the war… but the most valuable thing was that we began to put the issue of violence of the past and, as linked through, the present, on the public agenda." (Interviewee 19, 11.02.14)

Initiated in 2003 as part of an effort to "complicate the story of the war, to add new dimensions and… rescue the memory of Mayan women as historical subjects", *Weavings* is revealingly framed as the "third report of Guatemala's historical memory" (Consorcio Actoras de Cambio 2009: 1, 6-7). In a noteworthy departure from the official TC's method of speaking to survivors individually in the hopes of extracting the victim-testimonial narratives often expected from racialised women (Rosser 2007), the consortium's approach was to facilitate collective narration and performance of indigenous women's stories of the war, as part of an effort to have the commonality of their experiences "reflected in and refracted by the experiences of others" (Crosby and Lykes 2011: 466). And, in a key "bridge" between this report and the retributive trials discussed further below, the consortium built off of these oral histories to organise a "mock trial" in 2010, with the participation and observation of both national and international, state and non-state individuals (Crosby and Lykes 2011: 467).

Although labelled the "Tribunals of Conscience for Women Survivors of Sexual Violence during the Armed Conflict" (Alianza Rompiendo el Silencio 2012), it is important not to over-state the extent to which these processes "contained" the central subjects/subject matter within the discursive limits of sexual violence victims/sexual

violence, as some feminist analyses have done (Crosby and Lykes 2011). Indeed, although the consortium sought testimonials from groups of Mayan women from areas where some of the most extreme patterns of generalised violence against indigenous peoples and sexual violence against women had been committed, unlike the CEH, I would suggest that neither the report nor the Tribunal that followed rendered Mayan women *only* visible within the boundaried and often depoliticised terrain of sexual violence (Rosser 2007). Indeed, reading the report, one is struck by the extent to which the accounts of sexual and femicidal violence are framed within a wider historical critique of the intersectional oppressions experienced by indigenous women in Guatemala:

> "The emergence and prolongation of the conflict over more than three decades is the result of the accumulation of multiple historical factors…the most apparent being the archaic socio-economic structure, the exclusionary character of the political system inherited from colonial times, the foreign intervention which aborted a project for national transformation, as well as the discrimination and racism against the indigenous peoples. In order to understand the sexual violence they lived through, as well as the extreme cruelty with which they were treated, an integral historical analysis of the armed conflict and of Guatemalan social reality must be undertaken. The power structures and the racist, classist and sexist ideologies on which Guatemalan society was shaped, and which were exacerbated during the war in order to lead to the perpetration of atrocities against Mayan women, need to be analysed. It is essential to incorporate the structural causes of the armed conflict into this analysis; the counterinsurgent State policies; the genocide, as the maximum expression of racism against the Mayan people; as well as sexual violence, the most powerful tool for maintaining the patriarchal system, and the expression of femicide that took place against women."
> (Consorcio Actoras de Cambio 2009: 141-2)

The account above is remarkable in how it refuses to situate sexual violence in a vacuum. Indeed, the passage, which is reflective of the approach in the entirety of the nearly 500-page report, implicitly troubles the assumption that sexual violence is in any way limited to the "excesses" of war or conflict, "individual pathologies" (Berger 2006: 103), and "militarized masculinities" (Boesten 2014: 53), or that its contemporary "femicidal" expressions can be reasonably framed as "new" (Carey and Torres 2010):

"For these women, the war did not end with the signing of the Peace Accords… Survivors of femicidal violence during the war were victims of this new context of post-conflict femicide. This history of brutal violence against their bodies reveals the continuum of the violence that women have to face throughout their lives, the collection of violent misogynous events that threaten their safety, put their lives at risk, and that may culminate in their death." (Consorcio Actoras de Cambio 2009: 221-2)

As described earlier, despite offering a nuanced account of the racial and class inequalities that structured the state's practices of counterinsurgency, the CEH failed to provide an intersectional analysis of the violence, somewhat awkwardly pinning sexual violence onto the report, but within its own section (Rosser 2007); a move which I would argue performed a dis-articulatory function in relation to how racialised sexual violence was framed within the archive of official historical memory, and for how it might be read into future justice processes. Of course, "justice is irrevocably linked to social memory" (Berger 2006: 103); thus, the silencing or invisibilisation of Mayan women's experiences and voices from the archive of "official" historical memory is, as *Weavings* emphasises, neither "accidental… nor politically neutral" (Consorcio Actoras de Cambio 2009: 4). Rather, evacuating these accounts (of, yes, racialised sexual violence, but within a broader framework of entrenched inequalities and structural poverty) from the official narratives is linked to a sociopolitical context of "postwar reforms" which are grounded in a "depoliticisation of gendered" violence (Berger 2006: 103)—whether in the past or present. Having said that, these civil-society-initiated truth-telling projects were not merely concerned with "breaking the silence", as is often emphasized (Crosby and Lykes 2011; Patterson-Markowitz et al. 2012). One feminist involved in the consortium process highlighted that "speaking truth to power" implies far more than a mere interruption to an enforced silence/silencing of marginalised voices and experiences: "it is an exercise in re-signification and re-dignification" (Interviewee 20, 11.02.14). Adding to this latter point, another feminist suggested that this "re-signification implies the de-legitimation of silence and… is the base in any search for justice" (Interviewee 19, 11.02.14).

I suggest that this "re-signification" should be situated in relation to the way in which this "third historical memory report" makes the victims/survivors of historical

gendered violence visible in ways that challenge the discursive limits of intelligibility that some have argued were crystallised by the CEH report—a somewhat paradoxical combination of "gendered silences" (Crosby and Lykes 2011: 466) and "hyper sexed/depoliticised visibility" (Rosser 2007: 395). By framing all forms of sexual, gendered, and femicidal violence as historically and structurally articulated, the report challenges the temporal limits between war and peace often reified within "official" TCs and the post-conflict discourses that accompany them (Enloe 2002), instead invoking the "continuum" of violence across Guatemala's (multiple[36]) genocidal history (Consorcio Actoras de Cambio 2009: 142). Perhaps more importantly, still, this report of "gendered historical memory" and the pseudo-judicial processes through which women and indigenous activists and survivors have built upon its documentations, push beyond the ideological boundaries that regulate contemporary formations of 'post war' femicidal violence. Rather than reifying the definitional and subjective limits for violence as I suggest are contained within private VIF (individual male/family violence) or public (in)security (non-state criminal violence) formations, the *Weavings* report situates its narrative(s) and analyses of gendered violence within a comprehensive account of structural, symbolic, and everyday violences (Interviewee 28, 23.02.15). While the CEH report "set a legal and… highly symbolic threshold" (Oglesby and Ross 2009: 22) by articulating a genocide determination, I suggest that the cumulative power of the intersectional and structural analyses offered within these gendered historical accounts helped push both the substantive content and methodological approaches (Interviewee 20, 11.02.14) of later retributive processes, including the Genocide Trial and Sepur Zarco case.

I argue that this is at least in part because these earlier alternative transitional justice projects were grounded in, or motivated by, a *transformative* critique of the violence that they chart. 'Transformative' in the sense that neither sexual nor femicidal violence emerge representationally as (only) war-related "events" disarticulated from peacetime inequalities. The emphasis placed on articulating the Guatemalan state's *on-going* role in the impunity for and perpetuation and normalization of, gendered

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[36] Several interlocutors highlighted how the report makes a point to speak of the "three genocides" that indigenous Mayans, and particularly organisations of indigenous Maya women, make reference to (Author Field Notes, 24.01.14): the first in 1524 during the Spanish invasion, the second in 1871 during the Liberal Revolution, and the third during the armed conflict between 1960-1996 (Consorcio Actoras de Cambio 2009: 10).

violence, and upon the repetitive and intersectional nature of the latter, constitutes a critical (re)reading of the country's history (and historical memory) of violence. Further still, it gestures at the kinds of "social transformations" that would be needed in order to effectively confront "broader structures of inequality" (Boesten and Wilding 2015: 78)—structures which facilitate the perpetuation of violence against marginalised subjects, while inscribing the bodies of those subjects with the mark of a disposable and differentiated visibility, invisibility, or de-legitimation. That Mayan women emerge representationally as "subjects of history" and "agents of change", rather than merely as "sexed" bodies whose experiences with sexual and femicidal violence are substantively separated from their experiences with racial and class discrimination and the violence that such exclusion breeds, is, I suggest, a crucial reason why the criminal justice trials symbolically, if not also judicially, elude many of the conceptual and practical limitations of retributive processes (Boesten and Wilding 2015: 78; Burt 2015).

Indeed, the point of tracing these official and unofficial transition project antecedents is to emphasize that neither the Genocide Trial nor Sepur Zarco case arrived on the political and judicial stage, particularly in the form that they did, without the crucial "counter hegemonic" labour (Berger 2006: 97-107) of the women's and indigenous activists and survivors that initiated and pushed these alternative histories onto the representational stage. According to one interlocutor, "something deeply ideological and political is being threatened by the historical cases" (Interviewee 17, 06.02.14). But what is the "something" being referred to? What makes these bodies of historical violence—particularly when they are subjectivised as subjects of history and agents of change (Alianza Rompiendo el Silencio 2013)—such a threat to the hegemonic imaginaries of 'post war' Guatemala? If "talk of" violence is so ubiquitous across political, policy, and cultural domains in Guatemala (Interviewee 3, 21.01.14), and, indeed, if the subjects/bodies of contemporary femicidal violence emerge representationally within sites of regulatory power, what differentiates these "historical bodies" from the "peacetime bodies" tracked in earlier chapters? The proceeding section explores these questions by refracting the substantive content of the Genocide Trial through the political context within which it was activated— what I have analytically staged as the government's "disarticulated" formation of violence.

The Politics of Disarticulation: The Gendered Exclusions of 'Peace and Reconciliation'

Justice processes, and the memories, historical narratives, and movements for accountability that they encompass, are necessarily terrains of political contestation (Berger 2006: 103; McAllister 2013; McAllister and Nelson 2013). In the context of societies still struggling to put the "post" in "post war" (Nelson 2009) through transitional justice processes, such efforts necessarily bring forth the subject(s) of a country's history and, consequently, often constitute threats to the privileges and interests of those social, political, and economic groups who emerge from wars or conflicts as the "winners" (Burt 2015). Indeed, as Burt argues in relation to recent efforts across Latin America to move beyond the truth commission model and use retributive justice processes in the fight against widespread impunity for grave crimes and human rights abuses, "launching criminal trials against… powerful perpetrators is *likely* to produce a backlash from these sectors and their political allies" (2015: 2). Such a reflection is a necessary backdrop for contextualising the political responses and *judicial* outcomes (thus far) of the Genocide Trial and Sepur Zarco case. This wider perspective on the ideological "threat" that movements for accountability for historical violence seem to present for hegemonic powers also opens a conceptual passageway for situating the discursive framework of the Patriot Party and its cultural and economic allies as *intentionally dis-articulatory* when questions of historical (wartime), rather than contemporary (peacetime), violence enter the domain of sociopolitical contemplation. As I explained in the introduction, my analytical staging of "disarticulation" proceeds by way of highlighting how, on the one hand, discourses of denial and de-legitimation emerge in relation to historical trials grounded in accusations of state genocide and sexual violence (Interviewee 28, 23.02.15); while, on the other hand, patterns of 'post war' (ostensibly) non-state violence (in private and public formations) get highlighted as "legitimate" points of discursive and policy intervention (Interviewee 13, 02.02.14). I suggest that this framework of "disarticulation" is simultaneously predicated upon conceptualising (or rather, collapsing) notions of justice into a regulatory framework of peace (narrowly understood), reconciliation, and development.

The story of the Genocide Trial does not end with the "*si hubo genocidio*" ruling referred to in the opening of this chapter. As some international observers note, "the verdict was as historic and meticulous as it was short lived" (OSJI 2013: 3). Despite the fact that the trial had overcome a series of impediments that might have derailed the process over its two-month course—including three temporary suspensions and twenty legal challenges filed by Montt's defence team— its authority was ultimately undermined by a controversial ruling by Guatemala's Constitutional Court (CC) on May 20th, 2013 to overturn the verdict and take the trial back to a pre-testimonial stage (OSJI 2013: 4-5, 17). Significantly, the CC's ruling was strictly procedural, meaning that the resolution was not grounded in a substantive legal argument about the fallacies of the genocide conviction (OSJI 2013: 17). For many within the Guatemalan human rights community, the latter was an implicit illustration of the fact that the trial had fallen prey to political and economic powers still wielding great influence within the country's ostensibly reformed justice institutions (Burt 2015: 8).

According to every feminist and social justice interlocutor I spoke with about the annulled verdict, the relevant conceptual entry point for understanding the trial's outcome is *political and historical*, rather than legal (eg., Interviewee 3, 21.01.14; Interviewee 7, 23.01.14). In fact, momentarily leaving the CC's ruling to one side, it is worth acknowledging the profound institutional reforms that have placed Guatemala's post-conflict judicial restructuring on the international register (OSJI 2013, 2015). This is particularly the case insofar as these changes have facilitated the progression of once stagnant historical cases within criminal justice processes—ones that move beyond the legal impunity implicitly normalised by the truth commission model (Rosser 2007). These changes have included the creation of specialised "High Risk Courts" which take on cases considered to be of particular significance and which may require special protections for witnesses (such as the Genocide Trial), as well as the establishment of an international commission against impunity (CICIG) designed to work alongside the PPO to root out parallel power structures and corruption within Guatemala's institutions (OSJI 2013: 2). While these changes exist in a politically vulnerable context, and their successes hinge, at least in part, on the

commitment of particular individuals[37] and the financial support of the international community[38], the key point is that, taken alone, the legal and institutional scaffolding is considered relatively strong; it is the de facto power of social, political, and economic groups within those structures that is understood to produce problems (Interviewee 4, 03.02.14). Of course, given my interest in the representational domain, it is the contours of the discursive emergence of the Genocide Trial and the victims/survivors at its centre that requires interrogation, rather than any legal nodes of analysis.

When asked to reflect on the CC's ruling, one interlocutor framed her response as a question: "in doing that [annulling the verdict] whom do you think they were throwing in the garbage?" (Interviewee 10, 30.01.14). She went on to suggest that "they" had thrown "the Ixil women" away—their experiences and their testimonies—in an attempt to reinstall, not only a "silenced genocidal horror" (McAllister and Nelson 2013: 11), but a silenced, obscured, and "delegitimised sexual and gendered violence" horror (Interviewee 10, 30.01.14), one which conditions the possibilities for the femicidal present (Interviewee 3, 21.01.14). This sentiment was further elaborated in the feminist newspaper *La Cuerda*, (for which several of my interlocutors are regular contributors). Describing how the CC's ruling attempts to "erase" a counter-hegemonic national narrative that has continued to emerge despite the constant efforts to de-legitimate it, one contributor noted: "This genocide sentence was annulled by an impunity that is sustained through racism, misogyny, and the stubborn defence of the interests of the entrenched oligarchy." (Alvarado Chavez 2013) Another feminist

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[37] Perhaps most notably amongst these individuals is Claudia Paz y Paz Bailey, who served as Guatemala's first female Attorney General and head of the Public Prosecutors Office (PPO) from 2010 until her early removal in 2013 (Burt 2015: 12). In addition to gaining international recognition through her Nobel Peace Prize nomination, within the national human rights community she is deeply admired for her commitment to bringing forward historical cases related to state violence during the armed conflict, as well as for making strides against the context of widespread impunity for femicide and other forms of gendered violence. A common perception amongst feminist and social justice interlocutors is that her commitment to intervening within *historical* and *gendered* nodes of the country's violence (and not least her instrumental role in getting the genocide case, which arose out of a 2001 petition but had been largely stagnated until she took office, to a national trial), are what ensured the reprisals against her by the political and economic elite (Interviewee 7, 23.01.14).

[38] The commission against impunity, known as CICIG according to its Spanish acronym, is UN-sponsored. Like Paz y Paz's role within the PPO, CICIG has benefited from the 2013 appointment of Iván Velásquez Gómez as its head commissioner, an individual similarly celebrated by the Guatemalan human rights community on the one hand, and maligned by political and economic elites, on the other (Interviewee 17, 06.02.14).

juxtaposed the crux of the political and cultural elites' responses with the counter-narrative that emerged during the course of the Genocide Trial:

> "… what we see and hear continues to be steeped within a rancid racism, political intolerance, machismo, and a *denial* of history, all of which are indicative of a symbolic violence that continues to *refuse* these subjects, one after the other, *disqualifying* the validity of each one of their stories, voices, and memories… but in this instance, it was impossible to continue hiding the undeniable: from the declarations of survivors and the testimony of expert witnesses… a daunting history emerged, one that told of the most cruel of repressions, amongst these sexual violence, executed under military orders that did not take even the most basic humanitarian norm into account." (Monzon 2013, emphasis added)

As Burt perceptively notes, the "conservative backlash" palpable in relation to the Genocide Trial is not a phenomenon that is exceptional to Guatemala (2015). Highlighting examples from across Latin America, Burt argues that for sectors whose on-going political and economic power leans upon structures of impunity, a denial of (illegitimate) state violence, and upon the refusal to recognise the bodies that emerge, dead or alive[39], to disclose stories of that violence, these trials are "*likely* to produce a backlash" (2015: 2, 10). Boesten offers a similar reflection on the pact of impunity that regulates the political responses to, and thus, very often legal outcomes of, historical cases in the Peruvian context, explaining that "military and political leaders… seem to work together in trying to prevent human rights cases from going to court" (2014: 116). Indeed, as meticulously charted by the Open Society Justice Initiative, who served as international observers during the Genocide Trial, the CC's ruling only solidified, in legal form, an ideologically driven campaign orchestrated through a triage of political, economic, and cultural sites of hegemonic power (OSJI 2013). The latter include key groups connected to the military, the country's powerful business lobby (known by its Spanish acronym as CACIF), high-profile journalists

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[39] As one interlocutor's narrative about the discovery of a clandestine grave during the course of her work with sexual violence victims/survivors suggests, there is always a possibility that "disappeared" bodies will be discovered: in this account, the remains of 51 men were excavated, many of whom were identified as family members of the women with whom her organisation works (Interviewee 20, 11.02.14). This example gives form to Sanford's powerful reflection on the politics of trying to "bury secrets": even where silence/ing is the "official" story, such a narrative is always vulnerable to breakages since "the bones don't lie" (2003: 30).

within the mainstream media (most notably, *Prensa Libre*) and, not least, by President Otto Perez Molina and key members of his administration[40] (OSJI 2013: 16-7).

To explore the ideological "threat" that the *discursive* emergence of these historical gendered bodies represented during the *legal* emergence of the Genocide Trial onto the national political scene, it is helpful to briefly look once again at the policy framework within which the PP government sets its boundaries of recognition for violence (only then can we reckon with the responses from other, ideologically allied, sites of regulatory power). While some of the contours of the government, business, military, and mainstream media "counteroffensive" against the Genocide Trial have been well explored (Burt 2015; OSJI 2013), these have yet to be analysed against the backdrop of the policy terrain within which the PP actively invokes some, while differentiating or obscuring other, forms of violence. Unlike the frameworks for "private VIF" or "public (in)security", the policy terrain for historical violence is more implicit across the Patriot Party's governing agenda. Still, there are conceptually significant 'moments' that emerge from the texts of the (already discussed) government documents, "Agenda for Change" (Partido Patriota 2011) and the "Security, Justice and Peace" agreement (Ministerio de Gobernacion 2012a), particularly by approaching them through the conceptual node of "disarticulation".

When asked to describe the government's discourse around justice, broadly understood, one feminist interlocutor, using air-quotes to qualify her words, explained, "it is one of harmony, peace, progress, and development" (Interviewee 20, 11.02.14). Significantly, within the PP's Agenda for Change, it is notable that the "justice framework" is discursively arranged in the present tense, with no explicit references made to historical violence or injustices (Partido Patriota 2011: 17-21). For example, under "Access to Justice", the document reads that the administration "encourages the use of dialogue, mediation and conciliation as alternative mechanisms for resolving social conflicts nationwide" (2011: 19). More revealingly,

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[40] During a public event in London, England, the PP's head of the Interior Ministry confirmed that the government's official position fell in line with the CC's decision to overturn the ruling, proclaiming to international media that "there was no genocide" (Author Field Notes, 06.05.14). Furthermore, the PP-instated Secretary of Peace and head of the Presidential Commission on Human Rights (SEPAZ), Antonio Arenales Forno, gave testimony as a "fact witness" for the Genocide Trial defense team (OSJI 2013: 10).

the Interior Ministry's influential "Security, Justice and Peace" agreement (where, to recall, the frameworks for "safe homes", "secure families", "Task Force Against Femicide", and the "Safe Schools military squads" are also located) provides a comprehensive overview of how the government conceptualises (or rather, contains) notions of justice and peace, in particular. What is perhaps most remarkable is how largely unspoken, and yet palpable, the reference to recent historical violence is:

> "… reconciliation should be seen as the essence of the cultivation of our national identity.. As the Peace Accords… mark a route towards national reconciliation… [this document lays out] policies that will help achieve harmony and peace… In practicing the values and principles of the Agenda for Change 2012 – 2016, the Government is promoting a search for consensus… one in which differences are resolved in the mark of dialogue. Solidarity and reconciliation… highlight the road through which we can recuperate the capacities derived out of forgiveness, [while] an awareness of historical reality is acquired so that the ability to live in tolerance, peace, and coexistence is restored…. Forgiveness does not mean to forget… It is the process of becoming aware of past events, understanding and accepting them, and voluntarily renouncing hatred and revenge… It means… finding common ground in order to trace a path for the harmonious development of the country." (Ministerio de Gobernacion 2012a: 3-33)

What is remarkable about the logic of this "justice" and "peace" section of the Security Agreement is how it is conceptually tethered to the "conciliatory" components of the "private VIF" framework as discussed in chapter 4, on the one hand, and yet unhinged from some of the deeply interventionist actions within the "public (in)security" framework addressed in chapter 6, on the other. Beyond the spatial distinction, might a wider set of temporal (and thus, subject/ive) coordinates be guiding the complex contours of these discursive and policy boundaries? How, to recall an earlier quote, do historical cases and victims "rupture" dominant social imaginaries? (Interviewee 20, 11.02.14). One feminist interlocutor involved with the Genocide Trial (and Sepur Zarco case) articulated the tension within the PP's interpellation of "peacetime" violence:

> "… that is precisely their approach... to unlink… to dislocate the country's violence from the structural level. They remove all of the political and economic baggage that it really carries… But it is not possible to talk about the construction of peace, or the construction of democracy, if there is not a

> basis in justice, in its broadest sense, not just for these historic
> cases but justice in a historical and political sense… as
> transformation." (Interviewee 28, 23.02.15)

Her account seems to speak through the idiom of disarticulation— it alludes to the boundaries through which the government regulates what, or who, can and cannot be the object of its contemplation, recognition, or intervention in relation to violence. The contours of historic exclusion and inequality, as I was reminded throughout my fieldwork, remain stubbornly entrenched, as do the assumptions about what constitutes an injustice, and who deserves 'justice': "the idea is that the victims contemplated within these historical trials don't deserve justice" (Interviewee 29, 25.02.15). This is an important reflection for the purposes of understanding, not only the "backlash" from de facto political, economic, and cultural powers to the Genocide Trial, but for appreciating the re-signifying function performed by the representational emergence of the (racialised and gendered) bodies victimised by the state's violence.

"Historically the state and the media have clouded over these victims" (Interviewee 29, 25.02.15). Conceptualised in both its legal and symbolic nodes, then, the Genocide Trial "broke the rules" that have regulated the terrain of historical memory—or rather, historical amnesia (Wilson 1998)—in Guatemala: namely, "impunity and… denial narratives" (Burt 2015: 10). Although, as one interlocutor pointed out, there are very few exceptions to the rule that the country's 'post war' administrations have been reticent, if not out rightly obstructive, towards cases linked to the armed conflict, she suggested that the PP period is especially notable in this regard:

> "This government has made such destructive noise about any
> case related to the armed conflict… and even during the
> anniversary for the signing of the Peace Accords, the core of
> [President] Molina's discourse was that peace… that the main
> pillar of peace is the nuclear family … there is an
> intentionality to that framing." (Interviewee 28, 23.02.15)

Looking at the crux of the "backlash" to the Genocide Trial reveals a series of different nodes through which elites within Guatemala's political, economic, and cultural sites of power worked to de-legitimate the violence(s) being prosecuted, and "re-dispose" of the subjects narrating that violence on a public stage (Interviewee 10,

30.01.14). The trial and its judgment constituted a "finger in the wound" (Nelson 1999) on many different levels, although responses were articulated through similar ideological nodes. The arguments were channelled through (at times implicit) concerns regarding the trial's legal and political-economic ramifications, and, less implicitly, through arguments pertaining to the (negative) cultural and symbolic impact of allowing the so-called "traitors to the peace" (prosecution witnesses, "but especially the women that were victims of sexual violence" (Interviewee 17, 06.02.14)) speak "their lies" and "polarise the country" (FCT 2013; OSJI 2013: 16).

Some responses suggested that the trial constituted a disruption to "the peace" and would compromise the country's "development", while others focused more on disparaging the victims/survivors as well as any national or international interlocutors who were marked as supporters (Burt 2015: 4-7). The onslaught of "no hubo genocidio" discourses came from military groups, the business lobby (CACIF), and high-profile media interlocutors, as well as from the executive branch of government. By exploring the contours of some of the discourses, what emerges is a wider narrative geared at reinstalling a disarticulated account of Guatemala's violent 'post war' present: one that denies the genocidal-femicidal violence addressed through the trial and de-legitimises the subjects at its centre.

Approximately half way into the trial, a now infamous full-page paid advertisement was published under the title "Betraying the peace and dividing Guatemala", and was signed by respected former politicians and academics (Burt 2015: 5). The statement claimed that the trial represented "a serious danger" to the country's stability and threatened to unravel "the peace we have achieved"—to which an interlocutor said "what peace are they referring to?!" (Interviewee 10, 30.01.14). According to one human rights activist, "the invocation" of peace and development "is common when [the state or elite interlocutors] try to delegitimise movements for historical justice" (Interviewee 17, 06.02.14). For another feminist interlocutor, the accusation that the trial constituted a "threat" to Guatemala's peace and development was predictable, because it was entirely consistent with a political-policy terrain grounded in the idea that the country's transition to a democratic society had proceeded through "peace as reconciliation", rather than peace as "justice and transformation":

> "… war persists in Guatemala because the structural
> conditions, those that reproduce violence, continue in tact…
> yes of course there have been some changes, but these are
> minimal. They haven't even touched the bases of power… the
> underlying situation persists." (Interviewee 2, 15.01.14)

In this view, the "peace" referred to in the paid advertisement relates more to an official status, rather than a substantive condition; implicitly, the successful achievement or sustainment of this peace requires a "severing" of the past from the present (Interviewee 3, 21.01.14). For feminist interlocutors, this social imaginary of "reconciliation" necessarily contains gendered (and racialised) exclusions and differentiations (Interviewee 19, 11.02.14; Interviewee 20, 11.02.14). Such a concept of "peace" depoliticises gendered violence in the 'post war' milieu as peripheral to the logic of a peacetime achieved through an exclusionary development model (Interviewee 3, 21.01.14). And, as one feminist pointed out, suggesting that "peace" is the condition that was "interrupted" by a trial linked to a broader movement for justice (for gendered and racialised bodies), recognition, and, crucially, transformation, obscures the *constancy* of the patterns of structural and symbolic violence faced by the most marginalised subjects across Guatemalan society. The logic of this "peace", she noted, is predicated on the disregard of those subjects "who still live under conditions of violence… those who live within its continuum" (Interviewee 2, 18.11.13). In a similar narrative, another feminist lawyer who works with victims of (historical and contemporary) sexual and femicidal violence suggested what the "threat" of this counter historical narrative constituted:

> "there is an everyday violence that so many women, many of
> them the same survivors [of state violence] continue to live
> in… transformation [to genuine peace] would need to account
> for that… the continuum of violence is linked to the
> continuum of the conditions that facilitate and normalise that
> violence. [Justice] would guarantee non repetition [not just of
> sexual violence], and that's why, that [account] directly
> implicates the state, since they would be responsible for
> creating conditions that would allow for, well, so that this
> violent context, which is basically the same now, would be
> addressed. [But] it [requires] an acknowledgment of the
> violence that [these women] are still living in today."
> (Interviewee 20, 11.02.14)

In a parallel explanation, another interlocutor explained that an acknowledgement of its past role in sexual violence directly implicates the role of the state in contemporary femicide:

> "for the Ixil women to denounce… to break the silence during the genocide trial.. what does that imply?... it means there is a total failure of the state of Guatemala, a failure to create specific political and policy [changes] to eradicate all forms of violence against women." (Interviewee 3, 21.01.14)

Both accounts suggest that acknowledging the historical (state) violence outlined in the Genocide Trial carries a substantial "risk" for the state, and also to those that have benefitted from the lack of reforms in the transition period. Doing so would undermine the "official" story that Guatemala is at peace; and, it might furthermore trouble the disarticulated narrative of "peacetime" femicidal violence as peripheral to historical sexual violence.

Amongst the economic elite, Guatemala's powerful business lobby (CACIF) tried to frame their denunciation of the trial within the terms of a political-economic argument, suggesting that the trial verdict "tarnished" Guatemala's "international image" and that there would "likely [be] obligations" for reparations and land transfers (OSJI 2013: 16). This argument was, of course, a real concern of the political and economic elite, whose wealth has been protected by embedded structural inequalities around land and labour across times of conflict or peace (Gonzales-Izas 2013; Oglesby 2013). However, as Burt perceptively notes, their concern went far beyond this: they "grew increasingly concerned that if Rios Montt were convicted, they might be next in the docket, since they had financed the counterinsurgency effort" (2015: 6). The fear of a future "justice cascade" also goes some way towards explaining why the PP government and high-ranking officials publically declared that there was never genocide in Guatemala: as periodically alluded to in this thesis, President Molina was himself a military commander in the same region and under the same period contemplated by the trial (Burt 2015: 6). But the campaign also went beyond a simple negation of the "si hubo genocidio" conviction, (re)mobilising a deeply entrenched imaginary of an "internal enemy" (see chapter 6) that was responsible for taking the country into disarray, and for denigrating the Guatemalan military whose only role during the war had been to "save" the country from the

guerrilla (the historical "internal enemy") and their communist doctrine (FCT 2013). Reflecting on the campaign to undermine the trial, one feminist wrote:

> "A discourse was installed that the victims don't want justice, but rather, vengeance; that to remember the past contributes to the polarisation of society… and warning us that to insist that there was genocide would provoke the return of political violence." (Monzon 2013)

The effort to undermine the trial in the media was not only channelled through special paid advertisements, but through high profile journalists who, unable to ignore the trial and its victims (as interlocutors suggest has been their tactic, historically), instead worked to ridicule and delegitimise its object of intervention (Interviewee 25, 11.02.15). To paraphrase an interlocutor, the approach was that "if we can't invisibilise them we will denigrate, deny, and de-legitimate them" (Interviewee 3, 21.01.14). For example, one journalist who has a weekly opinion column in *Prensa Libre*, used his cultural platform during the two-month trial period to undermine, at first, the genocide claim more generally, and when the trial continued despite delays, his column moved onto denying legitimacy to the victims testimonials and to the legal personalities and human rights community members, involved in the prosecution. His refrain was to articulate the trial through the metaphor of "genocirco" (Kaltschmitt 2014)—a play on the words "genocide" and "circus", and he expressed particular disdain at the leader of this "circus", the trial's head judge, Jazmin Barrios. These sentiments were not isolated. As many interlocutors highlighted, the counteroffensive against the trial proceeded largely through an attack of the subjects at the centre of the trial, or those who were seen as having politically or legally supported its progress at the national level. One human rights activist involved with the trial said that the "black campaign to discredit [the trial] was just as much a media and cultural-political one as it was legal" (Interviewee 17, 06.02.14). Indeed, during one of my field visits to Guatemala, I noted graffiti on a wall near the Constitutional Court that read: "If there was justice, then Jazmin Barrios would be dead" (Author Field Notes, 25.02.15). Further still, bomb threats were made to the offices of the CC in the period between the trial court's conviction and the CC's annulment (Burt 2015: 6-7). In many ways the latter merely provide more extreme examples of the disarticulatory logic within the PP's policy framework around justice and peace, particularly insofar as 'post war' rather than historical violence is threaded into this agenda; although the campaign

against the Genocide Trial proceeded on many different fronts, these were grounded in a broader ideological denial of the violence being narrated, and a delegitimisation of the bodies narrating it.

But if, as already outlined earlier, Guatemala's UN-backed truth commission (the CEH), had already established, more than a decade prior, that genocide had been committed and that the state was responsible for the large majority of violations (Oglesby and Ross 2009), what prompted the political-economic elite, and, subsequently, the Constitutional Court to (paraphrasing the sentiments of several feminist interlocutors) metaphorically *re*-dispose of the Maya-Ixil victims/survivors (Interviewee 3, 21.01.14; Interviewee 10, 30.01.14) and reinstall the (momentarily "ruptured") hegemonic national narrative that "*no hubo genocidio*" (Interviewee 20, 11.02.14)? One way to read this backlash is precisely by conceptualising the ideological "threat" that the trial constituted, not through the legal nodes (for example: the fact that the initial ruling demanded the immediate jailing of Rios Montt, a still powerful political figure in Guatemala), but through the gendered figures that emerged as subjects of history—ones who refused to abide by the rules of a "silenced society, where there are things that cannot be said" (Interviewee 26, 18.02.15). It is important to recall the discursive limits of the CEH's genocide determination; as already discussed, the conditions of visibility for (Mayan) women was in their status as victims of sexual violence (Rosser 2007), consequently unhinging wider accounts of racial discrimination and poverty from the nexus of their experiences. And, although the CEH confirmed that sexual violence was systematic and that the large majority of victims were Maya indigenous, it failed to articulate how racialised sexual violence has been central to the re-production of social hierarchies across Guatemala's history, irrespective of whether the country has been in times of peace or conflict, thus neglecting to outline concrete recommendations to the state for how to address the deeply structural and intersectional nature of the sexual violence violations it had charted.

A strong current within the feminist literature around transitional justice pertains to concerns around the limits of retributive mechanisms as opposed to more "gender sensitive" approaches like the truth commission model to bring forth women's

experiences, voices, and perspectives (Franke 2006; Hayner 2001; Minow 1998). Summarising these concerns, Boesten and Wilding explain:

> "… there is an inherent tension in feminist activism directed at eradicating gender inequality, and the structure of criminal law, which is directed at individual crimes and perpetrators… Within the confines of criminal law, women all too easily become solely the object of harm, instead of the agent (or indeed, subject) of change." (2015: 78)

The 2013 Guatemalan Genocide Trial obviously falls into the category of retributive justice, but there are important reasons to suggest that it circumvented many of the concerns pertaining to the re-victimisation of women victims/survivors and the individualisation of violations at the expense of more structural analyses (Crosby and Lykes 2011: 462). While the trial necessarily built off of the previous labour of the human rights community and survivor testimony, it also benefitted from the gender-sensitive institutional reforms spearheaded within the PPO[41] (with Paz y Paz at its helm). More notably, still, looking at the substantive content of the court's genocide ruling suggests that its (re)reading of genocide pushes beyond the discursive limits of the CEH, which disarticulated the femicidal history of the conflict (Consorcio Actoras de Cambio 2009), including racialised sexual violence, from its genocide finding. Indeed, the 718-page judgement is remarkable in the way that it comprehensively integrates the "finding" of rape and sexual violence within the nexus of the other violence(s) and violations it charts as part of its cumulative establishment of the crimes of genocide and crimes against humanity:

> "the nature of the violence deployed against the Maya Ixil included massacres; forced disappearances; torture and cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment; rape and sexual violence against women and girls; infanticide and the abduction of children; the destruction of crops to induce starvation; the razing of civilian non-combatant villages, burning of houses, and forcible displacement in subhuman conditions, or forcible relocation of surviving populations into militarized "model villages"; and aerial bombardments, and control of populations, territory and natural resources. Women and girls

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[41] These included the directive for prosecutors to investigate the "psychosocial aftereffects of sexual violence", so as to not lean purely upon testimony and physical evidence. In the lead up to the Genocide Trial, after the judges demanded that women give their declarations in an open court (as opposed to in private in a pre-trial court), the PPO "gave the women the option of declining to testify" or, if they felt more comfortable, to testify with their faces covered by shawls (Burt 2015: 14, 19).

were not only raped as the "spoils of war," but as part of the "systematic" and intentional plan to destroy the Ixil ethnic group by exercising violence on women's bodies as a way to destroy the social fabric and thereby ensure the destruction of the Ixil population." (OSJI 2013: 13-4).

Rather than peripheral phenomena contained within a "hypersexed" narrative of bodily harm (Ross 2003; Rosser 2007), the court's ruling articulates the performance of racialised sexual violence as central to the counterinsurgent state's commissioning of genocide. And, as the expert witness testimonial of sociologist Marta Casaus Arzu furthermore confirmed, "sexual violence is an expression of racism, dehumanization and objectification of the women who are raped" (OSJI 2013: 43). Feminist interlocutors highlighted that the court's account of gendered violence was implicitly enveloped within a wider story of a nation-building project grounded in the use of gendered and racialised violence to produce and sustain structural inequalities and exclusion in times of war *and* peace (Interviewee 3, 21.01.14; Interviewee 7, 23.01.14) (see Boesten 2014 and Theidon 2013 for a similar discussion in relation to Peru). This is partially what I wish to capture when I suggest that the Genocide Trial (and, further on, the Sepur Zarco case) pushes past the discursive limits of the CEH's genocide finding and, more importantly still, in my claim that the meanings that emerge in relation to the trial constitute disruptions to the disarticulated formations of "peacetime" violence explored thus far.

The sheer magnitude of the "backlash" from elite forces in Guatemala to the trial demonstrates the extent to which the emergence of this counter-hegemonic historical narrative disrupted the spectrum of visibility and recognition as regulated within the discursive economy of Guatemala's 'post war' violence— not least through the marginalised voices "producing an echo" across a society that, according to one interlocutor, wears the shroud of a "reconciled peacetime" (Interviewee 25, 11.02.15). Rather than "depoliticise history" (Berger 2006: 103), or obscure the structural and symbolic violences that underpinned the logics of a genocidal and femicidal conflict, interlocutors argued that the trial, like parallel criminal cases pertaining to historical violence "almost inherently trigger[ed], or demand[ed] a historical-structural critique of violence, oppression, inequality, and those continuums" (Authour Field Notes, 24.01.14). Therefore, I suggest that the "threat" that the trial (and others like it), constitute to hegemonic social imaginaries goes far beyond the legal realm— an

important qualification to keep in mind in light of the (often successful) efforts to recrystallize de facto impunity (Interviewee 7, 23.01.14). Instead, the "threat" exists at the interface of the "official" political and historical truths that are symbolically derailed by the emergence of "historical" bodies of gendered violence: these are victims/survivors whose accounts fail to remain bounded within the authorised 'post war' frames of reference for violence, gesturing instead at a *continuum* of violence (Interviewee 3, 21.01.14)— the coordinates of which have undergone shifts, rather than transformations, with the advent of Guatemala's post-conflict developments (Interviewee 20, 11.02.14). During an exchange with a feminist photographer who has spent several years documenting the lead up to these two historical trials, she made a statement that I suggest speaks volumes in the context of the present analysis. After discussing the visual regimes that circulate for domestic violence femicide victims (recall the facial depiction of Cristina Siekavizza) and for "public" femicide victims (recall the bodily depictions of victims charted in chapter 6), she then countered this with: "well, what I take photos of… the images that I produce… the mainstream media doesn't want these" (Interviewee 29, 25.02.15). In my view, there is something conceptually very relevant about how *historical* subjects/bodies/figures of gendered violence constitute "threats" to hegemonic social imaginaries. It suggests that acknowledging their presence, or their narratives, helps challenge the discursive limits by which the Guatemalan state regulates the boundaries of visibility and recognition for gendered and femicidal violence.

According to the OSJI, "[w]ithin Guatemala, the aspect of the trial and the judgment that drew the greatest attention was the genocide charge" (2013: 16). Although this might be a fair assessment, as several feminists pointed out, it is important not to obscure the highly gendered contours of the "backlash" against the trial and its subjects (Interviewee 3, 21.01.14; Interviewee 18, 06.02.14). Indeed, the fact that *racialised sexual violence* was firmly demarcated within the genocide charge and articulated throughout the proceedings (Interviewee 7, 23.01.14) cannot be left to one side when addressing the campaigns to deny the violence and delegitimise the victims/survivors, and when conceptualising the "threat" that this process posed to dominant narratives and social imaginaries of violence in Guatemala. Remembering the refrain of Mbembe (2003), "what place is given to the body in the order of power?", my analysis suggests that the discursive emergence of the trial and the

victims at its centre troubled the boundaries by which racialised women—particularly those marked by historical state violence—fail to matter, or even register, on the sociopolitical scene, unless, of course, as silent/silenced victims of sexual violence.

It is important to keep in mind that, ultimately, this "backlash" was (thus far) *legally* successful in reinstalling impunity[42], since, as already noted, the Constitutional Court overturned the conviction. However, the aftermath of the Genocide Trial is on-going (Burt 2015: 12) and, crucially, the possibility for new "geographies of justice" (Oglesby and Ross 2009) remains open. The final section of this chapter foregrounds the Sepur Zarco case[43], not through its legal nodes (which would be limited to the pre-trial testimony given by the 15 Q'eqchi women), but rather, through the narratives of feminist interlocutors working with the victims/survivors. Through my field observations, I explore what is at stake with the discursive-legal emergence of another historical trial grounded in claims of the state's racialised sexual violence.

Disrupting Femicide's 'Post War' Formations

"…The femicide and sexual violence cases we see today have historical roots, this is not a problem that emerged now… the decision to fight for historical memory and social transformation is a political one, [the women of Sepur Zarco] have forced a profound social problem into the public consciousness, one that this society still hasn't been able to acknowledge or recognise, let alone resolve… that all of this violence takes place in times of war and in times of peace" (Author Field Notes at "Breaking the Silence and Impunity" forum, 24.01.14)

"Something was left over" by the Genocide Trial—this "something" could not be erased or undone, even as the verdict was overturned (Author Field Notes 19.02.15). In this final section I offer a provisional interpretation of what is at stake with the discursive emergence of the Sepur Zarco case, refracting my own observations with how interlocutors (who work with the victims/survivors of sexual violence contemplated in this case) narrated its significance. It seems especially important to evaluate the "disruptive", or counter-hegemonic potential, of this case beyond the legal realm, even as the latter is significant. What I propose is so powerful about the

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[42] At the time of writing, more than 100 different legal impediments have prevented the re-trial from commencing; and, furthermore, Rios Montt is no longer considered mentally fit to face trial. Still, a new trial, which "cannot result in a criminal conviction.. but can establish certain facts" has been scheduled for January 2016 (Beaudoin 2015).

[43] At the time of writing, the trial is set to commence in February 2016.

narratives that emerge in relation to the Sepur Zarco case is that they gesture at a substantive re-reading of Guatemala's "peacetime", articulating a historical and structural critique of the violence that continues to inform the lived experiences of survivors. And, importantly, tracking some of the ways in which the subjects of Sepur Zarco have emerged representationally suggests that the terms of visibility challenge the boundaries that contain the forms of recognition for contemporary femicidal violence.

The idea that "something was left over" by the processes leading up to and since the Genocide Trial was expressed (both explicitly and implicitly) at various moments during an event I attended in Guatemala City in 2015. The event included a photography exhibition with photos of the Maya-Ixil witnesses of the Genocide Trial and the Q'eqchi women of the Sepur Zarco case; music and poetry performances; as well as a presentation of a film entitled "Seeds of Memory" (2015), which documented the Genocide Trial and its aftermath through interviews with victims/survivors. Walking into the "Teatro Lux" in the centre of Guatemala City where the event was held, what was immediately notable was the prominent arrangement of photographs of the Maya-Ixil victims/survivors of the Genocide Trial interspersed with photographs of the Q'echi women of the Sepur Zarco Case. The photographs were particularly striking for the stark contrast in visual regime compared to those that circulate for contemporary "domestic" or "public" femicides. While, in some cases, the women were depicted with shawls covering their faces, they were nonetheless subjectivised as political actors: shown defiantly standing outside the national court during (and after) the Genocide Trial, or giving their pre-trial testimonial in anticipation of the Sepur Zarco Trial. An especially poignant photograph was of a woman named Magdalena, one of the central witnesses for the Sepur Zarco case; her face and eyes directly meet the camera. In earlier field visits I had learned that Magdalena had died of cancer, but only after she had given her *prueba anticipada* to the pre-trial court in 2012 (Interviewee 20, 11.02.14). Below the photograph, a quote from Magdalena read: "I did what I needed to do, I said what I needed to say, you continue this fight" (Alianza Rompiendo el Silencio 2013).

The legal nodes of these cases are only one component to potential disruptions, since the discursive emergence of these victims/survivors of sexual violence as "subjects of

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change", rather than as "neutral" victims or "disposable" bodies of femicide, proceeds through discursive and aesthetic practices before, during, and after "official" trials. While the meanings that emerge from visual images are complex and interpretive (Butler 2009; Mirzoeff 1999), I suggest that this photograph of Magdalena—and, indeed, the range of discursive representations that emerge at events such as the one described above—is significant because of its potential to disrupt the regulatory boundaries that exist in relation to the spectrum of visibility and recognition. Part of the ideological "threat" that cases linked to historical state gendered violence constitute should be located within the kinds of representations that are offered through these mediums—within documentaries or photo exhibitions, for example—in which the performative staging of gendered violence and its subjects is governed by "unofficial" historical narratives. Because, while the juridical consequences are (potentially) substantial, especially as these are tied to mechanisms of accountability, as we saw with the Genocide Trial, they are deeply vulnerable to entrenched institutional impunity. Reading the resistance to these cases, however, precisely suggests that something less tangible than a legal condition is at stake. That the government denies the validity of the claims of state-executed genocide and sexual violence, that the mainstream media "clouds over" or "doesn't want" photos of these victims/survivors (Interviewee 25, 11.02.15; Interviewee 29, 25.02.15), and that politically hegemonic groups put extensive labour into discrediting both the violence and the victims (OSJI 2013), indicates that the discursive emergence of these historical gendered bodies and narratives of state violence can disrupt the boundaries that regulate 'post war' formations.

In conversations with feminist interlocutors who have been working with the Sepur Zarco women for almost a decade, one especially pronounced theme pertained to the *violence* of the victims/survivor's everyday living conditions (Interviewee 20, 11.02.14; Interviewee 25, 11.02.15). Although the pre-trial testimonies of the women speak to horrific experiences of wartime rape, sexual slavery, and torture, the accounts of their lives of "survival" in 'post war' Guatemala give form to the structural and everyday violence that structures "neoliberal peacetime" for the most marginalised. The "logic of their disposability" is not only realised in the practices of sexual and femicidal violence that were/are exercised against their bodies; "that same logic operates through the political economic model that structures Guatemala"

(Interviewee 2, 15.01.14). Referring to the 15 Q'echi women whose accounts form the evidentiary corpus of the Sepur Zarco case, a feminist explained:

> "they are monolingual [don't speak Spanish], they can't read or write… and they live in a situation of extreme poverty. And many of them live totally alone… so when thinking about an idea like access to justice one wonders, 'what does that really imply?'… If poverty and all of those factors are not addressed it's, pah [somewhat meaningless]… For example, one woman is nearly blind, she can't see well at all, and, she lives alone, in a house made of sticks... on land that isn't hers. She has nothing, no bed, no chair... You see there are so many *conditions*, difficult conditions… and this is [generalizable in Guatemala]… everyone is focused on the how… how to survive day by day." (Interviewee 20, 11.02.14).

This interlocutor articulated precisely why approaches to justice—even in the mark of "official" legal processes like retributive trials—cannot intervene only within a single event, because doing so obscures the structural factors that provide the conditions of possibility for the continuum of violence, and which impede the possibilities for women survivors to participate in justice processes:

> "the road to justice is not only… not purely legal… for example, the process of facilitating the pre-trial testimonies… was not easy… So, what were they worried about? Different things… so we asked, and one of them, Dona Catarina, says, 'well I have a pig, so if I leave for 8 days, who will feed the pig? The pig will die'. You see?... the pig, that is her source of nourishment, her food. Another woman that had hens… she was worried that the hens would die… all of that needs to be addressed… it is all important, because, for them, what help is it to go and give your testimony and declare in a courtroom if afterwards you go back to find… the pig dead?" (Interviewee 20, 11.02.14).

Listening to these descriptions of the "peacetime" realities of survivors of sexual violence compellingly designates an account of a 'post war' condition that is encumbered by different articulations of violence across a continuum. On the one hand, the racialised sexual and gendered violence against these women has yet to be acknowledged within the "official" historical record, and, as of yet, legal impunity shrouds those violations. On the other hand, the testimony of their experiences, as well as the realities of the on-going structural, symbolic, and everyday violences and marginalisation within their lives, are emerging across moments of "broken silence

and silencing" (Interviewee 28, 23.02.15), such as the cultural events described earlier on. I suggest that these discursive and visual representations help sediment new accounts of Guatemala's historical gendered violence. The terms of reference of this historical gendered violence are necessarily political, intersectional, historical and structural (Interviewee 3, 21.01.14). The violence(s) in Dona Catarina's life or, when she was still alive, in Magdalena's, certainly does not fall into an account of private domestic violence that can be interpellated through a gendered call to "resilient" wives/mothers to create stronger families, nor do their experiences gesture at a public insecurity and violence driven by crime that could be resolved by squads of armed military-police.

Speaking to a feminist involved with both the Genocide Trial and Sepur Zarco case, she offered a reflection of how the protagonists of the latter case, despite the attempts to (re)silence them, were emerging as historical subjects:

> "This legal case has a great symbolic importance…
> transcendence, even… Already, the fact that the women have
> given their testimonials, and what they are saying… that is
> historically significant… And, most important, they are the
> principal *actoras*. But they are not alone." (Interviewee 19,
> 11.02.14)

The terms within which the Sepur Zarco case and its central protagonists get articulated in these accounts gestures at the markedly different frames of reference that can circulate for historical gendered violence. The violence disclosed in the lives of these victims/survivors extends far beyond the "sexed" (Rosser 2007) "(hyper/in)visibility" (Martin-Baron 2014) of rape, instead highlighting forms of structural exclusion and symbolic invisibility that inform their experiences of "peacetime". To paraphrase Nelson (1999: 348), this violence "bleeds" across the spatial and temporal boundaries that I suggest work to contain contemporary femicidal violence as depoliticised "events" disarticulated from on-going social processes. Beyond the articulation of a continuum of violence, the significance of the representations charted above is in the re-signification of the victims/survivors *as* subjects of history and "subjects of change" (Consorcio Actoras de Cambio 2009).

Further indication of the disruptive potential of the Sepur Zarco case can be found in the response it has garnered amongst politically hegemonic groups in Guatemala.

Although it has yet to go to trial, the Sepur Zarco case has already been subjected to similar forms of "backlash" charted in relation to the Genocide Trial. During the pre-trial testimonial hearings, for example, one feminist interlocutor recounted that "the men that help guard the official story" showed up at the proceedings: these "guards" included lawyers for President Molina, as well as one of the most high-profile leaders in the (military and economic elite) movement to deny historical state violence (Interviewee 28, 23.02.15). Furthermore, highlighting that the media campaign to disqualify the voices and experiences of the victims/survivors started back when they were giving their pre-trial testimony, another interlocutor explained that the organisation supporting the women found it necessary to hire a consultant to ensure that media coverage was "appropriate". As with the Genocide Trial, the concern around the terms of mainstream coverage was articulated through the notion that because it would be "impossible to ignore" and invisibilise these victims/survivors, as is the usual strategy, the campaign would instead likely try to delegitimise and denigrate them (Interviewee 27, 19.02.15). I cite these examples to highlight how the "backlash" to these trials might gesture at a broader issue, or potential, in bringing cases of wartime state violence to bear on the present. Indeed, the fact that the potential visibilisation of these historical figures, or recognition of their narratives of racialised sexual violence, seem to pose "threats" which solicit a "backlash" from conservative forces suggests that the "official story" of Guatemala's violence is guarded by more than a de facto legal condition. Indeed, it suggests that this dominant narrative is also guarded by social imaginaries—ones that lean on the highly gendered, racialised, and classed exclusions of mainstream representations of (subjects of) violence. Thus, I propose that the discursive emergence of these "historical subjects" onto the sociopolitical stage constitutes a meaningful disruption through which "something is left over", even where legal impunity is reinstalled.

In a memorable account, a feminist interlocutor commented that cases like Sepur Zarco and the Genocide Trial before it, "do more" than try and break the "official" impunity and normalisation of gendered and femicidal violence across war and peace (Interviewee 28, 23.02.15). When I asked her to expand, she explained that these "official" processes open up a space for those women, who are often the most victimised by wartime violence and yet (re)marginalised in its aftermath, to expand on their own "ideal" peacetime. I suggest that her account implicitly articulates the

deeply gendered distinctions between "peacetime" as an official status achieved with the ending of conflict and reconstruction, as opposed to a substantive condition realised through 'post war' transformation (Boesten and Wilding 2015: 77-8):

> "There are many tools that contribute to breaking with hegemonic approaches [to violence]. Yes there are legal routes, but also unofficial justice processes, music, art. With the Alianza [Alliance for Breaking the Silence and Impunity] for example we don't just have the legal petition [querella penal], we also have a theatre programme… the idea is that if things can be changed in the theatre [performances], then it [things] can be changed in reality… the [official] story, the history. Through the theatre the proposal is to create the ideal world ["el mundo ideal"], then the women address the real world, and from there the proposals for change emerge. So, for these women, in their ideal world all of the communities supported them, they were attended and listened to in the health posts [care centres], they went to seek justice and they succeeded. And so the question that we then pose [together] is: what do we need to do to change this reality [into the ideal]? (Interviewee 28, 23.02.15)

Conclusion

"This society is based in the fundamental pillars of racism and patriarchy. And so if we don't tackle that… the classism and sexism, and all of those conditions of subordination and oppression… If we don't challenge the forms of power as they operate… all of this other violence [femicidal, sexual, gendered] will not change. Otherwise, we are just covering up, putting a bandage here and there. Transformation involves another… a transformed model." (Interviewee 20, 11.02.14)

Hegemonic national narratives on historical violence have a productive effect on the kinds of meanings that emerge in response to a country's 'post war' violence (Boesten 2014; Sanford 2003; Theidon 2013). In Guatemala, the denial of the most recent genocide amongst the political, economic, and cultural elite, and the pervasive impunity for the wide range of human rights violations committed by the state, forms part of a wider ideological suspension of the *kinds of violences* and *types of victims or subjects* that are contemplated by the 'post war' state. The significance of the two historical cases discussed in this chapter is complex and their possibilities remain open: however, within the context of this analysis, one especially powerful effect is the space that they open for articulating a different narrative of gendered violence, and thus the potential they hold for visibilising and challenging the exclusions upon

which the Guatemalan nation-state was built and through which it continues to be sustained across war and peacetime temporalities. Rather than a break with the past, I suggest that these historical trials and the bodies/subjects at their centre reveal continuums in how the most marginalised experience gendered violence. And rather than development, progress, and reconciliation, their stories gesture at the structural and everyday violences (the "war by other means" (McAllister and Nelson 2013)) through which the country's official "peacetime" status has been achieved. The articulation of gendered and femicidal violence as historical-structural phenomena, rather than as individuated 'events' which occur outside of, or peripheral to, the logic of the political, economic, and cultural organisation of power and the regulation of subject-formations across war and peacetime, gestures at the kinds of radical transformations that would need to take place in order for genuine peace and security to be realised (Boesten and Wilding 2015) for those for whom neither of the latter truly arrived, even as they "survived" to see the end of the war.

Writing during the early stages of Guatemala's 'post war' moment and aftermath, Sanford noted, "history can become a tool for the empowerment of the hitherto powerless" (2003: 710). In what I have proposed should be read as a disruption to the disarticulated femicidal present, in which the continuum of violence is obscured by regulatory discourses that work to secure 'post war' and depoliticised frames of reference, feminist and indigenous activists and victims/survivors are pushing narratives of the state's racialised sexual violence onto the sociopolitical stage, despite concerted efforts to deny and delegitimise them. If, as Boesten and Wilding suggest, transformative gender justice "explicitly intends to move away from a singular vision of women as victims of conflict-related sexual violence towards a more relational approach" (2015: 78), the processes charted in this chapter suggest that struggles around cases of historical gendered violence in Guatemala are reaching towards this horizon.

Chapter 8 – Conclusion

"Perhaps femicidio – the war-enabled lethal expression of long-running patterns of hatred for and violence against women—is the key to identifying the demons still at large." (McAllister and Nelson 2013: 7)

In April 2015, a series of corruption scandals rocked Guatemala's political elite, and, in particular, President Molina's Patriot Party. The most prominent of these scandals, uncovered by the CICIG and PPO, involved a kickback scheme to defraud the government of customs revenue, and triggered some of the biggest popular protests that the country has seen since the revolution of 1944 (Abbott 2015b). After several months of protest Molina reluctantly stepped down from power— soon after which he was arrested for his presumed role in the scandals. Although these protests were not sparked by citizen outrage at the country's violence and inequality, *per se*, the extent to which the tentacles of corruption had worked to rob the Guatemalan public coffers, prompted demands for wide-scale changes to the status quo. In October 2015, that "change" came in the form of political "outsider" Jimmy Morales, who won the Presidential race. The National Convergence Front party (FCN) through which Morales was elected, was founded by retired generals motivated to protect military interests in the aftermath of the Peace Accords. While it will be a question of time to see how violence, and particularly femicide, emerges within the discourses under Morales' rule, the fact that his party has already taken similar "denial" positions in relation to the historical state violences charted in earlier chapters, suggests that "in practical terms, [Morales' FCN will be] a continuation of the administration of … Molina" (ibid.).

This study of the discursive economy of gendered violence in 'post war' Guatemala has provided important insights that contribute to our understanding of how meanings are made through the political citation and cultural representation of femicide. In the first three empirical chapters, I explored how the VIF and (in)security frameworks constitute discursive formations of femicide and gendered violence that are performatively staged across political, policy, and cultural terrains, as "family violence" in the private sphere, and as "gang" and "delinquent" criminal violence in the public sphere. Both of these frameworks allow for exclusionary boundaries to re-emerge, and thus illustrate the inadequacy of assuming that where problems linked to

'post war' femicidal violence engender discursive and policy attention, this will necessarily produce effective, let alone transformative, changes in relation to deeply entrenched inequalities. As I suggested, the terms of contemporary femicidal (in)visibility and (mis)recognition are largely reconstituted by the emergence of peacetime bodies "undone" by (what is framed as) 'post war' violence, particularly as these boundaries get regulated within "private VIF" and "public (in)security" formations. This is, at least in part, because these frameworks are effectively absorbed within the discursive-policy terrain of 'post war' transition and development, particularly, as this thesis shows, in relation to how issues linked to gender/ed (and) violence are addressed within notions of 'protection', 'security', or 'peace and reconciliation'.

In chapter 7 I suggested that the historical gendered violences disclosed by the Genocide Trial and Sepur Zarco case, trouble the discursive limits of intelligibility for contemporary femicide, since the former cases cannot be developed outside of an analysis that situates violence on a historical and intersectional continuum. I argued that the discursive emergence of these historical cases and the victims/survivors/subjects/bodies at their centre therefore constitute meaningful disruptions to the spectrum of (in)visibility and (mis)recognition for Guatemala's 'post war' violence.

The political and cultural recognition (or 'visibilisation') of femicide as a social problem across 'post-transition' Latin America is a site where forms of violent exclusion might get reconstituted, but within new, seemingly benign, discursive formations linked to 'protection' (chapters 4 and 5), 'security' (chapter 6), and 'peace and reconciliation' (chapter 7). As the Guatemalan case illustrates, none of these discursive sites are neutral— this is particularly true where the object of contemplation is violence, and where the subjects of intervention are the bodies of that violence. Certainly, for 'post war' states whose power continues to be underwritten by racism, patriarchy, and classism, it is crucial to explore how femicide is deployed across political, policy, and cultural domains in ways that leave, in tact, the broader structures within which these violent social relations and gendered subject formations are (re)constituted. Given the attention that gendered violence potentially mobilises at the national and international level, it is all the more necessary to

interrogate how modes of representation or intervention organise the spectrum of femicide's (in)visibility, while simultaneously limiting the parameters of recognition for the subjects and bodies of that violence.

Wider Implications / Future Directions

The empirical chapters in this study have each flagged up issues, with implications that extend beyond femicide, and the Guatemalan context, and therefore point to directions for future research. Among these are the exclusions that re-emerge in the context of calls for "protection of the family" rather than women's rights to be free from violence; the instrumentalisation of violence for militarized policy imperatives, and, finally, approaches to violence that make false divisions between war and peace[44]. Here I will address one especially interesting regional development, one that highlights, in particular, the entrenchment of 'protection' and 'security' within racial, class, and gendered formations.

It is significant that the recent Inter-American Development Bank (IADB) and US-aid development initiative, the "Plan of the Alliance for Prosperity in the Northern Triangle" (PAPNT) (El Salvador et al. 2014), imitates similar "mapping" logics as those alluded to in chapter 6. While ostensibly designed to improve economic and individual security in light of 2014's "child migration crisis", and on-going gang and drug violence, the plan is more evidently geared towards "unlocking economic opportunities" for investors in the countries making up the triangle: Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador (McKibben 2015). If the recent history of similar trade agreements tells us anything, this latter emphasis on "creating special economic zones" to encourage investment, will open the floodgates to further militarization of civil society and urban spatialities (Costantino 2006). And, indeed, many observers note that the plan, which "entails the provision of an additional $1 billion from the US on top of previously existing aid programs to the three Central American governments" has already directly fed into the expansion of more of the "Security Task Forces" discussed earlier (Abbott 2015a). That US development aid is being

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[44] The UN Security Council Resolutions around "conflict-related" sexual violence are pertinent examples.

channelled so directly into policies that strengthen the role of the Guatemalan military in the country's domestic security is, according to many analysts, part of a wider strategic initiative to instrumentalise violence and insecurity in order to secure economic interests of the United States, multinational corporations, and the Guatemalan *"empresarios"* (businessmen) and companies that benefit from free trade relations with the North (Abbott 2015a).

While the details of this plan are still emerging, it is pertinent to note that criticisms have thus far neglected to consider the conjunctures between how the plan conceptualises the *sources* of violence and risk (and thus, where policies for "crime reduction" are directed), and how governments like Guatemala's Patriot Party have regulated (without actually reducing) violence in recent years. What is important to highlight is the way in which the PAPNT's calls to "reduce insecurity" mirror the Patriot Party's strategic agenda by centring focus on gendered spatialities, implicitly framing the sources of violence (and its prevention) in relation to racialised and classed units and subjects. For example, under "programs to prevent violence at the family and community level", the document reads:

> "Prevention measures centered on the family and the
> community will be the first step toward reducing high levels
> of overall violence and violence within families, raising levels
> of safety in our countries and protecting our children, young
> people and women. At the family and individual level, we will
> seek to encourage resilient behavior… lessen influence of
> gangs [on young people]… provide support to parents in the
> use of alternative mechanisms for resolving conflicts, so as to
> keep violence from being passed down from generation to
> generation." (El Salvador et al. 2014: 18)

Crucially, as with the VIF framework and the related "Safe Homes and Families" policy, there is a focus on the family unit as the site of the production of violence in society, as well as an emphasis on the strategic (and moral) role that parents, but especially mothers, (should) perform in the production of "good kids" who avoid involving themselves with criminal violence and gangs (Patriot Party 2011). Significantly, violence against women in general, and the "killings of women", in particular, are inserted in this section, thereby implying, once again, that "the family unit" is the site of the (re)production and performance of gendered violence (El

Salvador et al. 2014: 18). The nature of the PAPNT suggests that several of the problematic logics of the "insecurity" paradigm being charted in this thesis, are not isolated phenomena; rather, they reverberate within the Central American region and are being articulated through substantial forms of aid in the mark of "development". Indeed, it is revealing that the "child migration emergency" of 2014, and the politically cited pervasiveness of criminal gang and drug-related violence that prompted the November 14, 2014 meeting between US Vice President Joseph Biden and the three Northern Triangle leaders, was described by Guatemala's President Molina as a "crisis [that] has become a huge opportunity" (Grandin 2015). An appreciation of the conjuncture between regional plans for tackling problems of violence necessitates further critical reflections on how exclusions (re)emerge within the nexus of "security" policies, gender politics, and social marginalisation.

Conclusion

This thesis began by asking: what are the dialectics between Guatemala's 'peacetime' femicidal violence and the discourses that interpret, and thus organise the boundaries of, its meanings? In foregrounding the importance of placing the body at the centre of critical analyses of violence, I began with the hypothesis that discourse is formative of subjects, and that femicide is a productive force in the consolidation of boundaries— not only between subjects, but between types of violence—which create hierarchical regimes of visibility and recognition. My analysis, which was underpinned by an assortment of empirical data including interviews, policy documents, speeches, media reports, and images, has demonstrated that there are discernable ideological imperatives that govern why femicide emerges, or, indeed, why in particular contexts it fails to emerge as an object of political significance to the Patriot Party government and to particular state institutions (in their formulation of public policies around domestic violence or crime and insecurity, for example). And, relatedly, my analysis has shown how gendered and racialised normative frameworks—historically informed and yet contextually fluid—constrain whether or not, and how, particular bodies of this violence emerge as subjects of sociocultural importance (in the mainstream media or civil society's interpellation of specific cases and victims of femicide, for example). More generally, my research has shed light on how discourses of femicide help organise life—and death—in 'post war' Guatemala, with

implications that might be extended to other post conflict countries where systemic forms of violence engendered by histories of sexism, racism, and classism continue to reverberate across 'peacetime' contexts.

This thesis has produced an account that furthers our understanding of how ideological struggles are waged through the medium of femicidal violence in 'post war' Guatemala. While drawing from historical norms, I have shown how hierarchies of gendered disposability and, indeed, representations of that disposability, shift over time according to the contemporary social, political, and economic formations of the moment. Through my analysis I have also offered a wider reflection on the complex relationship between violence and (mis)recognition, and violence and (in)visibility, highlighting the performative role of political citations (within public policies and speeches) and cultural representations (within mainstream media) of femicide, for reproducing the stratifications that render victims of violence 'disposable'. Building on this latter point, one of the more significant implications of the analysis within this thesis emerged from my observation that the *contextual coordinates* of femicide— such as spatial designations between public and private, subjective descriptions of victims and perpetrators, and distinctions between war or post-war temporalities— work performatively to mark femicide's *ideological boundaries*. I have shown that when these contextual details emerge in visual or discursive form within political speeches, public policies, or media representations, they are in no way benign citations—they are deeply ideological and, furthermore, hierarchical.

Indeed, as I discussed in the empirical chapters of this thesis, one central analytical observation in relation to the manifestations of femicide in contemporary Guatemala is precisely that they *do not* necessarily lack cultural visibility (in the mainstream media, for example), nor do they altogether lack political acknowledgment or recognition by government and state interlocutors (in the development of policy agendas, for example). Thus, my research has highlighted that the lack of recognition or visibility for femicide is not, *per se*, the problem. Instead, it has demonstrated why, as critical feminists in particular, we need to focus on questioning the nature of femicide's discursive visibility. Especially since, as I have argued, gendered disposability can be realised *through* forms of political citation and cultural visibility.

If the discursive recognition and visual representation—rather than the outright occlusion—of femicide (albeit in misrecognised, instrumentalised, or disarticulated formations) is helping to reproduce racist, sexist, and classist hierarchies of recognition for victims in life and in death, then, if we shift our analysis to different countries or regions where discourses linked to femicide can be identified, we should be asking *what political, policy, or cultural 'work' is being performed by the bodies that these discourses bring into visibility*. Of course, as I insisted at the outset of this thesis, even as there might be significant parallels in other Latin American and post conflict countries (such as those referenced in this thesis: Peru, El Salvador, Mexico, Brazil, and Argentina), identifying the performative and boundary-producing effects of discourses of femicide in other contexts requires its own empirically grounded account.

As a final reflection on the significance of this research to feminist analyses of violence more generally, it is helpful to return to an idea that was explored in the introduction to this thesis. In her powerful work on the subject, Judith Butler has continued to emphasise the importance of appreciating that violence is not merely 'seen' or 'not seen', or 'visible' or 'invisible'. As feminist researchers, I would insist that we continue to build off of this insight about how gendered violence is ideologically 'read', and commit to actively pursuing critical 're-readings', rather than merely lamenting the lack of visibility for gendered violence, which is not, *per se*, the central problem identified within this thesis (though of course, this is not to suggest that invisibility and occlusion are not relevant concerns in this area). And, as the final empirical chapter of this thesis suggested, what is perhaps more important still is that we pursue research that can help support local feminist and civil society movements that are working to bring their own critical 're-readings' of violence to the centre of the national stage—re-readings that push for new historical and contemporary narratives, in the hopes of disrupting the exclusionary regimes that continue to structure hegemonic interpretations of femicide and gendered violence around the world.

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Appendices

Interviewees

1. Women's rights activist and director of a prominent NGO dedicated to providing emotional, social, and legal assistance to victims of violence. Although the NGO does not work exclusively with women or domestic violence victims/survivors, these are the types of cases they predominantly take on. Involved in development of Law Against Femicide.
Interview: 18.11.13, Guatemala City.

2. Prominent feminist activist and academic at one of Guatemala's national universities. Host of radio show dedicated to covering issues of relevance to women across Guatemala.
Interviews (x3): 18.11.13; 15.01.14; and 24.02.15, Guatemala City.

3. Indigenous Xinca and feminist community activist residing in Guatemala City. Co-founder of an indigenous women's association located in a rural regional Department of Guatemala. Member of Latin American-wide indigenous women's rights network.
Interview: 21.01.14, Mixco, Guatemala.

4. Lawyer and human rights defender at prominent social justice NGO in Guatemala City. Takes on both historical and contemporary cases of human rights and women's rights abuses.
Interviews (x3): 23.01.14; 03.02.14; and 23.02.15, Guatemala City.

5. Lawyer and human rights defender at prominent social justice NGO in Guatemala City. (since left this position)
Interview: 23.01.14, Guatemala City.

6. Director and human rights defender at prominent social justice NGO in Guatemala City.
Interview: 23.01.14, Guatemala City.

7. Feminist and LGBT activist; also a member of a feminist newspaper publication that was founded by a group of feminists in the wake of the signing of Guatemala's Peace Accords.
Interview: 23.01.14, Guatemala City.

8. Journalist for prominent national daily newspaper; self-described feminist.
Interview (x2): 29.01.14; 05.02.14, Guatemala City.

9. Canadian academic and women's rights activist living and working in Guatemala City for over 10 years.
Interview: 29.01.14, Guatemala City.

10. Feminist lawyer and human rights defender. Provides specialized training regarding the Femicide Law, and other laws related to women's rights/violence against women, to legal professionals within judicial branches of the state.

Contributor to a radio show dedicated to covering issues of relevance to women across Guatemala
Interview (x2): 30.01.14; 24.02.15, Guatemala City.

11. Academic at one of Guatemala's private universities.
Interview: 31.01.14, Guatemala City.

12. Feminist working at a partially state-funded NGO dedicated to providing support and shelter to victims/survivors of domestic violence; also the coordinator of a women's network promoting non-violence. Involved in development of Law Against Femicide.
Interview: 02.02.14, Guatemala City.

13. Feminist working at a partially state-funded NGO dedicated to providing support and shelter to victims/survivors of domestic violence.
Interview: 02.02.14, Guatemala City.

14. Feminist working at a partially state-funded NGO dedicated to providing support and shelter to victims/survivors of domestic violence.
Interview: 02.02.14, Guatemala City.

15. Former head of Guatemala's Presidential Commission Against Femicide and special advisor to the Public Ministry for prosecution of femicide.
Interview: 05.02.14, Guatemala City.

16. Formerly of Presidential Commission Against Femicide in Guatemala.
Interview: 05.02.14, Guatemala City.

17. Office director and social justice advocate at human rights organisation based in Guatemala City. (since left this position)
Interview: 06.02.14, Guatemala City

18. Researcher and social justice advocate at human rights organisation based in Guatemala City.
Interview: 06.02.14, Guatemala City.

19. Feminist academic and activist working within prominent women's rights and social justice organisation. Involved in delegation to sign Peace Accords as part of Guatemalan National Revolutionary Unity. Involved in development of Law Against Femicide.
Interview: 11.02.14, Guatemala City.

20. Feminist lawyer and women's rights advocate working within an organisation that provides accompaniment to victims of sexual violence, discrimination, trafficking, and femicide; supporting cases of both historical and contemporary sexual violence against women in Guatemala.
Interview: 11.02.14, Guatemala City.

21. Feminist documentary filmmaker and women's rights advocate; director of feminist collective active across Latin America and United States.

Interviews (x3): 28.09.14, 27.10.14 (via Skype) and 29.07.15, Los Angeles, California.

22. Documentary filmmaker and human rights/social justice activist.
Interview: 29.03.14, London, United Kingdom.

23. Documentary filmmaker and human rights/social justice activist.
Interview: 10.02.15, Guatemala City.

24. Employee at one of Guatemala's national universities; social justice activist.
Interview: 10.02.15, Guatemala City.

25. Feminist lawyer and women's rights activist; Poet and member of a women's art collective in Guatemala.
Interview: 11.02.15, Guatemala City.

26. Journalist for prominent national daily newspaper; director of an organisation dedicated to monitoring press coverage of violence against women in Guatemala.
Interview: 18.02.15, Guatemala City.

27. Human rights and social justice activist; Public Ministry worker and Congressional candidate. Participated in research for the production of the ODHAG Truth Commission Report.
Interview: 19.02.15, Guatemala City.

28. Feminist activist and director of prominent women's rights and social justice organisation.
Interview: 23.02.15, Guatemala City.

29. Photographer and photojournalist; feminist and human rights activist.
Interview: 25.02.15, Guatemala City.

30. Feminist, LGBT activist, and social justice advocate. Involved in development of Law Against Femicide.
Interview: 25.02.15, Guatemala City.

Forums/Meetings/Events

1. Civil society forum on youth participation in politics, with special focus on young women and girls in Guatemala.
24.10.13: Guatemala City.

2. Guatemalan feminist and women's rights organisations alliance meeting on femicide and sexual violence, and breaking the silence. Also attended by United Nations representatives and feminist and indigenous rights activists from Mexico, Brazil, Honduras, and El Salvador.
24.1.14: Guatemala City

3. 'One Billion Rising Against Violence Against Women' demonstration: co-organised by justice branches of the state, women's and feminist organisations, and social justice advocates. Rally held outside the Justice Centre for Crimes of Femicide and Violence Against Women.
14.02.14: Guatemala City.

4. National Human Rights Ombudsman, civil society groups, and national university organised public forum on 2015 national election; covering topics of campaign violence, corruption, elected officials and impunity, and scenarios for potential change. 02.02.15: Guatemala City.

5. Civil society public form on economic inequality and social justice in Guatemala.
04.02.15: Guatemala City.

6. Presentation of a book by a feminist writer and activist, with a discussion panel of feminist activists and journalists discussing gendered violence in Guatemala.
10.02.15: Guatemala City.

7. Photography exhibition: collections covering Guatemala's Genocide Trial and Sepur Zarco Sexual Violence pre-trial testimonials.
19.02.15: Guatemala City.

8. Documentary presentation organised by human rights and social justice organisations, and testimonial witnesses of genocide trial; organised in honour of victims/survivors of Guatemala's genocide and violence; with poetry and testimonial readings. (Film: "Seeds of Memory").
19.02.15: Guatemala City.

9. Documentary film presentation and discussion with filmmakers. (Film: "Grain of Sand: How to Nail a Dictator", covering the lead up to the historic genocide and crimes against humanity trial against former dictator and de-facto head of state Efrain Rios Montt).
29.03.14: London, England.

10. "Guatemala: No Going Back" conference and solidarity event with prominent social movement interlocutors from Guatemala. Organised by transnational solidarity human rights and social justice organisations; hosted at Amnesty International head office.
31.05.14: London, England.

11. Solidarity event supporting protests in Guatemala regarding the 2015 corruption scandal around the Patriot Party government, President Otto Perez Molina, Vice President Roxana Baldetti, and other elected/appointed officials; and calling for electoral reform.
30.05.15: New York City.

Cases Referenced

As discussed in my Methodological Framework, I elected to not reproduce any photographic images that are described and analysed within this thesis (particularly within chapters 5 and 6). In listing the names and other details of these victims (where possible), I aim to interrupt, even if only momentarily, the dominant *visual* and *statistical* regimes of femicide victim representation (Interviewee 3, 21.01.114; Interviewee 7, 23.01.14; Interviewee 17, 06.02.14). The list below also includes the name of the case as it is referred to in the text (for example, "Caso Siekavizza"), or the title of the news article that accompanied the original report of the case of violence.

Again, where the information was available, I include the age of the victim in brackets after her name/case's name. Where relevant, I also disclose whether the media coverage included a facial or body photo ("facial image" or "body image"), and whether the case was popularly referenced within a specific formation, or 'type', of violence (for example: cited as "gang" or "domestic violence" related). Where the status of the case is described as "Unknown", this indicates that the enquiries I made via government websites (including the Public Ministry, Interior Ministry, National Civil Police) produced no further information regarding the status of investigation. Finally, any names followed by an asterisk* indicate that the victim went missing or was killed under an earlier period than the PP-Molina government predominantly contemplated in this thesis.

1. **"Caso Siekavizza": Cristina Siekavizza*** (34)
Cristina was a mother of two children. She has been missing since 7th July 2011 and is presumed dead. Her body is still missing and the investigation is on going. Her husband and prime suspect, Roberto Barreda de León, is in custody but the trial continues to face delays since his November 2013 arrest.

Cited as "domestic violence". Facial images.

Source: (Departemento Prensa Ministerio Publico 2012)

2. **"Caso Sánchez Makepeace": Mitzie Alejandra Sánchez Makepeace** (24)

Mitzie was a mother of one child. Her body was found on 3rd July 2014. Her husband and prime suspect in femicide, Banny Yhans Zambrano Llamas, is awaiting trial. Public Ministry has asked that he face trial in one of the country's Specialised Femicide Courts.

Cited as "domestic violence". Facial images.

Source: (Diario La Hora 2014)

3. **Claudina Isabel Velásquez Paiz*** (19)
Claudina was a law student. Her body was found on 13th August 2005. After poor and ineffective investigation due to failures of due diligence, the case was eventually taken to IACHR by victims' family.

Source: (Sanford 2008)

4. **Rogelia Cruz Martinez*** (26)
Rogelia was an architecture student that (is understood to have) collaborated with the guerilla during the war. She is also known for her status as "Miss Guatemala". Her body was found on 11th January 1968. She was 3 months pregnant.

Source: (Treacy 2001)

5. **"Caso Nuestro Diario": Candeleria López** (31)
Candeleria was a single mother who worked in agriculture, harvesting corn, coffee, and sugarcane. Her body was found on 23rd January 2014. The body of her 8-year-old son was found next to her. She was 8 months pregnant.

Status: Unknown

Body images.

Source: (Nuestro Diario 2014)

6. **"Caso Adela Chacon-Tax": Adela Chacon-Tax*** (27)
Adela was a single mother of 3. She worked at a local bar in Escuintla and assisted her mother and sisters in making and selling *tortillas*. Her body was found in 2007 in a ravine under a bridge. Her ex-boyfriend Ricardo Antonio Merlos Cojolum was convicted of femicide in one of Guatemala's Specialised Femicide Tribunals.

Source: (Justice for My Sister 2012)

7. **"Caso Mindy Rodas": Mindy Rodas*** (23)
Mindy was a single mother of one child. She went missing 24th December 2010; her body was found 25th December 2010 (but unclaimed initially). Her body found on the streets of Zone 1 of Guatemala City. She had been tortured and choked to death. In 2011, Mindy's husband, Edwin Esteban Lopez Bran, was sentenced to 62 years in prison for the initial attack against Mindy (July 2009) in which he mutilated/removed part of her face. The person responsible for killing her is unknown, and there has been no arrest made at the time of writing.

Source: (Hurtado 2011)

8. **"Caso Palala Pocía"**
Kerin Gemima Palala Pocía (13)
Yailin Celeste Palala Pocía (15)

Both Kerin and Yailin were sisters and students. Their bodies were found on 29th April 2014. The Task Force Against Femicide has arrested Ángel Antonio Rodríguez De León (20) and William Giovanni De León Ramírez (25), who are presumed to be members of the gang "Mara 18". Both are awaiting trial with Specialised Femicide Tribunal. No further information available on progress of case. Their bodies were found outside on a dirt hill in San Luis Buena Vista, San Pedro Ayampuc. Both bodies had signs of gunshot wounds.

Cited as "gang-related". Body images.

Source: (Lara 2014)

9. **"Caso Mother and Daughter Motel Room Zone 1"**
Names and ages Unknown
The bodies of the young mother and her daughter were found on 10th February 2015. They were discovered inside a motel room in zone 1 of Guatemala City. Mother was found in the shower, beheaded and partially naked. Daughter was found on the bed, poisoned.

Status: Unknown

Cited as "gang-related". Body images.

Source: (Andres Oliva 2015)

10. **"Caso INCA"**
Karla Daniela Oscal Pérez (17)
Nancy Paola Oscal Pérez (14)
Both Karla and Nancy were sisters and students. Both victims were shot on the streets of zone 1 in Guatemala City, one block away from their school, "Instituto Normal para Señoritas Centroamérica" (INCA). Both died later in hospital from their injuries. Three individuals were originally arrested and charged in connection with the femicides. These young men-- Kevin David Canté Mérida (19), Jesler Estuardo Martínez Hernández (16), and Mario Wilberto Olmino Pablo (19)— are presumed to be members of the gang "Mara Salvatrucha". Kevin Davis Canté Mérida y Mynor Alejandro Rodríguez Pablo have now been formally convicted by the Public Ministry and sentenced to serve 52 and 62 years in prison, respectively. The third accused, Jesler Estuardo Martínez Hernández, was found dead in his cell days after his arrest and thus never faced trial.

Cited as "gang-related". Facial and body images.

Source: (Ministerio Público 2015)

11. **"Violence leaves three women dead"** (3 total victims)
Case focus is on the first two victims cited in the report (**Names unknown**)
They were between the ages of 25-30. Unknown when they went missing. Bodies found on 19th January 2014.

Status: Unknown

Cited as "sex workers". Body images.

Third victim cited in this report: **Gladys Idalma Pineda Castillo** (59). Body found on 19th January 2014.

Source: (Marroquin 2014)

12. **"Remains of females left in Mixco"** (8 total victims)
Case focus is on the first two victims cited in the report (**Names unknown**). Unknown when they went missing. Bodies found on 7th November 2013 on the streets of Zone 2, Mixco with signs of being gagged and strangled. Their bodies were wrapped in curtains.

Status: Unknown

Cited as "gang-related". Body images.

Other victims cited in this report:

Maria Elena Sandoval (33)

Gloria Ruiz Sandoval (17)

Two victims (names and ages unknown). Bodies were found tortured, one beheaded in zone 10, Mixco.

One victim (name and age unknown). Body found in a bag in zone 2, Mixco.

Jose Camey Gregorio (47), Taxi driver.

Source: (Lara 2013)

13. **"January ends with 488 dead"** (4 total victims)

Jennifer Camey
(Age unknown. Killed 14 January 2015 in San Ignacio, Mixco)

Ana Luz Barrera (30 years. 6 months pregnant. Killed 21st January 2015 in zone 12, Villa Nueva. Gunshots killed victim)

Leticia Donis (34 years. 9 months pregnant. Killed 21st January 2015 in zone 6, El Milagro, Mixco. Gunshots killed victim.

Luisa Fernanda Ramos Gudiel (14 years. Killed in act framed as "gang violence". Body was tortured/overkilled/dismembered)

Bodies of victims were all found in public sites across the city.

Status: Unknown

Body images.

Source: (Alvaro et al. 2015)

14. "Woman suffocated in room in zona 1": Sara Maritza Villagran Garcia (26)
Body discovered 2nd February 2015 inside a room in zone 1 of Guatemala City, wrapped in a sheet. Signs of having been choked, possible indication of sexual violence.

Status: Unknown

Cited as a "sex worker". Body image.

Source: (Patzan 2015a)

15. "Two dead women in sacks found": 2 victims, names unknown (between 25-30)

Unknown when they went missing. Bodies found on 8th July 2015. Bodies found on the streets of zone 1 of Mixco, inside two bags.

Status: Unknown

Body images.

Source: (Sanchez and Vasquez 2015)

16. "Sex worker killed": Barbara (last name unknown) (20)

Barbara had 2 children. Her body was found in a hotel room in zone 11 of Guatemala City on 5th May 2015.

Status: Unknown

Cited as a "sex worker". Body image.

Source: (Lara and Patzan 2015)

17. "Woman's body found in Coban": Name unknown (26)

Body found on roadside by a little girl in Tontem, Coban on 25th August 2014. Body had signs of blows to it.

Status: Unknown

Body image.

Source: (Sam 2014)

18. **"The body of a woman was found Tuesday in a sand bank of the Motagua river": Name unknown (approximately 20 years old)**

Unknown when victim went missing. Body was found in a river in Cayua, Morales, Izabal. Sings of rape and torture, on 9th July 2013.

Status: Unknown

Source: (Perdomo 2013)

19. **"Female assassinated in zone 11": Maria Yamileth Perez Arita (30)**
Maria was a Hondurean national living in Guatemala. Body was found on 7th July 2014 in the entrance of a hotel in zone 11 of Guatemala City. Gunshot wounds cited as cause of death.

Status: Unknown

Cited as "sex worker". Body image.

Source: (Noticias Nacionales 2014)

20. **"Dismembered woman found": Name and age unknown.**
The victims' body was found in a ravine in zone 6 of Mixco, with signs of overkill, dismemberment. Unknown when she went missing, but her body was found on the 19th March 2015.

Status: Unknown

Cited as "gang-related". Body image.

Source: (Noticias Nacionales 2015)

Information Sheet

Department of Geography, Environment and Development Studies
BIRKBECK
University of London
Malet Street,
London WC1E 7HX
020 7631 6000

Title of Study: *(Re)reading the Boundaries and Bodies of Femicide: Exploring Articulations within the Discursive Economy of Gendered Violence in 'Post War' Guatemala*

Name of researcher: Lorena Fuentes

Email: l.fuentes@mail.bbk.ac.uk

The study is being done as part of my PhD degree in the Department of Development Studies at Birkbeck, University of London. The study has received ethical approval.

This study seeks to explore discourses of gendered violence, and femicide in particular, in post war Guatemala. In particular, this study hopes to direct analytical attention to the different practices that generate meanings in relation to the social problem of gendered and femicidal violence by examining representations across media domains, government policies, and different civil society and social justice movements.

You are free to stop the interview and withdraw at any time.

A code will be attached to your data so it remains anonymous.

The analysis of our interview will be written up in a report of the study for my degree. You will not be identified in the write up or any publication that might ensue unless you have explicitly requested to be identified for the purposes of the study.

The study is supervised by Jasmine Gideon who may be contacted at the above address and telephone number.

Informed Consent

Title of Study: *(Re)reading the Boundaries and Bodies of Femicide: Exploring Articulations within the Discursive Economy of Gendered Violence in 'Post War' Guatemala*

Name of researcher: Lorena Fuentes

Email: l.fuentes@mail.bbk.ac.uk

I have been informed about the nature of this study and willingly consent to take part in it.

I understand that the content of the interview will be kept confidential, except in cases where I have explicitly requested to have my name used for the purposes of this study.

I understand that I may withdraw from the study at any time.

I am over 16 years of age.

Name

_____

Signed

_____

Date

_____

There should be two signed copies, one for participant, one for researcher.

Acronyms

ACUNS: Academic Council on the United Nations System
CC: Constitutional Court of Guatemala
CEH: Guatemalan Commission for Historical Clarification
CICIG: International Commission Against Impunity in Guatemala
DEMI: Indigenous Women's Defense Institute
FCN: National Convergence Front Party
IADB: Inter-American Development Bank
LAF: Law Against Femicide
ODHAG: Human Rights Office of the Guatemalan Archdiocese
OSJI: Open Society Justice Initiative
NAFTA: North America Free Trade Agreement
NSD: National Security Doctrine
PAPNT: Plan of the Alliance for Prosperity in the Northern Triangle
PNC: National Civil Police
PP: Patriot Party
PPO: Public Prosecutors Office of Guatemala
REMHI: Recuperation of Historical Memory Project
SEPREM: Presidential Women's Secretariat
SEPAZ: Secretariat of Peace
TC: Truth Commission
UN: United Nations
URNG: Guatemalan National Revolutionary Union
VCM: violence against women / *violencia contra la mujer*
VIF: domestic, interfamilial, or *violencia intrafamiliar* framework
WB: World Bank