



Testimonies / “4 Piezas Acusmáticas por los Derechos Humanos”

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4. “Primeros encuentros con la vida y con la muerte (Leopoldo Muñoz)” - 13:22

“First encounters with life and death (Leopoldo Muñoz)”

First encounters with Life and Death. I am going to be at a sweat lodge, like beside a water bed, and in this place of land and nature I will see their faces again.

My name is Leopoldo Muñoz de la Parra. I'm a nursery teacher. Five teachers from AGECH (Asociación Gremial de Educadores de Chile) [Chilean Educators Guild]. had been kidnapped. And Manuel Guerrero, a teacher and head of AGECH himself, and Jorge Pavez, were informed of that, and it was known that these people could be in prison or some unknown place. At that time, during 1980, 1985, secret jails were a common thing to have. I was also part of AGECH, I was also a head there, and we were friends and colleagues with Manuel Guerrero, we worked at the same school. And on Friday, at 8:15 a. m., Manuel called me to tell me what had happened on thursday, and that he wanted me to go with him to submit an application for *amparo* for these “teaches” together. And I go walking and, from half a square distance, I see José Manuel Parada, at the school doors, leaving her daughter, Javiera, there, and chatting with Manuel Guerrero, too. And I keep coming towards them and, way behind them, two people, two men, came running really fast. And José Manuel just didn't realized that, for he was talking, had just left Javiera in, and headed towards his car. Manuel had just came in, and suddenly one of the guys running rushes into the school, and the other one, still on his run, jumps over José Manuel's back, throwing him on to the floor. And I try, I try to stop this thing that becomes a knotting of hands and punches.

We're under La Moneda, at its Centro Cultural. It was more than 30 years ago today that a coup d'état took place right upstairs. Modified spaces tend to enclose memory, to hide it. This is a cultural center that keeps no record of what happened in 1973 whatsoever. Over this place, too, for many years, at the median strip, in front of here, La Moneda, widows walked claiming for justice after three chileans slay. Probably most of these kids, now 10, 11, 12, 13 or 14 years old, know nothing about this. Maybe that's what makes necessary this memory to be revived.

I try to grab the guy's clothes in order to set José Manuel free, I yell at him to set him free, and I don't realize that a car was coming over, because I just heard the screeching brakes, the closing of the door by the person who stepped up. In this pushing and pulling and punches and everything, he tells to shoot me. And all this thing happened in seconds, and we were almost all together, like half a meter, a meter away, and this guy, the one coming out of the car, who, after nine years we finally knew he was a Carabineros captain, Patricio Zamora, shot me at the stomach. And there I stayed, sitting on the ground, not losing consciousness, and watching everything going on, them taking José Manuel and throwing him inside the car that just arrived, and pointing Manuel with a gun, his face covered, because they took his clothes upside down. And I'm there, sat down, I realize I'm bleeding, and the people that came in, they take Manuel out, they take José with them and leave the place in the car. And after that, I'm not sure if there were minutes or seconds, I lose consciousness. And they take me to Clínica Las Lilas, which was near the place. At first they didn't want to assist me, but finally the manager agrees, I'm

admitted, they take me on a gurney, and they explain to me... they take me into a block, and the nurse says I have a wound in my stomach and that they're taking me for surgery. Then I lose consciousness and wake up somewhere else...

The loss is really big, and maybe citizens aren't able to grasp that reaching ease in life, or in part of it, implies the highest costs. Many years went by in order to achieve realms for peace and quiet, after lots of pain and loss. And maybe that's what our people and our country are hiding, this suffering. It's sort of secured and kept in every family, in every child.

And then they explain to me that I was operated early, but the results are not ok, because I'm still bleeding, so they're going to operate again. And I stay like that for a while. I start losing a little sense of time, but not the sense of what has been going on at the time. It's absolutely clear to me that Manuel and José Manuel have been kidnapped. It's absolutely clear to me the guy who shot me, I can clearly remember their faces...

As time went on, after a month or a couple of months, I learn, they told me that dead people have been found. And then I learned that I lost certain amount of blood, and one of my legs has altered its movement, because, supposedly, I have bullets splinters inside that clashed the pelvis. And lots of things that started happening at that time, during the year of March 1985. Finally, after nine or ten years, thanks to another judge in charge of the case, Milton Juica, it is possible to shed light and finally locate all those generals involved in this, as well as the rank of all the Carabineros who were members of an organism called DICOMCAR. And, in this case, masterminds never replied, the ones serving term in jail ended up being the task force. And they appeal - because they were not accused of terrorist acts, understanding these were State-sponsored terrorist practices, for terms on terrorist activities are extremely high -, so in the end they are found guilty of petty crimes, just like mere delinquents.