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Affect, Neoliberalism and Forgiveness in Alonso Cueto's 'Redención' Trilogy

Anthony Joseph Pearce

A thesis submitted to the faculty of
Brigham Young University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts

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ABSTRACT

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In the aftermath of the bloody twenty-year internal conflict in Peru, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (*Comisión de la Verdad y Reconciliación*, or CVR) documented the massive human rights violations by Sendero Luminoso and the Peruvian state. The CVR contextualized these abuses by producing a broad historical narrative which has fomented the creation of a new discourse in Peruvian cultural production. This thesis is concerned with how the CVR and the post-conflict search for reconciliation have influenced contemporary Peruvian literature. This paper will focus on the 'Redención' trilogy by novelist Alonso Cueto. The three novels explore notions of forgiveness and reconciliation between perpetrators and victims of the conflict. Beginning with *La hora azul* (2005), the first chapter investigates the reliance on neoliberal reconciliation logic in the CVR (monetary reparations, etc.) as well as the gestures towards affective exchanges. It also explores the ways in which *La hora azul* stages these reliances within restitution discourse in Peru. In the second chapter, I examine *La pasajera* (2015) and further explore the ways in which reconciliation is tied to both affect and neoliberal logic. This leads to a discussion on how affect and the free-market work together, rather than as competing systems of exchange and how Cueto emphasizes the proximity of the victim and the perpetrator in the novel. Finally, I conclude by analyzing *La viajera del viento* (2016). This chapter continues to focus on the proximity of the victim and the perpetrator and how this ethically uncomfortable discourse may actually make way for new modes of forgiveness between victims and perpetrators.

Keywords: Alonso Cueto, affect, neoliberalism, forgiveness, restorative justice, Peruvian internal conflict

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Introduction: Redemption and Recognition

The trilogy of “Redención” novels by Peruvian author Alonso Cueto released between 2005 and 2016 examines post-conflict society in Peru. Cueto observed in an interview with the Peruvian newspaper *La República* how his novels do not tell “la historia de una reconciliación total...Hay un reconocimiento pero no una reconciliación” (“Alonso Cueto: ‘Los peruanos...’”). This distinction is an important one for the reader of the “Redención” trilogy. The novels present victims and perpetrators of Peru’s twenty-year internal conflict encountering each other, often by chance. These encounters often engender gestures towards restitution and forgiveness on the part of the perpetrator. These gestures are generally rebuffed and reconciliation, as Cueto notes, is repeatedly eschewed. Cueto, however, does not only wish to show us the fruitless efforts of reaching for reconciliation. The trilogy explores not only the flaws of forgiveness, but also attempts to expand our definitions of forgiveness and redemption. As Cueto asserts, there is recognition, rather than reconciliation.

Cueto was born in Lima in 1954. While he travelled abroad with his family when he was young, and returned to Lima and received a degree in Literature from the Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú (PUCP). He later received a doctoral degree from the University of Texas-Austin, writing his dissertation on the short fiction of Juan Carlos Onetti. His first novel, *El tigre blanco* (1985), won the prestigious Premio Wiracocha and *La hora azul* (2005) won the Premio Herralde de Novela. *La hora azul* inaugurates the “Redención” trilogy, but it is not the first novel to reflect on the consequences of the internal conflict. *Grandes miradas* (2003) uses the final days of the Fujimori regime and the corruption scandals of Vladimiro Montesinos, head of the *Servicio de Inteligencia Nacional del Perú* as set piece to explore the nature of corruption and

surveillance within the Fujimori regime. The novel ends with the collapse of the regime, thereby initiating the end of the internal conflict.

The internal conflict began just as Peru was embarking on a return to democracy. On May 17th, 1980, the day before Peru would appoint its first democratically elected president in twelve years, Shining Path inaugurated its “people’s war” by burning the ballot boxes in a small town in Ayacucho (Gorriti 17). Led by university professor turned revolutionary Abimael Guzmán, Shining Path embarked on a Maoist-inspired campaign of terror that would kill, harm, or displace thousands of the people it claimed to be fighting for. The military and political response to the crisis under the three democratically elected presidencies of Fernando Belaúnde Terry, Alan García and Alberto Fujimori, became a violent counterpart to the extremism of the Maoist rebel group. The indigenous populations of the Peruvian highlands bore the brunt of the violence from both sides and struggled to protect themselves over the course of twenty years from rape, kidnapping, murder, forced sterilizations and other human rights violations. After the capture of Guzmán in 1992 and end of the Fujimori regime eight years later due to a corruption scandal, the internal conflict came to an end.

The internal conflict may have ended in 2000, but its effects are still visible to this day. For many it remains one of the most contentious subjects within Peruvian political discourse. Many of the most public politicians that followed Fujimori have defended their connections to the internal conflict. Keiko Fujimori, the daughter of Alberto Fujimori and de facto First Lady for much of his presidency, ran for president and lost in both in 2011 and 2016. She experienced both enthusiastic support from many who also supported her father and hostile opposition from those who blamed her father for many of the human rights abuses and corruption of his administration. In addition, presidents Alan García and Ollanta Humala have both been criticized

for their connections to human rights abuses during the internal conflict. Just last year, president Pedro Pablo Kuczynski issued a pardon to the imprisoned Alberto Fujimori and his release from prison sparked outrage from much of the population. It also inspired dialogue around the potential release of terrorists arrested during the internal conflict, including Abimael Guzmán.

In addition to the perpetrators of human rights abuses, the debate surrounding the internal conflict in Peru has also centered on what to do with the many surviving victims. Between 2001 and 2003 the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (*Comisión de la Verdad y Reconciliación*) investigated the many atrocities of the internal conflict and published recommendations on what should be done to move towards reconciliation. The novels of the “Redención” trilogy are three of several contemporary Peruvian narratives that interact with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. The historical narrative created by the commission has created a new paradigm with which subsequent literature must engage. The “Redención” trilogy stages the interplay between affect and neoliberal models of restitution or reconciliation that are at work in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s final report and recommendations. Both seem to treat affect as a form of restitution that can perhaps supplement these neoliberal models.

Due to affect’s broad use in the humanities and social sciences, it can often be a nebulous term. While affect theory can attribute its genesis to several different philosophers and theorists such as Baruch Spinoza, much of contemporary affect theory is centered on the work of French philosopher Gilles Deleuze (1925-1995). Critic Jon Beasley-Murray interprets Deleuze’s concept of affect through contemporary theorists like Brian Massumi, describing affect as marking “the passage whereby one body *becomes* another body, either joyfully or sorrowfully; affect always takes place *between* bodies, at the mobile threshold between affective states as bodies either coalesce or disintegrate, as they become other to themselves” (Beasley-Murray 128). These

affective exchanges that take place between bodies are at the center of much of the “Redención” trilogy. Many of the interactions between victim and perpetrator forego rational discourse and exchange and instead focus on “the change, or variation, that occurs when bodies collide, or come into contact” (Colman 11).

Affect theory is often set up in contrast to what is considered the traditional Cartesian cogito. Rather than a mind having dominion over the body, affect causes us to consider the ways in which the mind is subject to control of the body. Opposition to Cartesian rationality does not seemingly engender a strong connection between affect and free-market capitalism, which is often viewed as a hallmark of rational thought. However, the analysis of these novels will show that they are very much connected, especially in the context of post-conflict reconciliation efforts. Deleuze’s philosophy is in fact was very much concerned with capitalism. Critic Paul Patton has noted that Deleuze himself believed that “any philosophy worthy of being called political must take account of the nature and evolution of capitalism” (6). Chapters 1 and 2 will be especially focused on the interactions between affect and neoliberalism.

Between 1978 and 1979, Michel Foucault delivered a series of addresses on neoliberalism. Foucault describes how neoliberalism, extends “the economic model of supply and demand and of investment-costs-profit so as to make it a model of social relations and of existence itself” (242). Neoliberalism “generalizes” the free market throughout social systems and organizations not normally governed by monetary exchanges (243). This “generalization” results in “a principle of decipherment of social relationships and individual behavior” (243). In other words, our social relations become governed and analyzed by a free market economic logic.

The historical backdrop of this thesis will be the administrations of the internal conflict as well as those of the post-conflict era through the Humala administration (2011-2016) and how they have managed the effects of the internal conflict while also prioritizing the free market. Much of the literature on the reconciliation process focuses on the administrations through Humala and little has been written about Pedro Pablo Kuczynski's responses to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's recommendations or about Martín Vizcarra's new administration. There are hopes that he will be able to bridge divides in Peruvian society from a more non-partisan viewpoint. It is still unclear how Vizcarra will handle concerns over the stagnated reconciliation process in Peru. While there may be some hope, if past administrations offer us any indication of the future, Vizcarra may simply continue to offer platitudes over any real gestures towards advancing reconciliation.

During the second decade of the internal conflict, neoliberalism became increasingly important. In *El neoliberalismo a la peruana*, Peruvian economic theorist Efraín Gonzales de Olarte details how neoliberalism began taking shape in Peru during the internal conflict. In August of 1990, Alberto Fujimori's government began putting in place economic reforms meant to stabilize the record levels of inflation and a flailing economy (41). These reforms (termed *Fujishock*) were considered a radical departure at the time. The economic reforms included deregulation of markets, privatization and fiscal reforms (40-59). During the same time period, Fujimori's government also became increasingly authoritarian and instituted the *autogolpe*, in which he suspended the constitution, dissolved congress and ruled with absolute power. After the *autogolpe*, Fujimori's administration created the 1993 constitution (which continues as Peru's current constitution). The 1993 constitution reflects the radical neoliberalism of his administration. It expresses a formal commitment to promote free enterprise, subjects both

national and foreign investments to the same conditions (which ultimately prioritizes foreign investors and leads to a deterritorialized global economic system) and regards private property as inviolable. According to critics William Avilés and Yolima Rey Rosas, the 1993 constitution “institutionalized a market orientation for Peru’s political economy” and “cemented the form in which the state, market, and society would be articulated” (166-7). Peru’s neoliberalism of the second decade of the internal conflict created a framework within which the restorative justice measures of the following decade would be allocated.

While Peru’s embrace of neoliberalism forms part of a global trend towards the free market, Gonzales de Olarte has written about just how radical and unique Peru’s economic system was in the 1990s:

El ajuste estructural peruano es un caso, quizás único en América Latina, de combinación de radicalismo neoliberal en sus medidas de estabilización y reformas económicas, con un régimen político crecientemente autoritario. Esta combinación ha permitido una rápida recuperación productiva, la reinsertión en el mundo financiero internacional y una reducción de la inflación, pero a costa de menor empleo, persistencia de la desigualdad distributiva y de la pobreza. Este desbalance entre eficiencia y equidad es el principal problema del ajuste estructural peruano y también de otros países, pues no da bases para entrar en el círculo virtuoso del desarrollo con democracia. (121)

The Fujimori administration institutionalized the free market in Peru while also weakening democratic institutions and increasing authoritarianism.

Peru’s embrace of neoliberalism did not end with the internal conflict and Fujimori’s disgraced exit from the presidency. On the contrary, the Peruvian state seems to have invested

further in the promises of neoliberalism as 2006's free trade agreement with the United States has shown. The Humala administration, once expected to inaugurate a left turn in Peru, has been one of the most active presidencies since Fujimori in promoting neoliberalism. Avilés and Rosas argue that "Humala's government has continued and deepened a political and economic regime that has been in place in Peru since 1990, one that has prioritized market capitalism and free trade while applying repressive measures against societal opposition to this agenda" (163). This is particularly surprising considering Humala's anti-trade rhetoric during his 2006 presidential campaign.

Avilés and Rosas show that "Humala not only reversed long-held positions but actually deepened and accelerated Peru's integration into global capitalism" (164). They claim that his change has come as a result of the political system of Peru, what they term a low-intensity democracy. They define low-intensity democracies as "procedural democracies" that permit more individual liberties and political opposition than military regimes of the last century but continue to use repressive tactics in order to maintain order (164). Low-intensity democracies also make transnational capital a priority in their economies. Criticisms of Humala have abounded for his use of the military and police to quell protests over mining in the highly publicized Conga mine fiasco. While he famously stated that water was more important than gold in his 2011 campaign, his policies revealed a different agenda. Peru's low-intensity democracy has made more room for foreign investment and international trade agreements (like the Trans-Pacific Partnership, which was pursued by Humala). It is within this environment of foreign investment, low-intensity democracy and the absence of state mediation in restorative justice that the "Redención" trilogy stages the interaction between affect and neoliberalism.

Cueto is cognizant of the relation between the internal conflict and the reaches of Peruvian neoliberalism. In his collection of short essays on Peruvian society, *Valses, rajes y cortejos* (2005), Cueto explains that the two most notorious phenomena of the past thirty years in Peru are the neoliberal practices of an ever-growing economy and the explosion of terrorism (104). He explains that both of these phenomena “están ligados a la presencia de actores nuevos en los escenarios del poder” (104). As explained earlier, one of the primary concerns of many politicians in the post-conflict era revolves around the effects of the internal conflict and the expanding Peruvian economy. While Cueto does not necessarily advocate for a left turn in Peru, he does acknowledge the important connections of an expanding neoliberal market economy and the barbaric acts of the internal conflict, not only during the period of conflict, but after as well. His “Redención” trilogy seems particularly interested in scrutinizing the connections of the market to the reconciliation process.

My thesis is divided into three chapters, one for each novel in the “Redención” trilogy. The first chapter will examine *La hora azul* (2005), the most lauded and studied of the three novels. The chapter will focus on the historical narrative inaugurated by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and how its recommendations are staged in the novel. These recommendations are often seemingly at odds (neoliberal restitution and affective exchanges). The novel frames these oppositions in a personal, intimate, and comprehensible way through the interactions of the son of a *militar*, guilty of committing atrocities, and one of his victims. The second chapter will focus on *La pasajera* (2015), the shortest novel of the three. The chapter will analyze the connections between neoliberalism and affect and how they reveal difficult ethical quandaries in the novel. Again, this novel looks at these important aspects of post-conflict Peru through the interactions of a victim and a perpetrator. The last chapter will explore *La viajera del*

viento (2016), the most recent novel of the three, and how the ethical complications initially presented in the first two novels make space for alternate modes of forgiveness, while navigating the complicated intersections of affect and neoliberalism.

By exploring the connections between affect, neoliberalism, and modes of forgiveness in the “Redención” trilogy, Cueto poses important questions about how to move forward both personally and as a community after the internal conflict. The novels question not only the ability to achieve justice and reconciliation, but what that would conceivably look like. Is justice achieved through market-inspired reparations? Or through affective exchanges between victim and perpetrator? The novels do not necessarily advocate for one or the other, but they do emphasize the difficulties and complexities of navigating both affect and the free market in the reconciliation process. More importantly, Cueto does seem to advocate and rupture in how we conceive of the victim/perpetrator binary. In both *La pasajera* and *La viajera del viento* he upsets this relationship in unexpected ways. The complicated conception of the victim and perpetrator in both these novels is a way to expand our conception of forgiveness and reconciliation and to open up Peruvian society to new modes of reconciliation.

Chapter 1: Narrating Restitution after the CVR in *La hora azul*

“Who will wipe this blood off us? What water is there for us to clean ourselves? What festivals of atonement, what sacred games shall we have to invent?”

—Friedrich Nietzsche

In the aftermath of the bloody twenty-year internal conflict in Peru and the end of the Fujimori regime, Interim President Valentín Paniagua approved the creation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (*Comisión de la Verdad y Reconciliación*, or CVR). Over the course of two years, the CVR documented the violations and abuses of both terrorist organizations and the state and created recommendations for the state on how to move forward as a nation after the crisis. The CVR contextualized these abuses by producing a broad historical narrative that points to the conflict as a result of sociocultural divisions rooted in centuries of oppression of indigenous peoples in Peru (Bakiner 195). In her work on the CVR, critic Cynthia E. Milton notes that “truth commissions are both the *product* of historical processes and the *sites of production* of historical sources about the past” (Milton 4). The role of a truth commission is not only to uncover the evidence of massive human rights violations, but also to create historical narratives with which we can understand the past.

This broad historical narrative formed by the CVR has fomented the creation of a new discourse in Peruvian cultural production. Many critics have discussed the existence of a post-CVR Peruvian narrative. In the years preceding the CVR, most narratives dealing with the internal conflict in Peru focused on the violence perpetrated by Sendero Luminoso and other terrorist organizations (Dickson). However, the CVR has “sparked a shift in the representation of violence in Peruvian narrative” (Chauca 67). The CVR attributed approximately thirty percent of

the number of deaths during the conflict to the Peruvian government and documented a long list of abuses by the three democratically elected presidents in power during the twenty-year period (Bakiner 130). As a result, cultural production since the CVR has “taken up the theme of government crimes, as well as those committed by Sendero, in a way that explicitly adopts the paradigm of traumatization on which the CVR partially depended” (Dickson 64). There is a correlation in the way that government crimes are portrayed in the CVR and the representation of government crimes in post-CVR narratives.

While these critics and others have noted the ways in which the CVR has created new representations of the government’s involvement in the internal conflict in Peruvian literature, there has been no discussion on the other ways in which the CVR has influenced narratives on the internal conflict. One of the unintentional characteristics of the CVR (and possibly of most truth commissions) is the way in which the CVR inconspicuously expunges political and cultural elites of their guilt. A small group of coastal intellectuals were given extraordinary power as they formulated a historical narrative and made recommendations for reconciliation. As spectators of the crisis, rather than victims or perpetrators, the guilt they felt and feel is uniquely tied to their roles as witnesses. The decisions made in the CVR alleviated them of the guilt felt by spectators of the crisis who observed the conflict from the relative safety of Lima.

The second aspect of the CVR which has influenced restitution narratives in Peru is the tendency to value affective experiences as a mode of restitution. This is seen in the photographic exhibit *Yuyanapaq - Para recordar* which was commissioned for the Museum of the Nation in Lima. The exhibit features a wide range of photographs documenting the complexities of the crisis. The photographic exhibition also speaks to the unique role of spectator and witness within the crisis. Gestures towards affect is also seen in the public hearings in which victims were given

the opportunity to share testimonials with observers. These affective experiences stand in stark contrast with the neoliberal logic of monetary reparations and institutional reforms recommended by the commission.

This chapter is concerned with how overlooked aspects of the CVR have influenced post-CVR discourse in restitution narratives. The CVR's alleviation of guilt and the use of affective experiences to look toward restitution has been insufficiently examined in the analysis of post-crisis Peruvian literature. This analysis will focus on one of the most well-known post CVR texts, *La hora azul* (2005) by novelist Alonso Cueto. The CVR's use of affective exchanges show the necessity of affect in discussing restitution. There is an emphasis on affect in the CVR and *La hora azul* because logic, reason and even language do not have the capacity to explain what has happened after massive human rights violations. As Idelbar Avelar points out in *The Untimely Present*, "the survivor's crisis of witnessing...emerge[s] from the abyss between the irreducible imperative to tell and the distressing perception that language cannot fully convey that experience" (Avelar 210). Language and logic cannot fully explain or make up for what has happened in these situations. When the neoliberal logic of transparency and commodification breaks down, affect is left to bridge the gap.

Towards the end of his life, Jacques Derrida wrote more and more about certain "possible-impossible aporias." Derrida claimed that certain concepts like forgiveness and mourning are plagued by paradoxes that illustrate their impossibility. The conditions that make these concepts like forgiveness possible are the same conditions that make them impossible. With the concept of forgiveness, Derrida questions how "an act of forgiveness worthy of its name, if there ever is such a thing, must forgive the unforgivable, and without condition?" (39). How can something be forgiven if it is quite literally unforgivable?

La hora azul dramatizes these aporias and the attempts by the CVR to foment reconciliation. By presenting these tensions, the internal logic of affect and restitution is made visible. While affect has no ability to resolve the paradoxes of reconciliation, it provides an outlet in the realm of the non-representable. It highlights the shortcomings of formal reconciliation processes. *La hora azul* can thus be interpreted as a response to the efforts put forth by the CVR. It explores the tensions between the neoliberal processes of reconciliation and the non-rational exchanges that take place between victim and perpetrator.

In *La hora azul*, the novel's protagonist, Adrián, is a high-powered attorney from Lima who slowly discovers that his estranged father was a part of the Peruvian military's campaign of rape and torture in Ayacucho in the 1980s. While coming to terms with this he hears a rumor that his father fell in love with one of his prisoners, but that she escaped. The protagonist then becomes determined to find the woman and find out what happened to her. His obsession is fueled by photographs that he has of her when she was kept prisoner by his father. After searching he is able to find the woman, Miriam, and begins meeting regularly with her. His weekly meetings with Miriam lead to an affair that damages his relation with his family and jeopardizes his career. Miriam eventually dies from a mysterious illness (although there are strong hints that it was suicide) and Adrián begins looking after Miriam's son, who may well be his half-brother. Matthew Bush has pointed out that in *La hora azul*, the affective exchanges between Miriam and Adrián, which often border on the melodramatic, offer "una forma particularmente aguda de analizar momentos complejos de conflicto social ya que representa ramificaciones de procesos históricos abstractos en un nivel más íntimo y personal" (16). *La hora azul* gives readers a chance to understand the complex history of the internal conflict through a personal, family-driven drama based on affective exchanges. These affective

exchanges offer a more personal evaluation of the massive human rights violations during the armed internal conflict.

With the end of the Fujimori regime in 2000, civil society activists saw their opportunity to advocate for a truth commission. They saw a need to uncover what both state and terrorist parties were responsible for during the internal conflict. The Peruvian truth commission was formed in 2001 and published its final report in 2003. After the publication of its final report, the CVR was praised for its comprehensive historical truth narrative. As noted by political scientist Onur Bakiner in his study *Truth Commissions: Memory, Power, and Legitimacy*, the CVR was truly “unmatched among truth commissions” and the wide-ranging list of recommendations elicited by the commission was exceptional (Bakiner 199). These recommendations included monetary reparations for the victims, changes to the political system, and the creation of a photographic exhibit to remember the victims and the crisis in the Museum of the Nation.

However, the hope in what a truth commission would be capable of was perhaps overestimated. Truth commissions can never fully atone for the wrongs perpetrated during massive human rights crises. Bakiner notes later that:

Governments may apologize for past abuses to rectify historical injustice; and victims receive material and symbolic reparations...all these measures address but a fraction of all political violence and human rights violations, and the forces of impunity and amnesia still prevail in most cases, but, arguably, individual and civil society advocacy in the wake of atrocities elicits official responses at a greater rate than any other period in human history. (Bakiner 2)

Truth and reconciliation commissions are not a cure-all for massive human rights violations. They are simply not capable of returning what has been lost. However, as Bakiner states, we must remain hopeful in the mere fact that these official responses are taking place at all.

Another critique of truth commissions is the role they play in legitimizing the neoliberal state. As Jon Beasley-Murray states “neoliberalism demands that civil society provide ever more legitimation ever more immediately and directly. The state and civil society should be completely transparent to each other. Transparency is neoliberalism’s key value, going hand in hand with governance” (107). The fetishization of transparency leads to a false confidence in the state and in its ability to uncover its past crimes. If the public knows what has happened, if the state is forthcoming with what it has done, there is a tendency for cultural amnesia to set in, to forget about the massive human rights violations and move on.

The CVR has also garnered criticism for the homogeneity of its commissioners. Soon after the announcement of the CVR’s formation, Salomón Lerner Febres was named head commissioner. Salomón Lerner Febres was a moral philosophy professor at the Pontificia Universidad Católica in Lima. He reportedly saw in the commission “the task of selfless devotion to the people, deriving from Levinas’s ethics of the Other” (Bakiner 123). Apart from Lerner, the commission was made up of sociologists, a political analyst and an anthropologist. Few of the commissioners had had any experience in Ayacucho or other provinces in the highlands affected by the crisis and all of them were from Lima or the coastal region. While the ideals of the commissioners may have been high and they may have sought to represent the victims of the crisis, the socio-economic isolation of the commissioners has been a target of critics.

Fujimoristas have perhaps rightly criticized the commission for singling out Fujimori as the only state actor guilty of “criminal” activity, while ascribing only political culpability to presidents Fernando Belaúnde and Alan García (Bakiner 137). Human rights groups and indigenous activists have criticized it for overlooking the massive campaign of forced sterilizations in rural under the Fujimori regime (Getgen), the lack of indigenous commissioners on the CVR, the “blind paternalism” of the commission and the promotion of “innocent victimhood”, among other things (Bakiner 201, 203). One fault that has not been of the commission’s making is the failure of the Peruvian state to implement many of the recommendations made by the commission.

While truth commissions undergo necessary work to uncover forensic and testimonial evidence of atrocities and create helpful historical narratives, they can become little more than an emotional release and acknowledgement of what happened during a crisis. The CVR’s exclusion of indigenous people (or anyone outside of a small circle of urban elites) creates a problematic issue of representation and oftentimes adopts a highly paternalistic tone. The characterization of the victims of the crisis strips them of their “political agency” (Bakiner 199). They are described as being trapped between state and terrorist violence without recourse. They become desubjectified beings without political or social consciousness. Without discrediting the good that the commission has done, it is necessary to criticize the narrow view with which they approach the crisis as well as the “cathartic” aspect of the commission. The question becomes: for whom was the commission created, the urban elite spectators or the victims? Does the CVR attempt to remove culpability from those onlookers who did not or could not do anything to stop the violence? Does it remove the culpability from those who have benefitted from Peru’s legacy of

systemic racism and economic disparity? Acknowledgement is not restitution. A truth commission does not wipe away complicity.

Perhaps there is some acknowledgement of the limitations of the CVR project in the commission's gestures towards the realm of affect. These gestures can be seen in the testimonials offered by victims of the crisis. These testimonies were given in public hearings reminiscent of the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission (Bakiner 129). These public hearings both literally and symbolically gave a voice to the victims of the crisis. It created an environment in which spectators could be affected. Restitution here is symbolic and seeks to contextualize the crisis in a personalized sphere of experience.

Another gesture towards the realm of affect may be found in the photography exhibit, *Yuyanapaq-Para recordar: Relato visual del conflicto armado interno en el Perú, 1980-2000*. The exhibit was commissioned by the CVR and is currently on display in the Museum of the Nation in Lima. The exhibit features photographs from the twenty years of the internal conflict. The photographs feature images of funerals, military personnel, burning villages, murdered villagers, etc. According to the online collection of photographs from the exhibit, the purpose is to “informar y socializar la historia de las últimas décadas del siglo XX” (IDEHPUCP). However, the content of the exhibit is only capable of providing a minimal historical sketch of the conflict. The main objective seems to be to create affective exchanges as spectators or witnesses navigate modes of restitution. There is seemingly an acknowledgment by the CVR that affect and affective exchanges may be as important as other recommended forms of restitution, for victims as well as for spectators.

The gestures towards affect underscores a tension in the CVR's recommendations. On one side, there are projects set to memorialize the victims through affective experiences. The

other side is a type of commodified restitution in collective and individual reparations. These reparations highlight an incredibly difficult struggle to find a way to move forward as a nation after massive human rights violations. Monetary reparations seek to erase the damage of the past. As is the case with other aspects of the CVR, monetary reparations are a way of erasing the past. As Avelar tells us in *The Untimely Present*, “the erasure of the past as past is the cornerstone of all commodification” (Avelar 2). We pay to forget what happened.

However, monetary reparations are far from useless. They provide necessary aid to those who have suffered. The affected populations of the Andes have received little attention from the state in the past. By implementing some of the CVR’s many recommendations, so-called “collective” reparations have been “distributed” in the form of much needed infrastructure projects throughout the Peruvian highlands. Unfortunately, their implementation in Peru has been flawed. Many victims are still waiting to receive them or do not recognize the “collective” reparations as being related to the traumas experienced during the crisis. In addition to the logistical and implementation issues that have plagued reparations in Peru, there is also an implication of an absolution of guilt.

In *La hora azul*, Adrián initially seeks to absolve his guilt through a form of commodified restitution. He, like the intellectuals who created the CVR, was a spectator of the crisis, rather than a victim or perpetrator. He hopes to retribute what has been lost by Miriam by paying her, or providing some form of tangential support. As has been shown, the CVR highlights a desire among coastal elites to absolve themselves of guilt. As Adrián becomes closer to Miriam, his longing for absolution grows stronger. After Miriam’s death, Adrián makes a show of regularly bringing one hundred soles to Miguel’s caretaker, Señora Melchora. Adrián seems to be self-aware of this desire as he remarks to himself that he is only giving the money to make himself

feel better (269). As the novel ends and, thanks to Adrián, Miguel has become a better adjusted member of society, Miguel thanks Adrián for his help (303). The last words of the novel are Miguel giving thanks to Adrián, framing his relationship with him and his mother by the desire for absolution. Nevertheless, his attempts to give money to Miriam are always rejected. His attempts to absolve himself through monetary payment are constantly rebuffed until she dies. The rejection of this payment breaks down a kind of neoliberal logic of restitution. As this system of logic breaks down, what is left over is affect.

Although Adrián's relationship with Miriam is framed by a desire to rid himself of guilt, their relationship is largely based around highly affective exchanges. It is the space between bodies and the exchanges that occur here where Miriam and Adrián are able to commune with one another. For example, as they make love, Adrián feels a whole range of emotions that are, for him, inexplicable. He feels both a "furia" and "cariño" as he enters her for the first time (245). After they make love, there is a long period of silence. There is an acute awareness of the inability of words to transmit the charges that are exchanged between them. They are drawn to each other. Neither is sure why or is able to give a coherent explanation of why they are drawn together. Adrián is cognizant of his inability to understand what brings them together. In his words, he could not "explicar a Claudia lo que me ataba a ella [Miriam]. Ni a Claudia ni a mí mismo" (231). What draws them together and what allows them to communicate, beyond the trivial conversations over coffee or beer, are the affective exchanges that go on between them. After some time of being together and meeting regularly, Adrián reflects on what they actually talk about when they are together. He states "me parece extraño y sin embargo de algún modo natural que durante ese tiempo nunca habláramos de nuestras emociones" (242). It is almost natural for them to not talk about their emotions or about what they feel for one another or why

they meet or what they mean to one another. They are more comfortable simply allowing these affective exchanges to take place. This seems to be the most viable option for them to interact with one another. There is an acknowledgement of the clumsiness of words in expressing forgiveness and condolences. Adrián notes that his words seemed “tan ridículas” as he tries to communicate during Miriam’s discussion of her escape and the loss of her family (238). Words simply are not able bring back what has been lost.

One of the most interesting aspects of Cueto’s novel is the use of the photograph. There has been little critical discussion of this aspect of the novel, even though it is emphasized in various ways throughout the text. The first chapter opens on a photograph taken of Adrián and his wife Claudia that has appeared in a newspaper (13). As the novel begins and it is revealed that Adrián’s father was involved in the atrocities of the internal conflict, Adrián is contacted by a woman with photographs of his father and Miriam (105). After the photos are recovered by Adrián, he cuts out the face of Miriam and places them in his wallet, throwing away the rest of the photographs (127). He frequently takes out the photographs to look at them and think about Miriam. Later in the novel, Adrián travels to Ayacucho. While he is there, he photographs the stadium in Huanta that was used as a concentration camp as well as the military barracks where his father lived and from where Miriam had escaped (168-71). Other examples of the photograph motif include a rumination on a picture of Abimael Guzmán that Adrián sees in the papers and a photo album gifted to him by his daughters. The role of the affective exchanges experienced in relationship with the photograph must be examined further.

In Roland Barthes’s work *Camera Lucida*, Barthes simultaneously theorizes about the essence of the photograph, what the photograph is “in itself” as well as offering up a eulogy for Barthes’s deceased mother (3). From the first few pages there is an association of the photograph

with death. This theme is taken up throughout the work and Barthes even calls death “the *eidos* of [the] Photograph” (15). Every photograph is of the past, documenting what is gone. Barthes examines several photographs of his deceased mother in the work, examining how the presence of death in the photograph is realized. We cannot look at a photograph without somehow being affected by the theme of death. We are brought to an intimate association with the past and with those who have passed.

This connection between death and the photograph is not lost on Cueto’s protagonist. After the death of Miriam, Adrián admits that he wishes he could recuperate the photographs of Miriam and his father in the barracks in Huanta. He thinks about how he would show the photographs to his family and how he would have liked to dance “alrededor de la foto de los dos cadáveres” (280). He notices the presence of death in the photographs and his capacity to be affected is increased by this realization.

Barthes’ main focus of his study is on what can be called affect, although he rarely uses this term. Instead, he prefers to talk about the “*studium*” and “*punctum*” of the photograph. These two differing qualities of the photograph are described in the way the spectator or observer of the photograph feels or what transmissions it receives. The *studium* is “a kind of general, enthusiastic commitment...but without special acuity” (26). These are the qualities sought out by the observer. In simplistic terms, these are reactions equivalent to whether the observer likes or dislikes the photograph. The *studium* of a photograph may be somewhat interesting for historical, cultural or social reasons. However, the observer never experiences “delight or...pain” in the *studium*. This is the realm of what Barthes calls the *punctum*.

The *punctum* interrupts the *studium*. It is an unexpected quality of the photograph and it tends to provoke a wider range of emotions in the observer than the *studium*. According to

Barthes “a photograph’s *punctum* is that accident which pricks me (but also bruises me, is poignant to me)” (27). In the language of affect theory, it could be said that the *punctum* of the photograph is some aspect of the body with a higher capacity to affect other bodies. Some photographs or qualities of certain photographs have differing capacities to transmit these affects or charges. These affective exchanges will depend entirely on the observer’s capacity to be affected. Barthes does not believe that the *punctum* of any photograph will necessarily have the same effect on two different bodies. It all depends, in the language of affect theory, on the body’s capacity to be affected.

As Adrián first sees the photographs of his father and Miriam during his meeting with Vilma, the woman who has contacted about the photographs and asks for money in return for keeping them secret. The *studium* of the photograph provides Adrián with the historical evidence that his father really did commit atrocities. He was responsible for some of the many atrocities of the internal conflict. However, it is not this truth that reveals the *punctum* of the photograph. He has seemingly been prepared for this truth. What overtakes him, the *punctum* of the photograph, is revealed to be the image of Miriam in the photograph. Adrián states that she was “una sombra gris, una serie de líneas borrosas...No la veía bien, pero era ella...Quería verla. Quería hablar con ella. Y, sin embargo, ¿qué iba a ocurrir si la encontraba?” (110). He is immediately struck with certain unexplained intensities. It is this aspect of the photograph that interrupts the *studium* of the photograph and affects Adrián. He has a visceral impression of the relationship between Miriam and his father. He understands in some way what happened to Miriam and what his father did. He is again forced to take the role of spectator, of witness, just as he must have witnessed from Lima the most difficult days of the internal conflict.

In addition to the affective exchanges elicited by the photographs, the emphasis on the photographs seems to be emphasizing the role of the spectator in the novel. Adrián Ormache is (as were many coastal elites in Peru) a spectator to the internal conflict. His journey is of a person coming to terms with his role as spectator, observer, and witness. He must come to terms with the fact that he, as well as many others, simply looked on as people suffered during and before the conflict.

La hora azul is not, as some critics have claimed, a victim's novel (see Camacho Delgado). Rather, as the emphasis on the photograph and the affective exchanges that occur with the photograph illustrates, it is a novel about spectators and spectatorship. It is about the guilt felt by the witnesses of conflict and their search for a way past their guilt, a way forward. This, in effect, can be seen as one of the primary goals of the CVR; looking for a way forward for those who looked away during the crisis.

Witnessing and spectatorship (as well as *being* spectated) is especially relevant to the cultural and political moment in which the novel takes place. Spectatorship was an important aspect of the Fujimori regime's unique relationship with television, videography, surveillance and the media. Fujimori used television as a direct point of contact with the people of Peru. Through television he was able to communicate directly with the people, without intermediaries. Talk show host culture became increasingly pervasive under Fujimori's presidency and it was also during this time that the rise of the celebrity politician occurred (Susy Díaz, a *vedette* or showgirl, was elected to congress in 1995) (Murray 111).

Another important aspect of spectatorship during the Fujimori regime was the ever-present surveillance done by the *Servicio de Inteligencia Nacional del Perú* (SIN). Critic Catherine Conaghan notes that "If there was anything that journalists of all political stripes

agreed on during the Fujimori era, it was that they were under surveillance” (141). Conaghan notes prior to evidence of the surveillance, many journalists in Peru had different stories of mysterious telephone calls or surveillance vans (141). In 1997, evidence of the surveillance was released by the press and was part of a series of scandals involving head of the SIN Vladimiro Montesinos.

Another way in which the Fujimori regime had a unique relationship to the media and television is seen in the resolution of the MRTA hostage crisis in 1997. The Movimiento Revolucionario Túpac Amaru (Túpac Amaru Revolutionary Movement), another guerrilla movement in Peru active during the internal conflict, had taken hundreds of people hostage at an event at a Japanese diplomat’s residence. Over the course of months, daily coverage of the drama appeared on Peruvian televisions. TV crews were even invited into the residence to interview the rebels. After four months, the Peruvian military overtook the residence and freed the hostages. Following the pattern set by the president, the rescue operation was broadcast live on Peruvian television for all to observe (Murray 112).

In a stroke of irony, the downfall of the Fujimori regime stemmed from a scandal involving recordings. In 2000 it was revealed that Vladimiro Montesinos, Fujimori’s head of National Security, “had secretly videotaped thousands of his meetings with military, commercial, and political contacts. These videos recorded a series of illegal financial transactions, including outright bribes accepted by opposition members of congress and by the proprietors of several Peruvian television stations” (Murray 112). The Peruvian public once again became spectators, free to observe government corruption and the inner-workings of media, political and market spheres. Everything was visible, whether intentional or not.

While spectators of the crisis may feel a desire to “make things right” in a sense, the struggle throughout the novel to find a way to make up for what has occurred never finds a resolution. Adrián finds comfort in the reassurance of Miguel that Adrián has helped him achieve something, in helping him to prepare for university. Nevertheless, the shadow of the conflict will always be cast over their relationship. Adrián’s actions are not developed out of a pure desire to help Miguel, but rather to atone for the sins of his father. Adrián must know that regardless of how much money he spends on Miguel or how much time he invests in him, there will never be a way to fully be forgiven or to fully forgive.

Adrián’s response to the atrocities committed against Miriam and her family in *La hora azul* is a difficult one to measure. After all, if something cannot be returned, cannot be forgiven, cannot be properly mourned, what then is left to be done? In the words of Idelbar Avelar: “how is restitution possible or conceivable when that which is to be restituted belongs in the order of affect?” (ix). It is perhaps in the realm of the non-representable in which the tension of these aporias find release. If forgiveness or mourning are impossibilities, is there not some sort of logic in the outlet of this tension belonging to the ineffable domain of transactions between bodies?

This is why we find the gestures in the CVR towards a symbolic restitution. Restitution that is not based in a neoliberal logic of erasure and commodification, but in the non-representable exchanges between bodies, the visceral transmission of intensities. Affect plays a role in restitution not because of a mysterious ability to resolve the effects of massive human rights violations. Affect has no power to restore what has been lost. It is, however, in this realm in which bodies coming to terms with the aftermath of these crises tend to collide. Affect has the ability to relieve the weight of the past. A ‘true’ or ‘full’ restitution is something unreachable and

non-representable. What remains is a tendency to reach for this realm of non-representability, to grope towards forgiveness and freedom from culpability, even if it is in vain.

Chapter 2: Homo Oeconomicus in the Age of Affect: Restorative Justice in *La pasajera*

Alonso Cueto's short novel *La pasajera* (2015) was published ten years after Alonso Cueto's first post-CVR novel *La hora azul* and could be called its spiritual successor. While *La hora azul* was written immediately following the publication of the CVR's recommendations for reconciliation, the next novel in Cueto's informal trilogy was written more than ten years after the CVR published their report. The short novel follows Arturo, a former army captain assigned to Ayacucho during the internal conflict and Delia, an Ayacuchan woman living in Lima who has a chance encounter with Arturo in his taxi. Delia was raped and tortured by the platoon that Arturo commanded. Arturo attempts to make amends by paying Delia a large amount of money stolen from his former commanding officer. When the offer is rejected, Arturo overflows with affect, turning a gun on Delia and then on himself. While he does not go through with killing Delia or himself, he is arrested. Delia, however, does not press charges. She moves back to Ayacucho and Arturo leaves the prison and kills the army colonel that forced Arturo to order the rape and torture of Delia.

The novel dissects Peruvian post-internal conflict society within the cultural context of substantial macroeconomic growth and diminishing efforts to apply restorative justice measures. Critic Lucero de Vivanco claims that *La pasajera* and other Peruvian novels released during this same time period are a direct reaction to the lack of application of transitional justice measures (287). Her thesis turns on the idea that these novels "llevan a la ficción la resolución de asuntos 'parecidos' a los que el estado debiera resolver respecto del legado de la violencia política, pero que terminan siendo asumidos por actores sociales que, ante la vacancia dejada por el estado, lo "reemplazan" en su función" (286-7). While *La hora azul* highlights the contradictions of

restorative justice, *La pasajera* looks at the implementation of restorative justice measures (or lack thereof) and deciphers the effects of possible measures in the lives of victims and perpetrators. *La pasajera* deciphers modes of restoration between affecting and affected bodies, but also between economic subjects in an affective, neoliberal post-conflict society. In my analysis, I will examine the ways in which neoliberal governmentality and affective exchanges are negotiated in *La pasajera* as well as the relationship between neoliberalism, the age of affect and restorative justice.

Ten years after the CVR and *La hora azul*, Cueto, like many other Peruvian authors, is still exploring the aftermath of the internal conflict in his writing. The novel delves deeper into the world of victims, perpetrators and restorative justice and the themes developed in the novel reflect changes in Peru within the same ten-year period between novels. Since the end of the internal conflict, Peru has experienced an extended and sustained period of macroeconomic growth. According to the World Bank, between 2007 and 2017 (roughly the same time span between the publication of *La hora azul* and *La pasajera*), Peru's economy grew at an average rate of 5.9% with low inflation and poverty and extreme poverty levels also decreased during this time period ("The World Bank in Peru").

While the economy and foreign investment (especially the mining industry) in Peru exploded during this period, the implementation of restorative justice measures has effectively halted. Critic Lisa Laplante, in her analysis of the CVR and its implementation notes that "despite the impressive advances in normative framework, the actual distribution of reparations has been slow if not nonexistent" (82). While the Toledo administration showed some reticence in following through with the recommendations of the CVR, the García administration (2006-2011) and especially the Humala administration (2011-2016) have been much more apathetic.

According to a report from International Center for Transitional Justice, the rate of allocations of collective reparations has slowed down considerably since the beginning of Ollanta Humala's tenure as president (12). Furthermore, the report has found that Peru has mostly failed to investigate and prosecute human rights violations perpetrated by the state during the internal conflict (27).

While the reasons for the slow-down in restorative justice measures are varied and complicated, one can easily make a connection to Peru's growing economy. Foreign investors are looking for stable countries with which to do business. A stable social order with minimal focus on past state transgressions is preferable to a country in which human rights litigation is an ongoing, prolonged process. As critic Idelbar Avelar has noted, "the free market established by the Latin American...[authoritarian regimes]...impose[s] forgetting not only because it needs to erase the reminiscence of its barbaric origins but also because it is proper to the market to live in a perpetual present" (2). Alan García and Ollanta Humala both had a vested interest in not prosecuting or investigating human rights violations perpetrated by the state because both were at the very least tangentially involved. Alan García, who has denied any wrongdoing, was elected to his first term as president between 1985-1990. Many of the atrocities of the internal conflict occurred during this period. Ollanta Humala was a member of the armed forces during the internal conflict as well. A recent Human Rights Watch report has accused him not only of human rights violations during this period (under a pseudonym "Capitán Carlos"), but of seeking to cover them as well ("Implicating Humala: Evidence of Atrocities and Cover-Up of Abuses Committed during Peru's Armed Conflict"). These accusations plagued him during both his presidential campaigns.

These issues are interwoven into Cueto's narrative. While the events of the novel take place in the late 1990's, the difficulty in finding restitution is very much a contemporary theme (as Vivanco has pointed out). There is a definite progression from Cueto's earlier work. *La hora azul*, as addressed in the first chapter, focuses on the recent CVR report that revealed the role of the state in thousands of deaths and disappearances. Adrián represents the middle class of Lima discovering the sins of the state through his discovery of his estranged father's transgressions. In *La pasajera*, the characters work under the assumption that this knowledge is widespread. The mystery of *La hora azul* is nowhere to be found in *La pasajera*. What we have instead is a perpetrator and a victim navigating restitution without state mediation. Cueto highlights the absence of official restorative justice measures and the effects they have on both perpetrators and victims.

The novel is unique in Cueto's trilogy because it features the point of view of both the male perpetrator and the female victim. The narrative goes back and forth between the two points of view and gives us a glimpse into the psyche of both characters. We listen to Delia's remembrance of her rape and torture, but we also are made aware of Arturo's point of view. He did not directly participate in the rape, but he did organize it. Arturo remembers being ordered by his superiors to organize the rape and, after refusing to do so, being threatened to be charged as a conspirator with Sendero Luminoso (45). The novel does make it clear that, while it was a difficult decision, he was still given a choice.

The shift in narrative voices creates a strange symmetry between the two characters. Their first meeting ends in a paragraph in which both characters are pleading with one another. Delia is asking him to leave and never come back, Arturo is asking her to listen to what he has to say. Their statements bleed into each and at points the reader must slow down to determine who

is saying what. After the shouting begins we read “Fuera, fuera, fuera. Fuera de aquí. Pero yo. Cómo hiciste para escapar. Váyase de aquí. Quisiera ayudarte en algo. He vivido con ese recuerdo, no te puedo decir cuántas veces me ha torturado lo que pasó” (32). While we can determine which statements are said by whom, the last statement seems to almost emanate from both characters. While Delia is clearly the victim in the novel, Cueto amplifies the proximity of victim and perpetrator through these narrative shifts.

There is also evidence in the novel that Arturo conceives of himself as a kind of victim. As Arturo speaks with his colonel, who now suffers from Alzheimer's and is barely cognizant of Arturo's visits, he states that “Usted se escapó. Felizmente para usted. Usted escapó. Pero yo no. Y ella tampoco. Nosotros no pudimos escapar” (52). He imagines himself as someone who, like Delia, was acted upon rather than acted out of choice or consent. Vivanco states that “Arturo también se concibe a sí mismo como víctima ante su superior jerárquico, y en esa concepción se iguala a Delia” (297). In Arturo's eyes the real criminal is his colonel, who victimized both Delia and Arturo.

Nevertheless, Arturo still holds himself at least partially accountable for what happened. Shortly after claiming to the colonel that Delia and him were both victims he seems to backtrack as he states “yo soy un desgraciado, un desgraciado, eso es lo que soy. Mucho peor que eso. Mucho peor. No sé cómo llamarme” (52). He is unsure of how to categorize himself, but he is sure that he is fit for punishment. After returning to Lima, Arturo lost his wife and daughter in an accident (58). Delia and her daughter conceived during her rape are a kind of reflection of what he has lost. Vivanco claims that this exemplifies how “la justicia se rige por designios divinos más que humanos” within the novel (296). In the absence of state mediation, ‘divine justice’ equalizes victims and perpetrators. Without punishment meted out by the sovereign, Arturo

begins to see the accident that took his family as a means of reparation. There is a sense that Arturo would like to be punished. He wants to repair what has happened, and in the absence of the state the duty lies on God and himself.

While the state is seemingly absent in Arturo's attempts to repair what has happened, he still seems dependent on the free market in his attempts at restorative justice. The money that he robs from the colonel is intended for Delia, even though she rejects it. Both he and Delia have lost confidence in state institutions to restore justice, but Arturo still relies on the market to equalize debts. Neoliberalism, rather than liberal democracy, has become the dominant cultural discourse within Peru and Arturo works within the paradigm to redeem himself.

The political theorist Wendy Brown, in her essay "Neoliberalism and the End of Liberal Democracy" expounds upon the ideas developed in Foucault's lectures. There are two strains within this essay that I would like to emphasize in this paper. The first is the concept of "neoliberal governmentality" and the second is the idea of an economic subject or, in Brown's words, "the citizen-subject of a neoliberal order" and a "new organization of the social" (37, 42). Brown stresses that neoliberalism is not simply an economic system, but has become "a mode of governance encompassing but not limited to the state" (37). In the twenty-first century, the market has surpassed liberal democracy as the essential "organizing and regulative principle of the state and society" (41). Global culture seems less dependent on state sovereignty and more reliant on the free market.

Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri point out in their seminal book *Empire* that the flow of goods, people, and production across national borders destabilizes the sovereignty of individual nations to regulate the economy (xi). The market also undermines the sovereignty of institutions within the state (elections, law enforcement, etc.). The frequent question put towards liberal

institutions is one focused on its efficacy or profitability, rather than how well these institutions protect or ensure liberal democratic values. As Brown notes, “one of the more dangerous features of neoliberal evisceration of a non-market morality lies in undercutting the basis for judging government actions by any criteria other than expedience” (50). The criteria for state policy-making tends to be judged on free market principles like cost-benefit analysis rather than a core criterion of ensuring democratic values. The discourse of liberal democracy has become less politically legitimate and serves perhaps as a second-tier concern in determining the role of the state. Put simply by Brown, “the state must not simply concern itself with the market but think and behave like a market actor” (42).

However, as neoliberal governmentality has replaced liberal democracy as the most politically legitimate discourse, a neoliberal rationality has also taken hold of the way in which we negotiate social connections and relationships. According to Brown, neoliberal rationality is not even primarily concerned with economy (40). By extending economic principles and rationality to non-economic institutions, free market rationality also “reaches individual conduct, or, more precisely, prescribes the citizen-subject of a neoliberal order” (42). The predominance of neoliberalism in contemporary culture imposes a new kind of subjectivity (a subjectivity referred to by Foucault as “homo oeconomicus” or economic man) as well as a new social order (37). Interactions between “economic subjects” are sanctioned by free market principles. To use an Althusserian turn of phrase, neoliberalism “interpellates individuals as entrepreneurial actors in every sphere of life” (42). Arturo forms part of this new social order and seeks to work within a neoliberal framework to restore justice.

Within the realm of restorative justice in post-conflict nations, neoliberal rationality manifests itself in institutions through the principle of monetary reparations and compensatory

justice, in which the victims of human rights abuses are paid as a way of repairing abuses. Teresa Macías, a critic writing about restorative justice in post-dictatorial Chile, describes how a neoliberal market paradigm, social policy (like restorative justice measures) tend to “reduce all human action to an economic language of calculability, profitability, and marketability” (129). Buying power becomes political and social power. There is a tendency to equate capital with any social or political debt, whether they be scars of colonialism or of the internal conflict. Arturo reacts to this political/social debt by attempting to pay for it. It will benefit both of them for him to settle the debt. She will be “reimbursed” for the crimes committed against her, and he will be able to forget them. As Macías explains, within a neoliberal social paradigm, “victims and survivors can make claims to dignity only along the prescribed lines of cost and benefit” (132).

In *La pasajera*, Delia seems to see past the free market social system as she rejects Arturo’s offer to take twenty thousand soles. She is forced to find her own path towards justice as she returns to Huanta. It is evident from the beginning that she desires to return to a pre-trauma Huanta. The walls in her room are lined with pictures of the Virgin Rosario, her daughter Viviana and a cathedral in Huanta. She tells her close confidant señora Liz that she would like to return to Huanta someday (20). As she prepares to return to Huanta later in the novel she reminds herself that both the military and Sendero Luminoso have already left her hometown (99). Nevertheless, she is cognizant that she cannot go back to the way things were. Her trip back to Huanta will not accomplish this and neither will Arturo’s payment. She understands that the rationale behind his payment is illogical and that it in no way recuperates what she lost.

Arturo does not understand this as he offers her the money, because he forms part of a system in which moral action and economic action are homologous (Macías 131). He views justice as an exchange. He tells Delia as he gives her the money “te corresponde, es tuyo” (101).

There is a kind of balancing sheet at work in his pursuit of justice. He is simply paying her what is owed in order to square his debts. Once the last column on the sheet is at zero, Arturo believes he (and Delia) will be able to move on with their lives. This is the purpose of money, to equalize things that are quite disparate. As Wendy Brown notes, “neoliberalism equates moral responsibility with rational action; it erases the discrepancy between economic and moral behavior by configuring morality entirely as a matter of rational deliberation about costs, benefits, and consequences” (42). The best rational (and moral) option for Arturo to restore what Delia lost is to pay what he believes he owes her.

In addition to settling his debt, paying Delia is a way for Arturo to resolve his conception of his mistakes. As he makes his way to Delia, he states that he would “recordar menos esta tarde” (62). He wants to pay so that he can forget what happened. In a visit to his commanding officer he tells him “tenemos que pagar mi coronel...yo no lo olvido” (52). Paying Delia will help him to forget. He tires of living in the past, of being constantly reminded of his mistakes and the lives he affected. Arturo strives to live in the present, free from any repercussions from his past. Avelar notes that the neoliberal market economy also promotes forgetting the old to make way for the new. He states that “growing commodification negates memory because new commodities must replace previous commodities, sending them to the dustbin of history” (Avelar 2). It is in the self-interest of Arturo, the economic subject, to forget his past. This is what the free market demands.

There is an apparent breakdown in the logic of the exchange as Delia rejects his offer and Arturo does not know how to react. His demeanor changes and his body reacts to the new circumstances. We read that “un golpe de sangre nuevo corría por sus entrañas” (103). Without knowing exactly why, he takes out his gun and begins to point it at Delia. He is willing to do

anything in order to forget. If the neoliberal logic of reparations does not help him accomplish this, he is willing to erase the memory of what happened by force. It is a moment of overflowing affect.

While Wendy Brown, Michel Foucault and others might point towards a social paradigm where the basis of subjectivity is one's buying power, there are an increasing number of theorists and critics who would claim that we are living in the age of affect. Where the basis of Western thought once relied on the Cartesian subject and the power of the mind over the body, increasingly we are more reliant on Spinoza's theory of affect. Our basis for subjectivity lies not in the *cogito* but rather in the body. Where we once conceived of ourselves as "thinking things," we increasingly conceive of ourselves and others as feeling things.

There are still other critics who have argued that the age of affect and the age of neoliberalism are very much connected (as my analysis of *La pasajera* seeks to consider). While we tend to think of the free market as a system based in rational exchanges, critic Dierdra Reber argues that capitalism has its roots in irrationality and theorist Brian Massumi claims that the free market is essentially an affective system. Reber describes how our conceptualization of capitalism as rationalistic is simply a diachronic effect (71). She shows that the original discourse surrounding the free market was much less rational. Both Massumi and Reber describe Adam Smith's concept of "the invisible hand" as a bodily network devoid of rationality. Massumi points out that "the whole point of the concept of the invisible hand had nothing of the godlike quality that has come to be attributed to it. The whole point of the concept was that the economic system is too churningly complex for there to be any possibility of a lordly overview upon it....there is no transparency or totality" (2). Reber describes Adam Smith's writings as "a conceptualization of capital as the substance that flows organically through the social body

public” (71). The less restricted the flow of capital, the healthier the economic body. Here we begin to see that the logic and reason of the market is, at the very least, a partial facade.

While we conceive of the free market as “rational,” Massumi points out that “the “rationality” of the economy is a precarious art of snatching emergent order out of affect. The creeping suspicion is that the economy is best understood as a division of the affective arts” (2). As Arturo overflows with affect, we are inclined to think that he is perhaps breaking from the neoliberal framework that his actions have functioned within up to this point. However, his outpouring of affect may not be that far removed from how the free market functions. As Massumi notes, the market is a complex environment (like the body) whose moods fluctuate and whose extreme, oscillatory scales are often disconcerting (8 & 10). It is not surprising then that when Delia rejects Arturo’s offer, the irrationality of both the exchange and the neoliberal rationale behind it reveals itself. Arturo realizes that what he is doing makes little rational sense. Giving her money didn’t make sense, killing her didn’t make sense (106). And so, he turns the gun on himself. As he does this, Delia approaches him. Expecting her to take the gun and pull the trigger, he is surprised when her eyes meet his and she takes the gun from his mouth and places it on the ground (107).

Looking back at both Delia and Arturo, we begin to see how the affective economy takes shape in each of their actions. As Massumi states, “The economy is continually agitated by the affectively fraught, felt need to preempt it” (13). Delia has no idea what Arturo wants or what he is capable of doing. Nevertheless, she believes that he is coming to shut her up, to kill her, to do something horrible and she acts in anticipation by preparing to go to Huanta. Arturo does not know what he will do if she leaves without accepting payment. He does not know how to cope with what he has done without some form of restitution. He acts preemptively by taking out his

gun. He seeks to create some sort of bodily (or economic) well-being and when this is rejected he uses force to achieve this 'balance' of the economic soma.

After the exchange, Arturo is arrested and Delia leaves for Huanta. Waking up the next morning in prison, Arturo is surprised to find that Delia has not pressed charges. He is free to go. The novel ends with Delia making her way to Huanta and Arturo killing the colonel (116-7). As he points the gun at the colonel, Arturo says, "Aquí nos paga algunos muertos, coronel" (116). In a last bit of irony, a radio broadcast reports that the police suspect a member of Sendero Luminoso in the killing of the colonel (122). Arturo is able carry out this act of supposed "justice" because of the lack of government mediation in the restorative justice process. In the government's absence, he is free to mete out justice as he pleases, whether that is attempting to pay Delia or shooting his commanding officer. He is doing what he believes is necessary to ensure the health of the social and economic body, even if it means working outside of the confines of the law. As Wendy Brown notes, "the neoliberal citizen is calculating rather than rule abiding" (43). The market rationality of the neoliberal citizen "can encompass even a modest amount of criminality" (58). What matters most is the health of the economy, the body, the multitude.

Within these exchanges between Delia and Arturo we sense an economic body, rather than an economic subject. The basis of its subjectivity is defined not only by its function in a free-market economy and neoliberal social system but on its physical capacity to affect and be affected. Cueto explores how justice can be restored not in the absence of the state, but in the immanence of the economic body. The world Cueto reveals to us is not a world in which the subjects presented are stand-ins for the government. Arturo is not an avatar for the military-veteran turned president Ollanta Humala. Instead, the characters are singular stand-ins for the

immanent multitude, the preemptive economy, the feeling body and network of affect. The network is not grounded in rationality as the space separating affect and rationality has effectively disappeared. Affect and rationality have, as Massumi notes, become functionally equivalent (9).

All mediation functions within this economic body, this network of transactions and exchanges. There is no external mediation from the state. The state now exists to maintain the economic body. In the novel, the state is literally powerless in keeping Arturo in prison. He is arrested for pulling a gun out on Delia, but is released the next day because she has not pressed charges. He even kills his commanding officer and is essentially free from repercussions from any law enforcement. As señora Liz encourages Delia to report Arturo for what happened in Huanta, Delia responds simply, “Ante quién lo va a denunciar, señora Liz?” (73). Her faith in institutions to mediate these difficult aspects of transitional justice is nonexistent. The state might as well not exist for her. She and Arturo exist within a self-governing body or soma. Dierdra Reber notes that self-governing, immanent bodies constitute a “single ‘we’ of immanent agency” which incorporates any “Other or ‘they’” (92). Thus, within this paradigm victim and perpetrator (Delia and Arturo) are rendered “we” and all space that separates them is essentially defunct. This immediately creates an ethical dilemma, one that is not completely resolved within the novel. The immanence of capital seems to inherently contradict steps towards transitional justice. However, the outbursts of affect overflowing from the neoliberal market economy sabotage the imposed rationality of post-conflict exchanges.

To reverse Hardt and Negri’s statement that in “the plane of immanence...the singular is presented as the multitude” (73), in *La pasajera* the multitude is presented as the singular. This is the false veneer of the free market. A singular subject is presented as being in control of his or

her own economic destiny, when in reality the singular economic subject does not exist. It is a multitude of inter-connected individuals. As Massumi points out, in a free market “to relate self-interestedly to oneself is in the very same act to relate, involuntarily, to everyone else” (4).

The victims and perpetrators of the internal conflict are presented in the novel as a self-organizing body, capable of restoring justice--a reflection of the self-organizing economic body, capable of repairing itself and correcting missteps manifested as recessions and economic crises. To paraphrase Foucault in his lectures on neoliberalism, human existence is now based on the economic model. However, as shown in Cueto's *La pasajera* this is not a sustainable model within which transitional justice measures can occur. The affective exchanges that undermine this “self-organizing” economic body reveal the faults of this system. Affect works to counter the neoliberal imperative to forget and to balance accounts. The affective exchanges point to the fact that human dignity cannot be negotiated within the framework of a cost-benefit analysis.

Chapter 3: Modes of Forgiveness in *La viajera del viento*

“*todo lo vivido / se empoza, como charco de culpa,
en la mirada*”

—César Vallejo

The last chapter touched on a particularly important aspect of Cueto’s work. In both *La hora azul* and *La pasajera*, Cueto emphasizes the proximity of the victim and the perpetrator. Arturo in *La pasajera* conceives of himself as a victim and to a certain extent is a victim of his circumstances. He is coerced to organize the rape of Delia and threatened with the possibility of being publicly accused of terrorism. Though there was still room for a different choice to be made (as Arturo would likely admit), there is textual evidence that Arturo still felt victimized. Speaking with his colonel he talked about how neither Delia nor he could escape the terror of the internal conflict or the things that were done to them (52). Similarly, in *La hora azul*, Adrián wants to find peace with what other people, like Miriam, went through during the crisis. He wants to feel better, as if the knowledge of what his father did has slighted him. He tells Miriam that “lo que quiero es ayudarte...Nada más. Pero la verdad también es que lo hago por mí, o sea para sentirme mejor yo” (216). While neither a victim nor a perpetrator, Adrián to a certain extent plays the role of both. He feels guilty for what his father has done, but also yearns for some kind of erasure of the past. He is eager to return to a time before the violence of the truth entered his life, in much the same way Miriam and Delia long for an unreachable past.

In Cueto’s third and final novel in his “Redención” trilogy, *La viajera del viento*, the victim/perpetrator dichotomy is further problematized. The victim and the perpetrator are placed in situations that complicate their status within their binary relationship. Both characters are originally from Ayacucho and were perhaps even playmates during their childhood. The “perpetrator” is also presented by Cueto as one of the most sympathetic protagonists in the

trilogy. This chapter will focus on the possibilities that this uncomfortable ethical territory can lead to, as well as the affective exchanges between the protagonist and the victim. Both characters are at the center of the relationship in the trilogy with the least amount of dialogue between the two. Their relationship is almost entirely based on affective exchanges and serves as an example of the move away in the trilogy from the victim/perpetrator binary towards something different.

The affective exchanges between victims and perpetrators within the trilogy, as well as the complicating of the victim/perpetrator dichotomy can be conceptualized as rhizomatic. The rhizome is a Deleuzian concept that is deeply connected to affective exchanges. It “describes the connections that occur between the most disparate and the most similar of objects, places and people; the strange chains of events that link people: the feeling of ‘six degrees of separation’, the sense of ‘having been here before’ and assemblages of bodies” (Coleman 231). The rhizome formulates new “way[s] of thinking without recourse to analogy or binary constructions” (Coleman 233). The rhizome is non-hierarchical, relational and open-ended. Within this framework we begin to understand how the victim/perpetrator binary may be understood in new, and possibly uncomfortable ways. The rhizome allows us to interpret the many connecting nodes between bodies that occur in what we previously viewed as a purely binary relationship. The rhizome is, in fact, the “apparatus for describing affective exchange” according to Deleuze (232). The multitudinous points of contact within this nexus increases the space in which forgiveness can take place.

Within Cueto’s “Redención” trilogy, the rhizomatic relationships foment modes of forgiveness and justice outside of the jurisdiction of the state. The rhizome allows for us to think outside of the binary and find ways towards restitution that are impossible within the Peruvian

political system. In the absence of state mediation of “forgiveness” or reconciliation, *La viajera del viento* presents an unmediated, immanent encounter of forgiveness. There is a sense in *La viajera del viento* that the lofty goals of the CVR may never be accomplished. It treats this as an a priori assumption rather than a point of criticism. Cueto is interested in exploring new and possibly uncomfortable modes of forgiveness. If forgiveness is to go unmediated by the state, then we must consider new modes of forgiveness in post-conflict Peru. Forgiveness will occur in some fashion as victims and perpetrators continue to cross paths and we may encounter some ethically uncomfortable areas.

At first glance, *La viajera del viento* seems to tread much of the same ground as *La pasajera* and *La hora azul*. A chance encounter in Lima between a perpetrator and a victim of the internal conflict leads to a series of attempts to reconcile the sins of the past. However, there are several important differences between this novel and the two that preceded it. The novel begins by relying on many of the same story beats as the other novels in the trilogy. Ángel, a former private in the Peruvian military is shocked one day to see a woman who he believed to be dead (22). Eliana, whom he personally shot in Ayacucho, seems to not recognize Ángel at all. After his initial shock, he becomes obsessed with talking to her and attempting to piece together how it is that she is still alive. His obsession eventually leads him to confront her about what happened. He finds his way to her house and in an uncomfortable exchange tells her “fui soldado en Ayacucho. Me dijiste que buscara a tus hijos. Yo te disparé. ¿No te acuerdas? No sé...” (60). At first she is completely nonplussed. After Ángel continues to berate her with questions and begs her to listen to him, she becomes visibly annoyed and states “No sé quién es usted. Voy a llamar a la policía si no se va, señor” (61). The exchange ends, but Ángel’s obsession does not.

Eliana moves in and out of the story in an otherworldly fashion. At points in the novel there is some doubt that she could have even survived what Ángel and the other soldiers put her through. However, the effortless interpretation of Eliana as some kind of phantom trauma returning to haunt Ángel is quickly dispelled as the first hundred pages of the novel comes to a close and the narrative changes dramatically. Ángel begins spending much of his time finding out more about Eliana. He surveils her neighborhood and frequently parks his car on her street to just look at her house. One night as he is parked and thinking about what her life is like, Oswaldo, a man who claims to be Eliana's father, begins harassing Ángel (90). This is where the novel begins to evolve into something distinct in this trilogy. As Ángel and Oswaldo's exchange becomes more heated, Eliana approaches both with a pistol in her hand. To the surprise of both Ángel and the reader, she shoots and kills Oswaldo and hands the gun to Ángel (93).

With hardly a thought, Ángel takes the blame for a murder that Eliana committed. Eliana offers no verbal indications that this is what she expected Ángel would do. Ángel is then arrested and serves part of a prison sentence for a murder he did not commit. While he equivocates occasionally with his lawyer (stating both "Sí lo maté" and "No sé si lo maté" in the same conversation (107)) he seems genuinely willing to take this burden upon himself and atone for his sins of the internal conflict, even if it is in vain.

After more than two years, his lawyer and his brother Daniel eventually secure Ángel's release from prison. The transition back to a life outside of prison walls is difficult for Ángel. He has grown accustomed to the quotidian pleasures of jail life and expresses fear at the thought of leaving (109-110, 153). However, his transition back into society is less painful than Ángel would have predicted (and much less painful than his transition from military to civilian life). With the help of his brother, Ángel promptly finds employment as a manager in Daniel's

expanding transportation business (188). While he is still looking for Eliana (194), perhaps to tell her what he did or receive some kind of recognition, he quickly becomes preoccupied with someone else. When he first sees Julia, a colleague in his new office, he is immediately enamored (205). After a short courtship they are married and not long after that they have their first child (212, 214). He transitions effortlessly into a father and a husband and easily moves past both his time in prison and the memory of the internal conflict. His reintegration into society is nearly complete when he receives one last chance visit from Eliana, who silently recognizes his efforts and passes ethereally beyond his reach.

By now it should be clear that *La viajera del viento* is a very different novel than *La hora azul* and *La pasajera*. As opposed to the other novels, the protagonist reaches some kind of reconciliation with the victim. While the fate of Eliana is perhaps no better than that of Miriam in *La hora azul*, Ángel fares much better than Arturo or Adrián. Arturo must kill to ease his pain and Adrián jeopardizes his relationship with his family. Ángel on the other hand, is in a better position than when he started. He goes through a transformation that fully integrates him into society and eases the pain and burden of the internal conflict. While the other novels may have been exploring the pitfalls of navigating reconciliation after the internal conflict, *La viajera del viento* seems to strike an almost optimistic note in its presentation of reconciliation.

At this point in the trilogy, we may realize that perhaps the immanent sphere of reconciliation that we saw in *La pasajera* is not an ethically compromised concept. Perhaps there is an inherent contradiction in the victim/perpetrator dichotomy and maybe in *La viajera del viento* Cueto explores how we may move past the traditional modes of forgiveness towards something else. While many may argue that it is not appropriate to advocate for forgiveness of the terrible atrocities that took place during the internal conflict, I think *La viajera del viento*

opens up a space where we can uncover new modes of forgiveness in post-conflict society and dissect the victim/perpetrator binary.

Critic Jill Scott has outlined a theoretical framework for looking at forgiveness that draws in equal parts upon the work of Kristeva, Derrida and Kelly Oliver (*A Poetics of Forgiveness*). Her work is concerned with how forgiveness can arise “as the product of human creative communication” (3). However, overall it could be said that her work is concerned with opening up new ways of thinking about forgiveness. In *La viajera del viento*, more culturally appropriate approaches to reconciliation will be explored by Cueto. The Andean concept of *pampachanakuy*, or a ritual that invokes a mutual decision to remember to forget the past, plays an important role in the novel. While Scott does not integrate any non-Western philosophies into her framework, it does advocate for the social space necessary for non-Western forms of forgiveness and laments the colonialist attitudes surrounding apologies and some forms of reconciliation.

This brings us to an important conversation on how the rhizomatic relationship in *La viajera del viento* creates space for the Andean concept of *pampachanakuy*. By creating more space for new or different modes of forgiveness, there is more room for victim-generated and culturally appropriate modes of restitution. As I mentioned in the first chapter, there are many critics who pointed out that indigenous peoples (who make up the majority of victims of the internal conflict) had very little say in the recommendations made by the CVR. Other critics have outlined the paternalistic and even colonialist attitudes of the CVR. The a priori assumption in *La viajera del viento* that many of the recommendations of the CVR will never be implemented allows for us to imagine new ways in which the victims of the crisis may gain control over reconciliation efforts.

Scott's framework asks us to imagine new ways in which to conceive of forgiveness and reconciliation efforts. Her three interlocutors all understand forgiveness in disparate, but equally important ways. Kristeva is concerned with how we assign meaning to the unintelligible. Interpretation is an ethical opportunity. In Scott's words, "that which previously made no sense or was nonsense, takes on new meaning--it is aesthetic activity that allows one to start fresh or to begin anew" (10). This will be important as we analyze how Ángel interprets his almost wordless interactions with Eliana.

Scott's framework also includes Derrida, whose views on the paradox of 'true forgiveness' ('true' or 'pure' forgiveness must forgive the unforgivable) formed part of my analysis in the first chapter. Scott outlines several ways in which using both Kristeva and Derrida to discuss forgiveness is potentially problematic. According to Scott, "Derrida's forgiveness is radically unmediated whereas Kristeva's is always mediated by language" (10). While there are other differences and critiques between the two theories, there are also several points of contact. Both theories are reliant on irrationality and the nonsensical. Both forms of forgiveness seem to arise "as if through the fog of babble" (11).

Perhaps then there is a way to reconcile Derrida and Kristeva in their views on forgiveness. In his essay "Before the Law," Derrida suggests that creativity or the imagination "ground[s] both literature and ethics because of the necessary acts of interpretation in both fields" (Duncan 11). Indeed, one could even say that there is an absent presence of the other "in all interpretation and action" (Duncan 13). While forgiveness and ethics are not synonymous, the ethical imperative and responsibility to the other seems to be grounded by both interpretation and creativity. In this way, Kristeva and Derrida may both agree that creativity and interpretation open up spaces for ethical action and ethical exchanges. Out of babble, we may find new

meanings and new interpretations. There is a need to be creative in our gestures towards forgiveness. The space between bodies is an area in which new modes of reconciliation may occur.

In addition to both Derrida and Kristeva, Scott incorporates American philosopher Kelly Oliver into her interpretative framework. Oliver represents a slightly different view of forgiveness. She conceives of forgiveness as being a fundamental aspect of human subjectivity. According to her, “to be human is to forgive” (qtd. in Scott 12). Scott goes on to describe how this view implicates a movement beyond the traditional binary relationship of forgiveness. She states that “Oliver’s project goes well beyond the perpetrator/victim dichotomy of right and wrong. For her, subject and object are mutually formed and informed by an ongoing becoming forgiving and the ethics of continual self-questioning” (13). While Oliver represents a very distinct view of forgiveness, it is also apparent that it signals a deviation from the traditional perpetrator/victim dichotomy. The inclusion of all three philosophers allows us to conceptualize what we previously conceived of as a flat relationship with a limited number of intersections as a three-dimensional, rhizomatic relationship with numerous points of contact and intersection. All three philosophers form a nexus in which new understandings of relationships of forgiveness can be conceived.

The approach to forgiveness that Scott gives is almost rhizomatic in itself. Her framework incorporates ideas that on the surface may have some contradictions, but there are still many underlying connections and nodes of intersection. While Scott does not articulate aspects of forgiveness in the Deleuzian nomenclature that I am assigning it (rhizome, immanence, affect, etc.), I do believe that it operates comfortably within this setting.

As soon as Ángel is introduced in the novel, Cueto complicates his status as a perpetrator. His name in and of itself implies a certain purity or goodness. According to Alberto Vidal, a prominent critic who studies literary onomastics, names have a representative feature. He argues that “Nuestro nombre es nuestro representante. Cuando no estamos, nuestro nombre actúa en nuestro lugar allí donde se hace necesario hablar de nosotros y traernos a cuentas aunque estemos en otra parte: somos el referente de la conversación” (11). The name Ángel represents the protagonist. It represents how we as readers view him. A literary name is always deliberate and never accidental. It would seem that Cueto wants us to sympathize with Ángel. He wants us to see him in a positive light from the very introduction of the book.

This creates an immediate problem. In both *La hora azul* and *La pasajera*, there is a comfortable distance between the protagonist and the reader. We can sympathize with their situation while still critiquing their actions. But Ángel is a different kind of perpetrator. We want to sympathize with his situation, even his actions during the eternal conflict. The reader understands him in a way that does not occur in the other novels. For example, in *La pasajera* it is easy to appreciate the difficult situation that Arturo is put in by his commanding officer. It is not, however, easy (or even possible) to excuse his actions. In contrast, in *La viajera del viento* Ángel’s actions are more easily understood. After being threatened and reprimanded, he is ordered to kill Eliana if she is not already dead. “Dispárale si se mueve” he is told by his commander (39). As he goes to bury her, she comes out of the body bag and asks for help. Without noticing what he was doing, “las manos de Ángel se movieron hacia el arma. Eran sus manos pero actuaban como si se pudieran mover solas” (36). There is never a sense that Ángel’s act was intentional or premeditated. What is apparent is that he acted out of fear.

Of course, Ángel is still far from perfect. His first interaction with Eliana exhibits his complicated desires. After entering the store in which he works, Eliana hires him to drive her to the church that she attends in order to deliver the goods she has bought from him. During the whole drive he is tortured with thoughts of how she might get her revenge (25-6). Perhaps she will denounce him to the Defensor del pueblo. Or perhaps she will reach for the gun in his glove box and get her retribution (26). Just as with Arturo in *La pasajera* and even Adrián in *La hora azul*, Ángel experiences a wide range of emotions as he encounters his past. He is both overcome with guilt and overwhelmed by the anxiety of the possible consequences of his actions. He exhibits both a concern for the other and a selfish desire for self-preservation as he begins obsessing over how to achieve forgiveness. Nevertheless, as Ángel progresses through the novel he exhibits his desire to put Eliana's needs above his own. Taking the blame for Oswaldo's murder is an act far removed from this initial selfishness.

Aside from presenting a sympathetic perpetrator, Cueto complicates the victim/perpetrator binary by emphasizing the proximity of Eliana and Ángel. Both he and Eliana are from Ayacucho. He is the first perpetrator that is not originally from Lima. This not only places him closer to the crisis, but closer to Eliana as well. From the beginning of the novel it is also hinted that Eliana and Ángel knew each other in Ayacucho as children. As Ángel attempts to find out more about Eliana, we read that “le parecía haberla conocido siempre” (32). In his search, he remembers her words right before he shot her. “Tú me conoces” she pleads (36). For much of the novel he does not understand her plea. Throughout the novel as he thinks more about her words, he realizes that he may have met her before, most likely as a child in Ayacucho (148). It is not until the end of the novel that Ángel is able to recall more concrete memories. As he encounters Eliana one last time, he remembers “una casa de niño, un juego de canicas en el

polvo, una voz en el patio que daba a la de los vecinos. ¿No la había conocido acaso, mucho tiempo antes? No estaba seguro, pero sabía que ella había estado jugando en su casa en ese tiempo remoto, cuando ambos eran niños en Ayacucho” (223). The proximity of Eliana and Ángel is made closer by this strong connection since their childhoods.

By transforming this binary relationship into something far more complex, Cueto implies that the responsibility to forgive and to ask for forgiveness goes beyond just one party. As Jill Scott points out, the breaking of the binary causes “the distance between the one and the other dissolves, both grammatically and psychically, and responsibility thus becomes a joint venture” (149). By creating this space for interpretation, creativity and forgiveness to take place, Eliana and Ángel are both able to take part in the forgiveness process.

In conjunction with these complications of the perpetrator/victim dichotomy, Cueto also emphasizes unexpected proximity of the victim and the perpetrator through a sense of liminality within the work. This sense of liminality not only complicates the victim/perpetrator binary (a liminal space in this context implies not being one or the other), but it also mirrors the liminal space of the victims and perpetrators of the crisis. They are continually waiting, like Beckett’s weary Vladimir and Estragon, for a reconciliation which may never arrive.

One of the ways in which liminality is emphasized in *La viajera del viento*, as well as the trilogy in general, is through its sense of place. All three works situate themselves in Lima, a city in which no battles of the internal conflict were fought, but that still maintained a keen cognizance of the threat from Sendero Luminoso. Whether it was the occasional car bomb, hanging dead dogs with repudiations of Deng Xiaoping or the Japanese embassy hostage crisis, Lima was never fully isolated or removed from the crisis.

While in prison, Ángel participates in several plays. As he is participating, he begins ruminating on the short text “Hamlet en Lima” by Peruvian writer Héctor Velarde. The short text imagines Hamlet arriving in Lima and eventually settling down with a Peruvian wife. Ángel remembers that the text “se decía que en una ocasión, cuando el príncipe había llegado a la ciudad, se había quedado muy confundido porque aquí ser y no ser es la misma vaina” (127). The text makes reference to the temperate climate in Lima which is neither very hot nor very cold in either the summer or winter, but always in a state of humidity. There are also the houses and buildings which are perpetually in a state of growth seemingly without ever being finished. The satire also makes reference to the failures of both capitalism and Marxism in Lima the eternal provisionality of the city. The reference of the satire within the novel further emphasizes the liminal qualities of Lima as the primary locus of the trilogy.

The same liminal state which describes Lima could just as easily describe Ángel’s situation for much of the novel. Whether it is as a soldier pining for home, a veteran struggling to integrate himself into post-conflict society or a prisoner unsure of where he belongs, Ángel is constantly situated between two poles. During the first few days of prison, Ángel struggles to even situate himself. He feels that he “había ocupado el cuerpo de otro hombre. Se fue habituando a esa otra identidad, acorazada en el silbido que brotaba de las paredes” (101). He feels displaced everywhere he goes, occupying space rather than existing in any one area. As described before he is situated in the novel as neither victim nor perpetrator, but in a space between the two.

As stated before, this opening of space allows for new modes of forgiveness to take place. Scott asserts that “creative responses to conflict can provide fresh insight into processes of resolution and reconciliation” (3). In *La viajera del viento*, Ángel finds his creative outlet in

prison. While there, he has the opportunity to take ceramics workshops. He is almost immediately enamored with the ability to create something, to be a part of making something that had never existed before. Speaking with his brother Daniel, he states that “Eso es lo que quiero. Hacer vainas. Vainas propias. Hacer tus propias cosas. Levantarte por la mañana y decir que vas a hacer algo tuyo, y hacerlo. Eso me parece tan nuevo y me hace sentir tan bien ahora. Me hace sentir que soy otro” (124). Ángel finally feels as if there is some kind of way forward, something beyond the past, a reason to wake up in the morning. And if there is a way forward, there may be space for forgiveness.

Scott describes how “human creativity can facilitate forgiveness” (9). Part of the creative process for Ángel is oriented towards creating a present in which the past plays a diminished role. He relates the creative process with working through the past. He continues telling Daniel that “Estoy en un puro presente, o estoy sin tiempo, eso es lo que busco, estar sin tiempo...O sea todo eso fue una mierda, pero a veces creo que tampoco pienso ya en lo que hice ni en la guerra ni en nada de eso” (124). He cannot dwell in the past forever, and the future-oriented poiesis of the creative process seems to aid him in reconciling with what happened in Ayacucho.

Kristeva explains how creativity relates to interpretation and the forgiveness process. She explains that “interpretation as pardon is manifested first as the establishment of a form. It has the effect of an action, a deed, a *poiesis*. The putting into form of relationships between humiliated and offended individuals: the outline of connections, the harmony of the group” (20). Interpretation as a tool of forgiveness seems to draw on an ordering of the irrational or impenetrable. The violence and horror of the internal conflict do not necessarily fall into neat, logical categories. That is perhaps why affect is such a useful framework with which to pair the violent past. Kristeva notes that pardon “draws its efficacy from reuniting with affect through the

metaphorical and metonymical rifts of discourse” (26). However, the irrationality of affect and affective exchanges make it difficult to process these exchanges. Interpretation of the past becomes an ordering of these affective exchanges into discernable meanings. Scott notes that “nonsense requires reinterpretation: It is not simply gibberish but rather functions as an ethical opportunity, a momentary hesitation or a suspension of meaning but also the assigning of fresh and alternative meanings” (10). An ordering of affect allows both the victim and the perpetrator to think about their interactions with each other and with others in a new context, which may be conducive to reconciliation.

Ángel is consistently found ordering and reinterpreting the past in *La viajera del viento*. As he describes what he knows about Eliana’s life to Daniel, he is left to fill in the spaces of what he does not know. He tells Daniel that “Creo que han pasado muchas otras cosas que no te puedo contar porque no las sé, en esta historia” (132). He must imagine what she has gone through because he only knows a limited amount of her life story. He is both inventing and interpreting her past.

Ángel also interpretes Eliana’s actions throughout the work and reevaluates them at times. After she hands him the gun, he acts as if she has given him deliberate instructions. He states that “Estaba claro lo que había ocurrido. Él debía aceptar el pacto que ella le había ofrecido. Ella tenía razón. Y liberarse él. Salirse del mundo por un tiempo. Abrazar ese destino con indulgencia, con alegría, casi con amor” (96). However, there is never verbal communication between them throughout this exchange. There are simply affective exchanges. He must interpret the flood of irrationality in order to give it meaning. He constructed her directions out of affective exchanges. As Scott notes, “Integral to this model [of forgiveness] is the creative

process of interpretation, which involves attributing meaning to the act” (9). Ángel is creating and interpreting interactions between himself and Eliana.

This is not the only time in the novel that Ángel embarks on a creative interpretation of past events. For example, his entire stay in prison is a constructed experience that he has created. In addition to this, he makes several reevaluations to his first encounter with Eliana. At first her words made no sense, but gradually he gave them meaning. By the end of the novel he is sure that they knew each other as children. Eliana offers no new information that persuades him, he is simply taking part in an interpretive process of forgiveness. We have no indication in the novel whether or not they actually were childhood playmates. It is entirely possible that Ángel may be inventing this memory to re-write his own story in order to bring himself into closer affective proximity with Eliana.

Ángel’s reordering and reinterpreting takes center stage at the end of the novel in the middle of a family outing on a Sunday afternoon. He is in the middle of having lunch with his wife and his son when he sees Eliana at another table. They exchange no words, but the experience serves as a catalyst to reinterpret and reframe the events of the novel. The affective exchanges give Ángel material to mold and sculpt, much like the ceramic figures he made in prison. While staring at her, he is able to reconstruct the entire novel as one in which Eliana is pulling all the strings:

Fue entonces que Ángel comprendió la historia detrás de todo lo que había pasado. Era increíble que no se hubiera dado cuenta antes... Todo lo que había pasado había sido el resultado de una estrategia que Eliana había organizado. Su encuentro el día que ella había entrado a su tienda no había sido casual. La casualidad no tiene que ver con eso. Ella lo había buscado. Sabía que Ángel

trabajaba allí...Ella sabía de su prisión, del juicio, de los esfuerzos de sus abogados, de las visitas de su hermano...solo en ese momento lo veía todo claro.

(227-8)

He reimagines her recruiting his associate from his days in the military to help her. He concludes that the priest who counseled him in prison (who was originally from Ayacucho) had been giving her updates all along. In short, he radically reframes and reinterprets the events of the novels to put Eliana in control of their immanent encounter of forgiveness.

Scott describes how this reinterpretation process can prove vital to an encounter of forgiveness. She asserts that “Narrative reframing may facilitate the appreciation of shared humanity, enable one to see the offender in a new light, and eventually foster forgiving attitudes” (16). While this circumstance is focused on Ángel reframing the narrative and not Eliana, his reframing empowers Eliana. Both of them have roles in the forgiveness process. She does not adapt to any terms set by Ángel. She creates her own terms that Ángel must adapt to. By giving her an active role in creating a forgiveness process, he is giving Eliana (and her culture) more control of how she is to be restituted.

While in prison, Ángel gains insight into what a more culturally appropriate approach to reconciliation might look like. Ángel befriends a priest who works in the prison named Esteban. Esteban is from Ayacucho and witnessed much of the terror of the internal conflict. Ángel confesses to Esteban everything that happened between Eliana and him and how Ángel struggles with the past. Esteban explains how victims of the crisis who had experienced torture, rape and other atrocities often spoke of *llakis*. *Llakis* are “pensamientos dolorosos. Recuerdos que se quedan con la gente. Nunca se van” (134). In addition to *llakis*, Father Esteban also describes the the concept of *pampachanakuy*, which is

un ritual de perdón, pero no es perdón en realidad. Es un acuerdo que ignora o pone a un lado los procesos del pasado. Las dos partes llegan a un acuerdo y luego entierran sus diferencias. Esta es la manera que tenían de lidiar con el perdón. No confrontando, sino superando el pasado. Ellos dicen una frase: “Recordar para olvidar”. O sea, no es como en el mundo occidental que se confrontan. No es lo mismo. Se recuerda juntos para olvidar también juntos. (134)

Anthropologist Kimberly Theidon expands more on the concept of *pampachanakuy* and on its relation to the internal conflict. She explains that the term literally means, “‘enterrar algo entre nosotros’...Frente a las autoridades comunales, los partidos de un conflicto hablan hasta llegar a un acuerdo (acta de conciliación) y tal acuerdo significa que han “enterrado” la queja entre ellos” (211). The past is buried, covered up, made flat. The chasm that once divided both parties is flattened and filled and both parties are free to interact on an equal level.

Theidon points out that this concept contradicts the credo of the CVR that uncovering more truth is synonymous with more reconciliation (210). But perhaps for some victims of the crisis, this alternative to forgiveness or reconciliation is more appropriate. Perhaps the uncovering of truth and unraveling of mysteries is better suited to the spectator (as shown in the chapter on *La hora azul*). Remembering may not be the most appropriate process for victims of the crisis or even perpetrators.

The concept of *pampachanakuy* is remarkably similar to the experience that Eliana and Ángel have in the novel. Forgiveness in the traditional western sense does not necessarily occur in the novel. Eliana and Ángel never have a moment where speech acts (such as “I forgive you”) play a role. After Ángel goes to jail he never even speaks to Eliana again in the novel. The closest experience to some form of exchange is the chance encounter at the end of the novel in

which Ángel receives his epiphany. Within these pages, without a word from Eliana, he realizes that despite his efforts to atone, he has not been forgiven by Eliana. He muses about what she is communicating to him and again must interpret her non-verbal exchanges. He explains that “Quizá lo que ella estaba tratando de proyectar hacia él era su reconocimiento (era un modo de decirlo), un registro de esfuerzos que él había hecho hacia ella, no un perdón ni un agradecimiento ni una reconciliación. No había nada de eso” (233). Perhaps a registration of efforts is the best we can hope for in this situation.

While this may seem like an unsatisfying resolution to a western audience, this registration of efforts allows for progression. It allows for movement forward. The past will never be gone, but the concept of *pampachanakuy* allows for the victims and perpetrators of the internal conflict to live with what has happened. According to Father Esteban, this may relate to the conceptualization of time in the Andes. He explains that linguistically, Quechua accounts for how “El pasado está delante de nosotros porque lo conocemos. En cambio, el futuro es lo que está detrás porque es desconocido...El recuerdo y el conocimiento son sinónimos” (138). The past cannot be changed and it is always before us, but this does not mean no efforts towards reconciliation are in vain. It may mean, however, that the measure of success should be adjusted.

While the concept of *pampachanakuy* and the Andean conception of forgiveness and time in general is totally distinct from Western philosophy and ethics, it does seem to function effectively within the Deleuzian framework we have outlined. Because the concepts of ‘to think’ and ‘to remember’ are so closely aligned in Quechua and parts of Andean culture, we must give up the rigid constructions of time that dominate Western “rational” thought. According to Deleuze and Guattari, “any point of a rhizome can be connected to anything other, and must be. This is very different from the tree or root, which plots a point, fixes an order” (7). The rhizome

exists in opposition to the tree or root. This more ‘arborescent’ way of thinking is utterly dependent upon vertical hierarchy. The rhizome then is more horizontally-oriented, creating what Deleuze and Guattari call a plateau.

This plateau or horizontally-minded rhizome is much more consistent with the Andean conceptualization of time than the vertical hierarchy. Any point in time has the possibility to connect or coexist with another, rather than the rigid progression of arborescent time which only allows hierarchical advancement. In addition, the concept of *pampachanakuy* (which is tied closely to this conceptualization of time) has the space to operate comfortably in the more complex horizontal relationships in the novel. The rhizome gives space to the concept of *pampachanakuy* and allows for it to bypass other hierarchical, colonialist models of reconciliation.

If true forgiveness really is a paradox, the space created by these complex relationships in Cueto’s novels allows for modes of reconciliation that are adjacent to ‘true’ or ‘pure’ forgiveness. Perhaps the atrocities of the internal conflict are too horrific to pardon. The measure of success in an ‘encounter of forgiveness’ will surely have to change as the recommendations of the CVR become further from reality. However, what Cueto shows us in his “Redención” trilogy is that bypassing the victim/perpetrator dichotomy is perhaps necessary to open up social space for forgiveness. The rhizomatic relationship between Eliana, Ángel, the state, the military, Oswaldo, etc. breaks open a space in which an immanent forgiveness (or at the very least a

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