

**Part 8**

**The interview**

**In the introduction you spoke of things like memory and also about things like identity, origins etc. They are big concepts that need, in my view, to be explained more thoroughly. You saw your barrio, for example, as shaping your identity as a Chilean. What do you mean by that? I would have thought that it was your country and not a small area, which you called my barrio, which helped to form traits of your Chilean character such as your ways of thinking, customs, language and cultural behaviour?**

*There are also other important concepts I need to look at: "Chile". What is the meaning of it? What is the meaning of the Chilean state, the meaning of citizenship and nationality in the life of the working people? All these concepts are very important to look at, because they go straight into your life experience in a given place.*

*In my view, it is in the barrio where we can put to the test all these abstract concepts and where we could also put under the spotlight other ideas about justice, freedom, democracy and human rights.*

**You spoke of memory too?**

*Yeah!!...Anyone who suffered in one way or another the full force of the Pinochet dictatorship has the historical responsibility to preserve, in whatever form and for future generations, what we have in our memories.*

**What is memory for you in the context of Chilean history?**

*Memory contains the sum of our experiences and the conclusions we are able to draw from each of these experiences.*

*Memory also is our main point of reference to get to know the cumulative experiences and history of a place which can be a barrio, a region, a city, a country a continent.*

*As I speak to you (December 2001), Señor Mario Garrido Montt has just been selected as the new President of the Chilean High Court. On Chilean television he was asked about his evaluations of the present members of the High Court who were active during the Pinochet era. He declared, with a certain pomposity, that he preferred not to look to the past but rather to look into the future.*

*What Señor Mario Garrido Montt does not want is to look into our collective memory of our most recent past. He does not want to because the performance of the Chilean High Court during the Pinochet era has always been perceived by many to have been on the side of the powerful. The working-class citizens know that this was an arm of state power which let down millions of Chileans during the dictatorship.*

**In fact, in your "Barrio" you mentioned "The Black Book of Chilean Justice" by Alejandra Matus.**

*Yes. I showed why this important book came to be written, why it was banned in Chile and why Alejandra Matus had to go into exile long after the dictatorship had come to an end.*

*The concept of 'justice' will continue to be a mockery in our country as long it is regarded, by those in power, as something irrelevant. With all due respect to Señor Mario Garrido Montt, I think he showed very little respect for the human rights of million of Chileans who suffered heavily at the hands of the Chilean Armed Forces and had nowhere to turn to for legal representation.*

**In plain words, what is Chile for you?**

*That depends to which social class you belong to. For the working-classes it means nothing. For a few families it means their kingdom and for the middles classes it is the dream of a place which could be better.*

**It was very interesting when you spoke of Material Culture in your work because this is memory at its best, when looked at from a cultural and historical point of view.**

*Yes. This is one of the things that I learned at the School of Scottish Studies at the University of Edinburgh where I graduated.*

*In relation to this material culture, and as we speak, (December 2001) a very important house in Santiago located at José Domingo Cañas No. 1367, and used by the Pinochet regime to torture people, has just been demolished. For me, this was a horrible thing to do. What took place was simply barbaric; this was an historic place and you do not destroy historic places in civilised countries. That house at José Domingo Cañas was very important. It would have served as a powerful remainder to the new generation of what some Chileans were able to do to others.*

*Many Chileans will tell you that memory is very important because, in their country, there are at the moment powerful forces which deliberately want to cover up the evil of the past. You see, for some reason, people in power today do not want to preserve anything reminiscent of the Pinochet era.*

**Give me an example of those powerful forces you are taking about?**

*The Chilean Army, in March, 2002, the Commander in Chief of the Chilean Army, General Ricardo Izurieta, in his farewell speech, underlined the necessity for the army and the Chilean people to 'turn the page' in relation to the events of the past which, in his view, still divided Chileans. The same view was expressed by the new Supreme Commander of the Chilean Army, General Juan Emilio Cheyre, when he said that it was important to look to the future and that this was good for the Armed Forces and Chile.*

*Here we have the Chilean Army trying very quickly to avoid their historic responsibilities towards the Chilean people, especially those who suffered the full force of their decisions and actions.*

**Let us talk about the barrio. What do you feel towards it?**

*A great deal. It is very dear to me. It was there, during my time in Chile, where I almost felt equal among equals. I felt that I was part of a body of people sharing, almost in perfect harmony, the same types of experiences. I do not think that I could refer to Chile in the same terms and with the same conviction. I think that this is very important if we are to understand properly such things as Chilean identity, status in society, citizenship, ethnic origin, the idea of freedom, the idea of justice or the role of the law in Chilean society etc.*

**Can you explain the idea of status in your barrio?**

*I can tell you that everyone in the barrio had status. What we did not have was a status in Chilean society. Those with status lived on the other side of the City, in the barrios altos.*

**But can you refer to your own barrio for the time being?**

*Yes, but nothing is unconnected.*

*In my barrio, you see, I was recognised as 'someone' and I remember that I valued it. I and most of my friends in the barrio, on the other hand, were, from the point of view of the Chilean state, unknown identities. The pets of the middle upper classes had more status than any of us in our working-class barrio.*

**Are you sure about that?**

*No doubt about it.*

**It is very sad to arrive at this conclusion.**

*Sad for you and for me, but not for the owners of the pets, who ensured that, in winter, their pets had a warm home, medical care, good food and love.*

*But coming back to the question of status in my barrio. It seems to me that everyone had an assigned role to play in my barrio. If you contrast this with the idea of my country the story is different.*

**What do you mean?**

*The tragedy of working-class people is that they are made to feel by the ruling classes that they have no role to play in the economic and social development of their country, when we know that the working-class people are at the centre of the economic activity.*

**But from the economic point of view, they are the ones producing wealth for the development of the country.**

*But what country are you talking about? The country of the working-class or the country owned by a bunch of wealthy families? In the country of the working-class, the working-class people to my knowledge were never producing wealth for their own development and future. All my friends in my barrio, who were obreros like me, never felt that they were producing wealth for Chile. The feeling was that we were producing wealth for the owner of the factory. At the Fernández lithographic plant, I worked very hard and almost for nothing to allow El pelao Fernández, the owner of the lithography, to change his lovely, long Chevrolet Impala every year, while I was living in poverty with my mother and father at the Chiflón del Diablo.*

**Can you talk a bit about roles and status in your barrio?**

*Roles in the barrio brought a well defined status and a position of a certain social importance. In the Chiflón del Diablo, for example, Rolando Rodríguez was the voice of social consciousness. I admired him because his role was to make us all think about our social condition.*

*The roles of El Congo and El Gringo, in the Chiflón, were to resolve the problems we had with the sewage system. Don Pepe's role was to use his skills to connect all of us who lived in the Chiflón with the electric cables strung along poles along Esperanza St. These people were real assets for all of us.*

**How did the people respond?**

*With a lot of appreciation for the work these persons did, using their skill. They were the centre of the attention for what they did on behalf of dozens of families.*

**Did you have a role?**

*I assigned myself roles accepted by everyone. These were things that I could do well and things that a few of my pals could do. Take sport as an example. I was, for my pals 'the goalkeeper' of several football clubs and, as such, I was always the captain due to my 'good behaviour' on the football pitch.*

*From the social point of view of my friends, I was a sort of street entertainer, as I was 'the guy who played the guitar well'. I remember very clearly how, in the evenings in our street, I was made the focus of attention. In terms of Chile as a "nation", I and my circle of friends were never the focus of attention, but in the barrio I was physically in the centre of a circle of friends, every one looking to me for a sign I would give them. They were ready to follow me and sing along with any song that came into my head. I was in charge of the situation. Notice again that, in Chilean "national" terms, working-class people never had been in charge of their own destiny.*

*My role was to play the guitar, to sing and to make my friends sing and dance. In other words, to make them to feel happy after a hard day's work. I felt powerful.*

*My friends El Perico, El Negro José, El Iván, El Catrutro, etc. had other roles to play. They were the guys that put the humour into our group.*

**Let us talk about the idea of identity now.**

*I have a personal interpretation of identity in the context of my barrio, which may not be like the idea of a national identity. In our barrio, we shared a common culture, which was not necessarily the culture of the barrios altos. Let's immediately get rid of the idea that one culture was superior to the other.*

*In the case of our barrio, we all shared something that resembles popular culture. You could see, by reading my work, the type of people we were and the things that we were attracted to.*

**But what was your common identity?**

*If identity can be denoted by one's manner of speaking, then I would say that, in the barrio, people of my age all spoke in a similar fashion: this meant that I and my peers shared the same language as everyone else in the thousands of poor barrios of Chile. This was Chilean-Spanish, at times intermingled with the Chilean slang called Coa and some swear words. In, and some others, did not swear but many other people did.*

*Due to our poor education, I also gather that we had bad pronunciation of certain words, and there is no doubt that we lacked linguistic sophistication in our expression of ideas, feelings and emotions. Of course, in all working-class barrios there were educated people who took care to speak properly. They were, however, aware of the linguistic systems used by all types of people in the barrio. But the overall impression I have is that the language or languages spoken in our barrio was not the one used by the middle upper classes who lived in the barrios altos.*

*Now, if identity can also be expressed by our attitude to life then I can tell you that we lived in constant pessimism. It seemed to me that nothing of importance or interest was ever available to us in the barrio. We always seemed to live under the impression of being losers in life.*

**Do you think that this was a false impression?**

*Undoubtedly it was a false impression, but there was some element of truth in it. Emotionally we all grew up in my barrio with the same type of apprehensions about life and perhaps having a fatalist point of view about it. We had the type of attitude that was often tempted to say, "Oh, well... what we can do ? We are poor. It is sad and that is it. It is our fate and it is not in our power to change anything." I wonder if this type of attitude embedded in the mind of a very large and important part of the population of Chile was a good thing for the country.*

**What do you think?**

*I do not think that this is healthy, especially when we consider, in addition, our famous earthquakes, where the main victims are always the poor, who lived in very fragile dwellings.*

**You spoke about earthquakes in your work.**

*I have to mention them because they also helped to shape our common pessimistic outlook on life.*

**But the rich and the powerful also suffer the consequences of earthquake, don't they?**

*Well, they panic as well and they too suffer material damage but not on the same scale as the rest of the Chileans. It is clear that the main victims of these natural disasters are always the poor.*

**You talked before about apprehension in life but, don't you think that the better-off also have apprehensions?**

*Yes of course. They have their own apprehensions but they are different in nature. But I can explain our own ones in the context of my barrio. Take the valid apprehension we had about death for example. Not for nothing do I have in my home a full collection of photographs taken in the cemetery. Sudden death was a very common occurrence in our barrio. "Next time it could be you" - that type of thing.*

*I do not think that the well-off had in their heads the same idea of death that we had in our working-class barrios. Hence, I can say that fatalism about life was part of our common cultural identity in the barrio.*

**So fatalistic is equal to working-class, if I understand you?**

*Yes. I regarded myself as working-class in origin and it was this social condition which conditioned me and my friends in the barrio to look at life in a certain, pessimistic way.*

**To have a pessimistic or a fatalistic view of life was part of your common identity in the barrio then?**

*Yes. This was my perception anyway. But notice that it may be not be a feature in the common identity of all Chileans. I suppose those living in the wealthy barrios may have a more optimistic outlook to life. It does not mean that all people in the working-class barrios are fatalist either.*

**As I understand it, identity comes into being in the lives of the people as a result of their experiences of life.**

*Correct. This is my idea anyway*

**Can you identify identity in other areas of the everyday lives of the people in your barrio?**

*I think so. I can talk to you about identity from the point of view of the places we lived, the type of clothes we wore, from the point of view of our wages and the environment and from the point of view of our dreams.*

*In the barrio, as you know, there were all type of dwellings from proper mini-shanty towns to well preserved houses with patios and trees. Most houses were small in relation to the number of people living in them. My home and that of many of my friends, at the Chiflón, and indeed in Esperanza Street, consisted of one room or two. Mine was a one-roomed house and we were three people but other people's houses were inhabited by four, five or more people in a single room. This would be mixture of adults and children - plus animals, like cats and dogs.*

*We dressed more or less in the same way. Our clothes were not very expensive and some of the cabros of the streets were always looking for bargain. The barrio of Patronato was a good place for bargain. Incidentally, this was a suggestion of El Negro José.*

*From the point of view of income, I earned more or less the same amount of money per week as my closest friends.*

*We all grew up surrounded by the same natural and artificial environment which did not consist of beautiful things to look at but rather a boring landscape of run-down houses in a street that did have trees which were useful in providing shade during the hot Santiaguino summers. We all grew up among drunken people, witnessing many street fights and hearing sad stories of family life. My friends and I grew up dreaming of better job prospects and a decent place to live.*

*In summary, my friends and I grew up side by side, in the knowledge that we shared a common identity shaped by our social condition.*

**However I still think that many values, cultural systems such as language, as you describe it, and other circumstances which can be seen as forming your cultural identity are also common to the better-off people, aren't they?**

*Most of us, as in any other country, have systems of conduct in relation to language, customs and manners which are unique. Take food for example: People in my barrio loved **empanadas, cazuelas, porotos granados, porotos con tallarines, pastel de choclos, asados, pebres, chancho en piedra** and alcoholic drinks such as wine, **chicha** and **pisco sour** or a soft drink like **mote con huesillos**.*

*I imagine that people in the well-off barrios were also fond of the same things but it does not prove that we all have the same idiosyncrasies, even if we were to say that Chileans have certain cultural features which make them different from the Argentineans, the Bolivians, the Peruvians, etc.*

**Yes... But rich and poor barrios may share a common denominator anywhere in Latin America.**

*What do you mean?*

**People may have different nationalities but, when it comes to dealing with their social condition, it is possible to find that a rich or a poor Argentinean may share the same type of identity as a rich or a poor Peruvian.**

*I would say that a rich Argentinean and a rich Peruvian will also share the same conservative values.*

**But I think that, irrespective of everything, your identity has to be linked to a very specific country.**

*Perhaps to a culture, but not necessarily to a country, since I know that in one country you may find different cultures shaping the identity of its components. In Chile we find several cultures - for example, the Mapuche, the Aymara, the Pascuenses (people from Easter Island). In addition, barrios also develop their own culture and a system of values and customs unique to them. This is my view anyway. The culture developed in the barrio Esperanza was very different from the one developed in La Nueva Matucana, the shantytown*

which was very near to us, and it was very different from the culture of those inhabitants of the better-off barrios.

**What type of culture do you think developed at La Nueva Matucana?**

*I suppose a type of culture based on fear, despair, anger, fatalism and resignation, as a product of social exclusion. If I were to compare this culture with the one found in any upper-class barrio, I am certain that everything there would have been quite different.*

**But is it not true to say that the culture of your barrio was, in a way, similar to that of *la callampa* known as La Nueva Matucana ?**

*I suppose the culture in the Chiflón, the place where I lived for about 10 years, was also a type of culture based on fear, despair, anger, fatalism and resignation, as a product of social exclusion. But this view is not applicable to the whole of Esperanza street – only that bit between Mapocho and Yungay Street which contained the Chiflón del Diablo and the places where I grew up.*

*The Chiflón was an integral part of the barrio Esperanza and the barrio was an integral part of the city of Santiago, made up of well- and badly-preserved houses with paved streets, with running water and electricity and with some people who owned their properties. Here we found people with different degree of education and social standing in the barrio. In my opinion, the Chiflón was a mini-shanty town but not of the same type as La Nueva Matucana. In several respects it was a better place to live than La Nueva Matucana. The Chiflón at least had a proper name. It was called Pasaje Santo Domingo and was located at Esperanza Street No 1386. It was located very near Yungay Street, which at the time was an unpaved street. This mean that when people asked my address I could say that I lived in the **pasaje** Santo Domingo No 1386, **tercer** citée. This did not sound that bad as saying, ‘I live in the Chiflón del Diablo’.*

**In Latin-American Spanish, there are different meanings for the word “Chiflón” but Diablo mean the Devil, doesn’t? And the implication is obvious.**

*The “Chiflón del Diablo” is part of a number of very sad stories set in the coal mines of Lota, in the south of Chile. They were written by Baldomero Lillo and collected in a book called “SubTerra”. Lillo’s father worked at Lota as a miner and told the boy many brutal stories of what took place in the mines, dug out under the cold Pacific Ocean. El Chiflón was considered by the mining community to be a extremely dangerous place to work. The belief was that any miner who started work in this particular mine had very little chance of coming out of it alive. The geology of the place was very unstable and, in the book, the miners were confronted with the reality of either working there or facing redundancy. The story tells of two young miners who are forced to work in the Chiflón del Diablo but they both meet a horrendous death.*

*The publication of Sub Terra in 1904 brought about major concern for the improvement of the coal miners’ working conditions. We have to remember that thousands of them worked for the Cousiño family, owners of a marvellous estate not far from the mines.*

**But your own Chiflón del Diablo was also a notorious place to live.**

*Well...Before moving to El Chiflón with my step mother Clara and my father Jorge we lived in a room in Esperanza Street no 1284 beside the room of my godfather, El Maestro Checho, a wooden-legged cobbler and a very nice man. He was **un zapatero remendón**. I remember very well hearing that the Chiflón, in Esperanza Street, had had ‘in the old days’ (in the 20s, 30s and 40s) a very bad reputation, such that even the police did not dare to enter it, because their lives were not safe.*

*When we moved to the Chiflón in the 50s, it still had a very bad reputation and much social deprivation. But when we moved in, the people living there were working people and certainly not the type that used to live there before. I remember, however, that anybody who lived in the Chiflón and in La Nueva Matucana had to bear the stigma of living in a place which had a very bad reputation in the barrio.*

**Do you have good memories of the Chiflón ?**

*In all honesty, yes. The human element was terrific. The people from the Chiflon were a good blend of people, some of them very memorable.*

**What do you mean by terrific people?**

*There were great characters. My father was one of them, la Señora Teresita was another. El Pirulo, El Congo, La Chela Santibañez and various petty thieves were all people who taught me a thing or two about humanity. But look...I am sure that we all would rather not have lived in un **insalubre, enterrado callejón de tierra sin salida**. I suppose, this insalubrious, dirt cul-de-sac was a metaphor of the life of millions of working-class people.*

**Now let us change the theme. What about country and citizenship?**

*For some time now I have been considering the difficult question: “what is really my country?”*

**Why?**

*For some reason, the question has always been at the centre of my thoughts. Perhaps it came about as a result of reflection on my life in Chile and the fact that I now live very happily in Scotland - and always introduce myself to others as a Chilean person. But then I began to wonder, if I feel like a Chilean in Scotland, to what extent did the Chilean State recognise me as its own citizen when I lived in Chile? This was another type of question which interested me very much.*

**Why?**

*I was interested to consider to what extent I was right to justify my “Chilean-ness” in Scotland, thinking perhaps that one day my children, who were born in Scotland, will have to justify their “Scottishness” to the world. Writing my own story and doing a little research about the history of my country, it was easy for me to establish that a person with my background and characteristics was never considered by the Chilean State to be a full member of the so call ‘Nation of Chile’. It was sad to discover that this privilege only belonged to a very restricted group of people assembled in the Chilean State.*

**What do you mean “assembled in the State”?**

*The upper classes coalesced in the many parts of the state apparatus and in the Catholic Church because it was convenient to their class interest. With this understanding, I have to consider the role of the state in my barrio and, of course, it was very limited. We had policemen on the street, we had schools to learn how to write and read, and we were provided with run-down hospitals to give us a bit of comfort when we were very ill. However, the state was never seen by us, the working-class people, as a builder of our future.*

*I cannot forget that the many apparatuses of the state are ‘legal’ instruments to privilege the upper classes. Sociologists have said that the state’s crucial characteristic is that it acts as the institutional system of political domination and has the monopoly of the legitimate use of violence. As we know, the upper classes and the upper middle classes had the political monopoly in Chile. The Chilean Armed Forces, on the other hand, under the leadership of Pinochet, destroyed democracy in Chile, killed thousands of Chileans and yet saw their violence towards the working-class as something legitimate.*

**We can also argue that it is the state which provides Chileans with the tools to have a representative democracy and allows you to have your Chilean citizenship?**

*Let me tell you that by examining the precarious existence, throughout the centuries, of millions of Chilean citizens, I am in a position to say that, objectively, they never enjoyed full democracy and never were in possession of having what you call Chilean citizenship. For millions of working-class people, Chilean citizenship is just a meaningless concept. The Chilean State never managed to incorporate all its citizens into what we can call the realm of Chile. As the state has been dominated by the upper classes, it is clear that the state has tended to respond more to the needs or requirements of those upper classes than to the needs of the lower classes. I, therefore, believe that the lower classes never enjoyed one hundred percent full ‘Chilean citizenship’. The lower classes are simply third- or fourth-class Chilean citizens. So, why be so passionate about Chile when we know that, in reality, ‘Chile’ is only a fantasy for millions of people, including myself.*

*During the Pinochet regime, the idea of being Chilean was questioned by the Chilean Army. Thus we have the following story reproduced years ago in “Le Monde Diplomatique”. An Army Commander by the name of Alvarado addressed the political prisoners at the Estadio Chile, where the song-writer and singer Victor Jara was murdered, saying “ You are prisoners of war. You are not Chileans because you are Marxists, you are foreigners and we are committed to killing all of you.”*

**Is your answer conclusive?**

*Yeah.. the evidence for this extreme view of mine about my country exists in the everyday life of the working-class and the poor, in the work of serious historians and the works of many travellers who have visited or lived in Chile at different periods of Chilean history. History shows that Chilean society has always been deeply fragmented but the lowest section of the working-class, the **campesinos** and other minority social groups seem to be condemned forever to live in a sort of social and economic exclusion zone with no real future for themselves.*

**What do you mean by having full Chilean citizenship?**

*To enjoy full Chilean citizenship means that a specific social group has available at any time a political and a social system shaped to suit their requirements. It is clear that the upper classes have such a system in Chile and that it has helped them to acquire power, wealth and privileges. The effect of this has been devastating for the people of that country because it has prevented the majority from achieving an economic future. The majority, therefore, become second-, third- or fourth rate Chilean citizens.*

**What type of Chilean citizen were you when you lived in Chile?**

*As I know my story and I know something about Chile, I am in a position to say I belonged to the third- or the fourth- rate type. Unacceptable in my view.*

**You spoke in your work, of a key financial family in your country, the Edwardses - owners of banks and of the most influential Chilean newspaper, El Mercurio. Are the Edwardses more Chilean in terms of citizenship than the people, let's say, in the poor barrios of Chile?**

*According to my definition of Chilean citizenship, the answer is, yes. Chileans like the Edwardses belong to another category of Chileans. They do not belong to the first order; they belong to a special order. Agustín Edwards Eastman represents the continuation of a family business tradition which has treated our country as their own property. A Government of the people, such as that of Salvador Allende, was powerless to investigate their economic and political activities in Chile and the United States.*

*The excerpt from “CIA Activities in Chile”, released by the CIA on September 19, 2000, in fact, shows the involvement of El Mercurio in the CIA 's efforts to stop Allende coming to power.*

*We know that El Mercurio was the recipient of CIA funds and the focal point of opposition to Allende.*

**By European standards Chile looks like a republic banana. Is Chile a banana republic?**

*In this respect this country even falls below the definition of a banana republic, thanks to the Edwardses.*

*The Edwardses and a few other Chilean families with the same social, economic and political status have always been in the driving seat, directing the destiny of Chileans. We know that Agustín Edwards helped to convince Nixon that the United States had to prevent Allende to coming to power in 1970. By doing this, in the eyes of the Americans, Mr Edwards confirmed what we really are.*

**Can he not argue that, as a Chilean citizen, he was entitled to act on behalf of Chilean interests?**

*Here is the fallacy. What constituted Chilean interests for the Edwardses and what are Chilean interests for the less privileged members of the working-class?*

*Agustín Edwards took matters into his own hands, which was totally wrong, not to defend the interests of Chile but his own economic interests in Chile, those of his class, and that of a foreign power, the United States, all of which makes this rich Chilean gentleman a traitor like Pinochet.*

*But we can also argue that the Government of Allende was also acting on behalf of the Chilean People. The Chilean People in this case were the majority whose interests were never previously taken care of.*

### **Where is the difference then?**

*Salvador Allende has been elected by the Chilean People to act on their behalf and Mr. Edward was not. Allende had a democratic mandate to act within the framework of the law and the constitution. Anything outside this scheme of work became unlawful. We have to consider the following: without being elected to the foreign ministry, Mr Agustín Edwards decided to influence American policies in relation to Chile. As he had the power to do so, he succeeded and, as a result of his political manoeuvres, Pinochet was un-democratically installed in power with a terrible outcome in the lives of millions of people. These millions become victims and thousands were killed. It is natural to look for the perpetrators of these crimes.*

### **Who were the perpetrators?**

*The perpetrators were the ones who devoted a lot of effort, resources, money and intellect to bringing down an elected government. There were also the accomplices and the ones that carried out the crimes.*

### **Is Agustín Edwards and his accomplices examples of what the sociologists will call “delinquent drift”?**

*This is a clever point. This explanation of social conduct was developed by D. Matza (1964; 1969) and, in fact, can be applicable to people like Edwards. I quote: “it claims that delinquents often ‘neutralise’ legal and moral norms (Agustín Edwards did this) by subjectively defining such norms as inapplicable, irrelevant or unimportant. (to destroy people lives and get rid of democracy in Chile was for Edwards an irrelevant or unimportant matter), Once a person feels indifferent towards the law (as Edwards did) he may commit unlawful acts without a strong sense of guilt or shame.” (This is exactly what had happened with Edwards and many others in Chile). The important thing to remember is that he and his accomplices “neutralised” legal Chilean norms and felt no guilt for it.*

### **So, a ‘pato malo’ del Chiflón or de la nueva Matucana are saints compared to these people?**

*Please do not insult people who were victims of a political system that never worked.*

*This view of delinquent drift was underlined when Pinochet was detained in London on charges of committing crimes against humanity. You see... the activities of Agustín Edwards prior to the coup have been closely scrutinised by the international community of historians, but not by the Chilean People who suffered as a result of his activities in Chile and in the United States.*

### **Agustín Edwards was wrong in doing what he did?**

*Mira (look!) He and several others have a lot of explaining to do to many families in Chile who fell victim to the Pinochet regime. For example, the family of Sebastián Acevedo who, in November of 1983, set himself on fire in the main square of Concepción to protest against the disappearance of his children at the hands of Pinochet’s secret police. Here at the University of Edinburgh, and thanks to Amnesty International, I saw Carmen Quintana who, on the 2nd of July, 1982 was set on fire, together with a 19-year old photographer called Rodrigo Negri, by the ‘Chilean Army’. Both had been in a street protest against the Pinochet regime. Carmen survived her ordeal with 65 percent of her body burned; Rodrigo died as a result of his horrific injuries. The officer in charge of the military patrol who set the youngsters on fire, Pedro Fernández Dittus, spent a year and a few months in jail for this criminal act ( justice Chilean-style ).*

## **Who are the others who you think ought to give some explanation to the people of Chile?**

*I have just read, in the fortnightly magazine Punto Final, an article entitled “Los Generales civiles del Golpe” (“The civilian generals of the coup”). The article shows how very influential Chilean civilians like Mr. Edwards did their utmost to bring down an elected democratic Government. It is hard to comprehend that these people, who regard themselves as Chileans, in order to defend their economic interest were prepared to allow a massacre.*

### **But who were these people?**

*According to Punto Final (<http://www.puntofinal.cl/010302/>), there were about fifty right-wing people anxious to bring down the Government of Allende, among them the ultra right-wing leader of Patria y Libertad, Pablo Rodríguez Grez, the lawyer who defended Pinochet in Chile after his arrival from England. Many of these people with powerful economic interests had, as one may expect, links with the military establishment, the Christian Democrats and other right-wing political parties.*

### **What are your comments on these people?**

*I feel that these “respectable” people cheated, in the worst possible manner, the working-class people and the poor. Of course, I can see nothing new in their actions, because people of their social class and temperament have always been antagonistic to the lower classes.*

### **Clearly Agustín Edwards, and his companions on Punto Final’s list and in the Pinochet regime, were not acting on behalf of the interests of the majority of the working people?**

*That is my conclusion. Edwards and Pinochet worked on behalf of his own class, the upper classes and the entrepreneurs who, during the Pinochet years, became richer and richer. Very importantly, Pinochet worked on behalf of the foreign armaments industry. Thus, according to The Statesman’s Yearbook (1998-99), a plan to spend nearly 2bn US dollars on weapons modernisation was announced in 1998. All this against the background of the working-class getting poorer and poorer.*

### **But in 1998 Pinochet was not in power?**

*But los Milicos (the Army), after they left power, made sure that any Government after them would have to accept whatever expenditure was necessary on weapons and other things strictly military. The poor and the workers of Chile do not have access to decent hospitals but the military officials have the best. They also have their luxurious houses and their plush Military Club in Lo Curro for their celebrations and special occasions. Pinochet and his wife were there on the 19th of April, 2002, to enjoy what the poor cannot afford. (Remember that I told you there are ‘Chileans’ and ‘Chileans’).*

*But let me continue with the story.*

*In 1983, one third of the labour force was unemployed. In fact it was at this time that people in Chile began to call for democracy. In 1988, the opposition labour leader Arturo Martínez accused the military regime of dividing the country into two Chiles. In fact this is what is Chile today. A country deeply divided economically.*

### **So, Edwards took full advantage of his special social status in Chilean society?**

*No doubt about it. His type of Chilean citizenship had allowed him to work, in my view, for a political framework which could allow him and his counterparts to have a specific economic system which could help them to accumulate incredible fortunes, by Chilean Standards.*

*In November, 2001, Señor Francisco Javier Errazuriz, a Chilean entrepreneur, sold his company, Planvital, for the sum of 22, 4 million dollars to a joint venture between Inverlink, a Chilean financial group, and Banca della Svizzera Italiana (BSI). Planvital, a pension fund administrator, was founded in 1981 during the Pinochet regime. Señor Francisco Javier Errazuriz, in my view, enjoyed the privilege of being a full Chilean citizen.*

### **Is this not a extreme view of Chilean citizenship?**

*Not at all. Everything is so evident. I cannot help but think that it is very difficult to recognise in our mind and in our ‘cultures’, the idea of being a Chilean national when I know so well that there are “Chileans and Chileans”.*

**You mentioned in “The Barrio” the material culture you brought from your country, including official Chilean documents, like the one I can see here in front of me. They all show that you are a Chilean citizen, don’t they?**

*All these documents only serve, from the point of view of the Chilean State, for statistical purposes. They serve me for reference purposes. I do not have any Chilean document which could have been important for my intellectual development, which could have perhaps helped me to have a good job in Chile. What you can see here are the six Primary school certificates which show that I completed my Primary school and another one which shows that I completed one year of Secondary school. So, in terms of citizenship, I noticed that I was recognised only as part of an economic force able to produce with my hands, wealth, not for me or my family, but for others. In this framework, then, it was clear to me that I had to find a place which better reflected my social and cultural standing in society.*

**Where was this place?**

*Within the domain of my barrio in Santiago de Chile. It was here where I was able to articulate my real identity in economic and social terms. I could even articulate the idea that the barrio was mine. As I explained before, my barrio gave me a real sense of belonging, by making me feel I was part of it and part of something really meaningful. Through the daily reality of its routine activities, my barrio began, little by little, to shape my nature as a human being and my identity as a working-class man. By writing my story in the context of the barrio I could see that I was part of a common socio-economic reality.*

**But we can argue that your Chilean identity was shaped by many other external cultural forces, wasn’t it?**

*Before I answer that, allow me to tell you that that the only visible presence of the state in my ordinary barrio was that of the Police ( los pacos ) in eternal struggle with our patos malos.*

*( If the streets of the barrio were paved, it was in order to allow the police cars to get in and out fast! Laugh!!! )*

*But coming back to the question... Yes. But more than an external force, there has been a powerful eternal force, forever present in our society, which has been shaping our Chilean cultural identity based on a system of inequalities.*

**But the State presence in the barrio was also shown in Education and the Health Service.**

*Yes.. in a bunch of very run-down, poor Primary and Secondary schools and in a smelly first aid post, called Posta 3, and in a hospital with very low status within the Chilean National Service. The way my father was treated in the San Juan de Dios hospital left a lot to be desired. He died here. The presence of Chilean laws to protect people and good schools to provide good education and good job opportunities were reserved for those people from the barrios altos.*

*At this point I wanted to be more adventurous and I decided to sound a little bit more provocative in the following questions.*

**What is Chile for you, because you seem to be hooked on that country? That is the impression you gave me and that is the impression that you always give to your friends in Scotland?**

*I can’t avoid talking about it, as I can’t avoid talking about Scotland.*

**A problem of a cultural identity crisis perhaps?**

*Maybe, and I would not be surprised if that were true.*

**But you love Chile and so did Allende - and Pinochet and all his supporters.**

*I am sure that Pinochet and his millions of supporters love Chile in the same way as millions of Chileans who opposed his repressive dictatorship. Surely these two main groups of people must have, however, different motivations to call themselves Chileans. In 1973, the powerful groups who instigated the coup went to great lengths to establish categorically that they were “the real Chileans” and not the others. Minutes after the Coup on the 11th of September, 1973, they used the Chilean flag to express their happiness. We, the Allende supporters, were*

*flagless. This symbolic right-wing gesture marked the political divide and the split of Chilean nationhood.*

### **How is that?**

*The coup was, in my view, also an act to assert the notion of nationhood at its higher and most dangerous level of expression by promoting hate and repression. This nationalistic use of the Chilean banner clearly established that 'they', and not the Allende supporters, were the "real Chileans".*

### **The 'legitimate use of violence' in Chile by its Armed Forces represented, in Pinochet's view and that of his supporters, an act of extreme patriotism.**

*Yes I know. It is sad and very disturbing to think that in today's world many atrocities carry the trade mark "Legitimate".*

*Today, as we speak, believers kill in the names of their Gods and they want us to agree with them. In Pinochet's action I cannot see any act of patriotism at all. What I see is an act of extreme cowardice. What I saw in his action in 1973 is what Salvador Allende saw - a Chilean soldier being a traitor to his fatherland, responding to the interests of a small but very powerful group of people in Chile and responding to the desire of a foreign power which had helped to impoverish the Chilean people. That power is the United States of America. In the name of 'America', in the name of freedom, in the name of the powerful Edwards family, thousands of Chileans were killed. In this context it is very difficult for me to understand Pinochet's patriotism which helped to torture and kill Chileans like chickens. Pinochet's patriotism led to the massive exodus of thousands and thousands of people from Chile. I am one of them.*

*We have to be very careful when we talk about Chilean patriotism. This is my concern when I call myself Chilean, because Pinochet is a 'Chilean', his Army is 'Chilean' and yet they were fully prepared to kill Chileans on behalf of their country and with the help of foreign power. The idea of 'nationality' in Chile became an absurdity.*

### **Why?**

*When it comes to big, and dirty, business the concepts of 'nationality' and 'nationalism' become another matter. In my country, we saw that the Pinochet coup was supported by our 'bourgeoisie' as they saw a great economic opportunity for them. In fact, during the Pinochet regime, many powerful economic groups with a market value of millions and millions of dollars came into existence. Not long time ago, some very wealthy pro-Pinochet business men, the owners of the electricity company in Chile, sold their holding, valued at millions of dollars, to a Spanish multinational company.*

### **But if the business was theirs, they were entitled to do whatever they liked with their shares, weren't they?**

*Do you mean a business called Chile? What was important for the very rich 'Chileans', those who enjoy full citizenship, was the fact that a Spanish multinational paid them very well for each of the shares they have in their pockets. In these terms Chile, the country, becomes a meaningless concept for these very wealthy men.*

### **Can you explain that?**

*They did not mind selling a strategic Chilean industry to a foreign power or leaving Chilean electricity consumers at the mercy of a very aggressive Spanish Company which, of course, will be looking to recover, as soon as possible, their heavy investment in electricity in Chile. The Spanish company will enjoy a monopoly in the Chilean electricity industry.*

### **It is sad, but Chile has managed to build a reputation as a country with certain economic success, especially with the economic policies introduced by the Pinochet regime, is that not so?**

*What? My friend Carlitos Duran sells ice creams on the buses and lives in one of those deprived barrios of Barrancas. How could you explain to him these so-call economic successes? Even today, as I am explaining all these things to you and Pinochet is back in Chile, and Santiago re-shapes itself as a new and 'prosperous' city, thousands and*

thousands of families live worse than those who live in La Nueva la Legua. The so-called Chilean economic success was for entrepreneurs like Errazuriz who, under Pinochet, were able to accumulate great fortunes. They could do whatever they liked with money borrowed abroad. They also could do whatever they wished with their workers.

**And what about the unions?**

Patricio Meller, a research economist at the Corporation de Investigaciones Economicas for Latin America ( CIEPLAN ), said that, in Chile, there has been a disciplined, non-destructive labour force\* which means that unions were not allowed to function and had no bargaining power. If, by the 1970s, dismissal of workers had been prohibited, during the Pinochet era this was no longer the case.

**Did the poor or the working-class people have any purchasing power during the nationalistic period of Pinochet?**

Purchasing power was found among the upper middle classes and the upper classes.

**Was there a lot of business done in the Pinochet years?**

According to the economists, the expansion of Chilean business was great during the Pinochet era and after his reign, but Meller also said that the workers have not benefited from the expansion of exports. This is the bit that interests me. Why have the workers not benefited from expansion of exports - or indeed from all the great economic expansion under Pinochet?

Chile may look in better economic shape than many Latin American countries but, by European standards, this country is just a form of 'banana republic'. This is what I think of today Chile anyway.

**Is this not a pessimistic view of the successes of those who came to power after the end of the Pinochet years: Socialists, Christian Democrats?**

According to the economists, Chile sustained, for a number of years, a high and steady economic growth which translated into jobs - but the evidence showed that it did not translate into progress for the majority of Chileans. In my view the costs of this economic progress, enjoyed by a few, was paid heavily by a majority.

I can offer you this to read.

Carlos at this point shows me The Guardian Weekend of May the 4<sup>th</sup>, 2002. This is a very extensive article called Blueprint for Britain written by the journalist Andy Bucket in order to promote his very interesting book "Pinochet in Piccadilly".

"When General Pinochet came to power in Chile after a military coup in 1973, he unleashed a wave of radical free-market policies that thrilled right-wing observers in Britain. The resulting 'economic miracle' in Chile benefited only some and was achieved at a cost of detention, torture and assassination. Nonetheless, it provided an inspiration for the monetarist revolution of the Thatcher years--and echoes of Chile-style economics survive here in Britain to this day"

**The Chilean wine industry has expanded enormously, we can see it here in Britain and I am sure that Chilean workers must have benefited from it?**

When I buy Chilean wine in Scotland I drink it with great satisfaction, because it is wine which is the product of a very fertile land. After I drink it, I think it is a good value for money. My friends agree with me.

\* ( Latin American Adjustment, How much has happened ?, John Williamson editor, Institute for International Economics, Washington, DC, April 1990 )

Then I see the prices of Chilean wine and I realise that Chilean wines range between £ 3.00 and £7.00 per bottle. A series of questions arises: who are the main beneficiaries of the rich Chilean wine industry? Are the campesinos? Are the owners of the vineyards such as the Errazuriz famil ?, are the foreigners who have invested heavily in the Chilean wine industry ?, are the great British super market chains ?.

The campesinos got a job, for sure, but then what else? To what extent do the Chilean workers benefit from the wine industry? How many people are employed in the industry?,

*How does the Chilean Estate benefit from this industry?, How does the state manage the income coming from taxes ?*

**Carlos you have a lot of questions.** (He looks very enthusiastic...)

*Yes, of course. With the 'prosperity' of the wine industry I expect proper houses and roads for the Chileans workers and good education for all.*

**How do you know all this?**

*I told you that I receive, in my home, the broadcasts of Chilean National Television. I can watch it everyday and have a good idea of what takes place in Chile. So I must ask myself: are we allocating substantial economic resources to education and health and those other services which have been the great successes of the Cuban revolution? The answer is, no.*

*I also ask myself. How do the people of the deprived barrios benefit from the Chilean Salmon industries? Chile is the second largest producer in the world. I also ask myself. What is the impact on the environment as a result of the wine and the salmon industry? These same questions apply also to so many industries in Chile which have taken advantages of what the sea, the lakes, the fertile land, the woodland, the desert and the mountains had to offer.*

*It is clear to me that the many wonderful things that Chile has to offer are not for the benefit of all the Chileans but for the benefit of a few rich Chilean families and foreign companies based abroad.*

**How could you, in a few words, articulate the economic imbalance of your country which is, in a way, a product of the affluent classes?**

*By looking at the type of barrios where these affluent people live in and contrasting them with the type of barrio in which the working-class and the poor live.*

*By looking at some statistical data. For example, by 1968, studies have shown that the 28.3 percent of the Chilean people at the bottom of the economic scale took in 4.8 percent of the national income, while the 2 percent of the population at the top received 45.9 percent of the national income. This incredible economic imbalance was in existence at the time when I used to work at Tizona very hard, for very long hours and not much money. This economic imbalance found in society was at the centre of Allende's economic reforms during my days in Chile.*

**So Chile is far from being a paradise for the poor and the working people?**

*I do not think that Chile is today a paradise for millions of Chileans. It never was and never will be, as long as there is a Class that does not share with others what they have.*

*There is so much work to do on social issues and infrastructure. In health, for example, I can tell you that horrible statistics are coming out from Chile about the health of its citizens. In January, 2002, the World Health Organisation announced that the Chilean capital, with 52.5% of its population, is the most severely affected capital in the world for mental illnesses.*

*While I am talking to Carlos we learn, through Chilean Television, of a new catastrophe. The central area of Chile, where the great concentration of people is found, has been affected by torrential rain. Chilean Television said that, in 1926, precipitation reached 130 millimetres in 24 hours. Forecasters are now predicting 230 millimetres of rain within a 24 hour period, which is much more of what this area receives in a year.*

*The scenes being shown on Chilean television are dramatic, as many roads have been turned into rivers. Flooding is everywhere and Carlos pointed out to me that the more affected areas are, of course, the working-class barrios of Santiago and Valparaíso. Carlos is very angry and anxious about the victims, which include thousands of children and old people.*

*While we look at the images being broadcast from Chile, Carlos says that what is taking place in this country is horrendous from a social and economic of view.*

*I dare to say to Carlos that what is taking place in his country is becoming a common occurrence in many other parts of the world, as a result of climate change, and that many cities around the world are also flooded. At this point we both read from the Deutsche Presse Agentur the following:*

**“The heaviest downpours to strike Chile since 1926 have flooded cities and rivers. The president of Chile, Ricardo Lagos, said that, so far, about 50 thousand people had been forced to leave their home.”**

*You see this problem that Chile is facing is endemic. It happens all the time and no resources are allocated to improve and build proper sewer systems to support a ‘modern’ city of nearly 6 million people.*

**Why not? (I suspect I know some of the answers)**

*The misery is caused by Nature, but the problem becomes more acute because of a human failure. For years, those in government have been talking about doing something to supply the cities of Chile with a modern sewer system; however, there has been, according to newspaper reports, a lack of real will to achieve it. Political accords, involving the political parties defending the middle and upper classes on the one hand and Governments on the other had diminished the chances of resolving the problems. Everything comes down to the question of how to finance a job which will cost the country about \$2000 to \$3000 millions. Raising taxes? If this is the proposal, the affluent classes do not want to know anything about it. Already they do not want to co-operate to finance El Plan Auge which is a reformed health system which will offer all Chileans access to a proper national health system. What is unacceptable is that a great proportion of the budget goes to the Armed Forces, instead of going to other services. Just think: the last planned sewer system, considered of great importance for the city of Santiago, was built in 1908 under the government of President Pedro Montt. It was very successful. I remember very well that when I lived in Santiago it was already a city of nearly three and a half million people and, during the winter, Santiago could withstand reasonably heavy rain for a week, day and night. Flooding did take place and, of course, the most affected areas were then the shanty towns and the working-class areas. Thirty years later, Santiago is unable to cope with heavy rain, even for two consecutive days. Neither Pinochet, who received millions of dollars to sustain his dictatorship, nor the Government of the Concertación, which included the new Socialists and Christian Democrats, managed to do anything of importance to confront a problem that was in the making all the time. The poor and the working-class people need explanations from those who have been in power for the last thirty years in Chile.*

**But Chile has a good reputation in international circles as a country where the level of corruption is low.**

*This is correct but it does not necessarily mean that in Chile corruption does not exist.*

**What about Ethics?**

*Ethics is a concept which counts for very little among the hierarchies governing Chile.*

**The workers of Santiago are the hardest workers in the world, according to the Economist of Dec., 2000. This statistic is consistent with many observations made in Chile by many foreigner entrepreneurs at different times in the country’s history. What do you think of this?**

*Nothing to be proud of. It shows the ferocity of those who created the productive system in Chile.*

**But it does not mean that the Santiaguino workers are the one who produce most in the world?**

*It may be but, according to the Economist, the average worker in Santiago clocked 2,244 hours this year with only 17 days of paid holiday. New Yorkers, on the other hand, worked 1,882 hours.*

**But, are you telling me that the people, instead of working, were playing football or enjoying their families?**

*What I am saying is that this statistic, produced by a Swiss bank, showed that Chileans in the Metropolitan area of Santiago worked harder than in any other place on earth, but did not necessarily produce more than a Parisian, who, according to the same statistic, worked about 1550 hours a year, much less than his counterpart in Santiago.*

*That is another Chilean problem which relates to a failed economic structure. We have to consider, however, the social effect. Here we have two other disturbing facts : Santiago, according to the World Health Organisation, registered the highest record in the world for mental illnesses.*

**What type of mental illnesses are they talking about?**

*Problems related to stress, depression, anxiety, alcohol dependency, feelings of loneliness, etc.*

**But this is a tendency that is present all over the world, isn't it?**

*Yes...But why did Chile have to be the leader? You see.. the other fact I cannot ignore, because they are linked, is that there is an increase in poverty in the Metropolitan region, where about a third of the population of Chile is concentrated. As usual, the statistics show the great contrast that exists between the poor barrios such as those of La Pintana and San Ramon and the rich barrios, such as Providencia, Las Condes, Vitacura. (See La Tercera of 18th February, 2002)*

**I do not think that you envisage great changes in your country, do you?**

*Yes. In a civilised world everything is possible but not in this country. I am not sure that it is possible to achieve a proper and fair social pact with the working-class by those suppressing them : the upper classes, the industrialists, the so call-political classes, the Army, the many state institutions, the Catholic Church, etc.*

*Many unacceptable things are still allowed to happen in my country. Why should a small group of people like Señor Francisco Javier Errazuriz or the Edwards's be allowed to flourish economically in Chilean society? Why, why, why?*

*Why do the people of working-class barrios not live in proper houses or have proper education available, like those people living in the rich barrios? The Población Nueva la Legua, located in a populous area of the south of Santiago de Chile, is a good example of social exclusion. We should ask the people of this **población** what opportunities were available to them during the time of the Pinochet dictatorship.*

**Do you think that their situation improved with the governments of the Concertación which came to power after the dictatorship?**

*My aunt Ana lived in La Nueva La Legua with my cousins. I used to visit her often when I was a boy and I can tell you that, while I am speaking to you in Scotland in the year 2001, that place still have the same grim outlook in term of poverty, deprivation and social exclusion as it had 40 years ago. The answer is, no !*

*While this is a very sad reality in La Legua, on the other side of the city of Santiago another reality had emerged since the time of the Pinochet regime. This reality is called La Dehesa. Here lived a small community of Chileans and foreigners who had taken full advantage of the opportunities that a Chile had to offer to them. Do you remember that bit in my "Barrio" where I tell the story of the Trappist monks?*

**Yes.**

*La Dehesa was built in that beautiful spot at the foot of the Andes Mountain. Fresh air, and with that air of exclusiveness...*

**What do you feel towards the Chilean flag?**

*Not a great deal, since the time of the coup. The powerful right-wingers, with their flag, managed the systematic manipulation of the natural nationalistic instinct of millions of workers. The end result was that millions of them were prepared to give all types of support to the atrocities committed in my country by the Pinochet regime.*

**Perhaps they were disenchanted with the Government of Allende?**

*Perhaps. In any case, we have to remember that millions of them were not prepared to vote for Allende in the election of 1970. What I know for certain is that these millions of people had very little in common with the small minority who had been in charge for centuries of their future and in charge of their nationalistic instincts. What is more, in an act of insane cowardice, the Chilean Right induced millions of working people to stain their hands with the*

blood of their own peers. On another level, people's support was very important because Pinochet could easily claim that he had the support of the "Chilean people".

**Do you suggest that the name of Chile was used to kill Chileans?**

I suggest that many people who were not upper middle class or upper class, just ordinary workers or lower middle class, were also graciously prepared, in the name of "CHILE", to support the total destruction of democracy in their country, the end of freedom and ignore the torture and killing, in an atrocious manner, of thousands of their fellow citizens. The name of CHILE was used to express categorically the idea of nationhood - all to underline the supposed fact that they were "the real Chileans" and not the others.

**But how did the Right manage to antagonise workers against workers?**

The question is also how the Left managed to antagonise the working-class. In any case, the Government of Salvador Allende was perceived by the right-wingers as the Government which would hand over Chile to the Russians. Chilean children were going to be handed over. This ridiculous message captured the imagination of many and many things were done to avoid this supposed hand-over of Chile to Russia. Carlos laughed at this point, as he said that:

What these workers did not know was that their country, their beautiful land, was taken away from them to be given, not to the Russians, but to their fellow Chileans: the ruling classes.

**But if, in terms of national identity, they, the right-wingers, were "the real Chileans", what type of identity do you think the supporters of Salvador Allende had?**

I cannot speak on behalf of the supporters of Allende. But I can speak of my experience, which may be similar or almost similar to that of millions of Chileans. My story as an Allende supporter showed that my real identity was not shaped by Chile as such, but by an ordinary barrio which I really felt was mine. I was really part of it. I cannot say that I was part of Chile. It was only in the 1970s that I began to perceive that sense of belonging to something bigger than my barrio. My identity in terms of nationhood, therefore, was determined by the type of place I grew up in, by the type of academic education I managed to have, by the type of friends I used to have, by the type of job I used to do, by the type of religion I used to believe in, by the material things that I was able to accumulate as a product of my work, by the standard of living I enjoyed as a product of my purchasing power, by the type of services that the Chilean state offered me. On the other hand, I have to keep in mind the following:

CHILE expected me to die young like my parents and many others in my street. CHILE expected me to live in misery all the time. CHILE expected me to obey the laws created to safeguard the privileges of the rich. CHILE expected me to salute the CHILEAN flag and to sing the CHILEAN national anthem with people who were not like me. In fact, with people who oppressed me. In this scenario, I have to conclude that I was never 100% Chilean but, rather, a timid second- or third-class Chilean and part of a society which also contained millions of people who, judging by their social standing in society, could easily be regarded as third- or fourth-class Chileans citizens.