LESSIE JO FRAZIER: ***Salt in the Sand: Memory, Violence, and the Nation-State in Chile, 1890 to the Present.*** Durham & London: Duke University Press, 2007.

While I was conducting oral-history research in Santiago a few years ago, I interviewed a soft-spoken middle-class gentleman who had been imprisoned by the Pinochet regime in 1974. Although he had not been involved in any Marxist political organization or movement, he was nevertheless arrested in the capital and transported, under heavy guard, to Pisagua, a coastal village in Chile's northernmost province, Tarapacá. He endured nearly a year of physical and psychological torment before his release from a notorious site of executions and other horrendous human-rights violations during the Pinochet dictatorship. After the country's return to democracy in 1990 the exhumation of mummified remains in a mass grave proved that many others at Pisagua had not shared my interviewee's fortune. Images of those remains circulated in the media and projected the light of day onto those once-buried bodies, state violence, and, as anthropologist and historian Lessie Jo Frazier indicates, the complexities of memory.

Far from a narrow focus on Pisagua after Salvador Allende's overthrow in September 1973, Frazier's ambitious and stirring book is a broadly cast ethnographic history of remembering and, at times, eliding, manifestations of state violence at the northern "frontier" of the Chilean nation-state—the nitrate-rich province of Tarapacá—since the Parliamentary Republic (1891-1925). It interweaves past and present using oral history, periodicals, literary culture, music, archival documentation, personal experience and subjectivity, and an array of analytic and theoretical tools borrowed from Antonio Gramsci, Michel Foucault, Sigmund Freud, and Raymond Williams, among others. Frazier's introduction shrewdly notes that some historians may find *Salt in the Sand* too anthropological, with its firm ethnographic grounding and narrative origination in the "Present" (circa 2006), to say nothing of its dense theoretical lattice. Anthropologists, meanwhile, may quibble about her examination of the past to answer questions about that past, not merely the relevant questions of the present. In at least one obvious way, then, *Salt in the Sand* does for Chile's northern reaches what another ethnographic-historical study—Florencia Mallon's *The Mapuche Community of Nicolás Ailío and the Chilean State, 1906-2001* (2005)—does for the indigenous south: foreground the past and present of a frontier region in the unfolding drama of nation-state formation.

Frazier begins with a paradigmatic query: Were the 1973 coup and the Pinochet dictatorship aberrations in an otherwise long history of political pluralism and constitutional-institutional stability in Chile? The fact that the democratic

opposition (and later the governing Concertación) effectively "denied the significance of state violence in the longer course of Chilean history by defining it as an exception rather than the norm" (p. 26) moved Frazier to revisit instances of state violence in Tarapacá and identify the varying ways those instances have been remembered. But why focus on the North? Tarapacá's history starkly demonstrates that memories of state violence in that region (including the exercise of military power and quotidian forms of repression) have been central in the (re)formation of the nation-state. Indeed, Frazier finds that "deployments and contestations of memories of state violence were about mobilizing affective ties integral to the forging of political projects and struggles of power centered, especially in Chile, around nation-state formation" (p. 3).

Salt in the Sand explores instances of state violence in Tarapacá and analyzes the memories of those instances of violence. She looks at the killing of nitrate workers at the Oficina Ramírez (1890-1891), the massacre of nitrate workers and their families at the Escuela Santa María in Iquique (1907), the massacre of workers at La Coruña (1925), and at Pisagua as a site of state violence and imprisonment since the 1940s. Frazier identifies the dominant modes of remembering instances of state violence (memories that create "affective ties") that coalesced in the political cultures of three periods. She argues that the prevailing form of memory during "the oligarchic state period and the rise of the labor movement" (1890s-1930s) was "cathartic"; during "the populist period of political party formation" (1930s-1973) the mode of memory was "empathetic." During "the neoliberal period beginning with the military dictatorship and solidarity movements and shifting into a civilian regime" (1973-2005), the dominant mode of memory was "sympathetic" before 1990, transforming into "nostalgia and melancholy" during the post-Pinochet years (pp. 12, 50). Frazier is careful to point out that varying modes of memory can co-exist during any given period. She argues convincingly that the juxtaposition of modes of memory entails struggles between hegemonic and counter-hegemonic forces, between memory and counter-memory, and between remembering and forgetting—all central aspects of nation-state formation. Frazier locates forms of cathartic memory, though eclipsed by the more dominant modes of memory, during the entirety of the twentieth century and into the twenty-first century.

In the case of the Chilean state's massacre of nitrate workers at the Escuela Santa María in 1907, an event that propelled working-class consciousness, Frazier finds that labor groups and other non-elite oppositional sectors employed memory of the massacre in a call for cathartic transformation during the oligarchic state period. That cathartic memory called "for ongoing, direct, and collective mobilization of non-elite sectors" (p. 118). During the populist period, when subaltern activism was subsumed under the rubric of populist reform, empathy defined the

dominant mode of remembering the Escuela Santa María violence, as populist parties and governments sought to create governing cross-class alliances. Thus, as Frazier notes, empathetic memory involved linking past and present struggles against the elite in "the progressive unfolding of a more inclusive nation-state" (p. 118). After Allende's overthrow, remembering the Escuela Santa María took on a sympathetic hue, as the massacre "became an allegory for the overthrow of the Popular Unity government, a story that could elicit solidarity both internationally and abroad" (p. 119). One manifestation of such sympathetic memory was the international popularity of the 1970 recording "Cantata de Santa María de Iquique," a rousing retelling of the massacre by one of the era's leading bands, the pro-Allende Nueva Canción group Quilapayún. After the 1973 coup, Frazier goes on to explain, "the story of this massacre formed a nexus in the contest between melancholy, nostalgia, and the vestiges of cathartic memory" (p. 119). Post-Pinochet civilian governments, led by Socialists and Christian Democrats, have downplayed state violence in Tarapacá (and elsewhere) during the "truth and reconciliation" process and amid their reinforcement of neoliberalism for the purported purposes of national progress and cohesiveness.

While Frazier clearly understands the problems inherent in periodizing Chilean history from the late-nineteenth century, and notwithstanding her attention to the juxtaposition of modes of memory, coupling dominant modes of memory during specific periods downplays some countercurrents, such as the government of conservative President Jorge Alessandri Rodríguez (1958-64) during the "populist period." Jorge Alessandri's father, Arturo Alessandri Palma, receives the attention he most certainly deserves in the context of an emergent populism (or proto-populism) during the 1920s, though the latter's more conservative presidency (1932-38) also recedes in Frazier's account. Regardless, *Salt in the Sand* is a nuanced, thoughtful, and elegant book. It demonstrates that the nation-state, like hegemony, is a process, not an outcome, and that remembering state violence in Tarapacá has been at the center of nation-state formation in Chile. In that vein, Frazier's book speaks to broader issues of violence, memory, power, and politics. It will undoubtedly draw the keen interest of scholars across disciplines and geographic concentrations.

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