

Performativity and Intimacy in Paid Domestic Work: Negotiating the Reproduction of Difference in Chile

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I Rosario Fernández Ossandón hereby declare that this thesis and the work presented in it is entirely my own. Where I have consulted the work of others, this is always clearly stated.

Signed: Rosario Fernández Ossandón
Date: 12th July 2018

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I dedicate this thesis to Nahuel, born in the last year of the PhD and who has seen his mother as who she is.

Abstract

The purpose of this thesis is to analyse the performative role of paid domestic work within upper-class families in Santiago, Chile in the reproduction of national narratives and difference. In 2005, Staab and Maher identified the Chilean version of the ‘servant problem’. Old and new middle- and upper-class families were struggling to find *good servants*; those who knew their subordinate place and performed their duties with a servile attitude. Chilean *nanas*, a pejorative and reiterative form of naming paid domestic workers, were no longer docile young women from rural areas; now, Staab and Maher (2005) wrote, the perception of employers was that these women knew too much about their rights and were from dangerous urban areas marked by violence and uncivilised forms of living. In addition, as the deceased poet Lemebel noted, workers were starting to behave and look like upper-class women; wearing similar clothes, going to the gym, or dyeing their hair blond. This thesis explores the routinised and repetitive acts of atonement of class and racial difference within employer/worker relations in a neoliberal Chile. It is argued that upper-class families continue to be the national norm lived in modern times through the reproduction of a culture of servitude (Camus and de la O Martinez, 2014), and that today survives and recreates the neoliberal ‘white gendered Chilean dream’ through the figure of the *Chilean happy family*. It is precisely this continuity of a culture of servitude that paid domestic work maintains, that enables the Chilean State to portray itself as modern and gender-friendly, with upper-class women becoming modern women – seemingly achieving forms of gender equality – while patriarchal and racist arrangements continue within the home and the nation. This thesis draws upon the theoretical work of Gutiérrez (2010) on affective labour, of Butler (1999) on performativity, of Berlant (2011) on intimacy and politics, and of Stoler (2009) on intimacy and coloniality. It uses interviews with upper-class female employers and with domestic workers.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Problematising paid domestic work in Chile.

'*Cara de nana!!*'¹ was shouted at Anita Tijoux – an internationally acclaimed Chilean rapper – by a young man from the audience in the middle of the Lollapalooza concert in Santiago in March 2014. This event was filmed and commented on in a wide range of local TV programmes, newspapers and on social networks, confirming that such words could only be a direct insult toward Tijoux's 'brown face with indigenous features', and creating a widespread debate around what might have been this man's motivations. In response, Tijoux published a statement, through her twitter account, arguing that this phrase was not an insult but, rather, it made her feel proud of all the women who are domestic workers, as they represent a symbol of courage. She later argued that her face was the same as that of the man who shouted at her: small, with dark hair, with 'features that seemed to bother your class'.

In August of that same year, the now deceased gay poet and performer Pedro Lemebel published an essay titled '*Cara de Nana*'², in which he made a critique of the act of naming domestic workers as *nanas*. According to Lemebel, the Chilean society – especially the new middle and upper classes – name domestic workers *nanas* in an act of *siutiquería*³, in their desire to obtain and show their social status: an act that represents the need to reference the historic elite in the context of their new consumption capacities within a neoliberal Chile. He argued that a great number of new middle- and upper-class professional women who work all day and feel tired, just want to come home and see that everything is functioning; domestic workers are those who make this 'professional women's dream' possible. *Nana* – a condition, according to Lemebel, that only exists as an expectation for social status – tries to affirm employers' 'invented' status and hides the dignity of this labour within a familial rhetoric that defines domestic workers as both part and not part of the family. We could further argue that what domestic work enables today, is the performance – or the idea of performance – of the 'white, gendered, modern Chilean dream'.

In addition, according to studies in Chile (Staab and Maher, 2005; Stefoni, 2002), the new middle and upper classes feel domestic workers today 'know too much about their rights' and no longer perform their duties with a 'servile attitude'. They even, according to Lemebel, work out at gyms,

¹ Nanny face, domestic worker's face.

² <http://alenclaridad.blogspot.co.uk/2014/08/cara-de-nana-por-pedro-lemebel-chile.html>

³ Pretending to be elegant and distinguished, but resulting in looking ridiculous, tacky or pretentious. Oscar Contardo makes an interesting analysis of the Chilean *siutiquería* in his book '*Siútico – Arribismo, Abajismo y Vida Social en Chile*' (Ed. Planeta, 2013), looking at the ways in which Chileans aspire to be 'more' than they are, aiming to improve their social class and status.

dye their hair and buy similar clothes to those of their employers. I argue, that these transformations propose a danger to social hierarchies and social order and an anxiety regarding the possible confusion of social boundaries. As Lemebel discusses, *nanas* are dressed in special uniforms so they are not confused with other guests, and they are asked to eat different meals; they are ‘put in their place’ because ‘they are not how they used to be’. According to the poet, *nanas* are again and again reminded of their ‘history’ of poverty and rurality and of their ‘indigenous origins’, thus, reproducing the new middle and upper classes’ extremely desired status. I argue that these intentions reproduce a nostalgic rhetoric of the ‘fixity’ of past social boundaries. Having ‘cara de nana’ is having a woman’s, indigenous, and poor face: a face representative of domestic workers, and ‘different’ from employers.

Although these events could trigger discussions on many things, I will focus on how class status, domestic work and ethnic ‘origins’ are clearly interrelated and reflected in these scenes, as well as on the dialogue between these things and the sustainment of the ‘modern Chilean dream’. Drawing upon Lemebel’s thoughts, naming someone as ‘cara de nana’ reveals how certain bodies are attached to a specific labour within a broader sexual and /racial ethnic division of labour; or rather, how domestic work – as a servant’s labour – needs certain ‘marked’ bodies in order to produce national narratives based on racial, ethnic and class differences. It also reveals how these bodily traces are used to distinguish between those who are ‘marked’ by ethnicity and race, and those who, apparently, remain un-marked. The naming of Tijoux as a marked woman enables the naming of the un-marked, those who are white, rich and from a wealthy background. In this sense, domestic workers become a symbol of poor and racially marked women, in contrast with those who are not domestic workers: employers, therefore, can be un-marked – or rather, whiter and richer. Tijoux’s case highlights how class, status and race are deeply grounded in the way Chilean society organises itself, and how it tends to self-define as modern and non-indigenous.

Lemebel’s critique also reminds us of the strategies of contemporary middle and upper classes used in sustaining their un-marked bodies in a context where domestic workers are not necessarily from indigenous and rural backgrounds (as they were in the colonial period until the mid-20th century). Today, domestic workers are not evidently ‘distant’ from those un-marked bodies, making it a necessity to re-mark their bodies through different strategies, re-racialise them, and thus, reproduce the much-desired social status of employers. Drawing upon Tijoux’s and Lemebel’s reflections, I further argue that the desire to maintain and reproduce a social status based on race, ethnicity, class and division of labour, within both new and old, middle and upper classes, is founded in a long

history of the elite's reproduction in the Chilean context, as well as in the ways in which different social classes have related to each other. In this thesis, I will explore the ways in which domestic work (and more generally a history of servitude) has marked certain bodies as inferior, and thus, provided social status to the Chilean elite, and how *servitude* can become a central site in understanding particular relations between social classes and status production in Chile. This thesis intends to explore the socio-historical ways in which paid domestic work has been 'marked' as inferior, in order to understand contemporary forms of production of difference in the context of neoliberal Chile.

The experiences of Anita Tijoux and the reflections of Lemebel are clear reminders of the importance of studying paid domestic work in Chile. Class status, ethnicity and racial 'origins' and gendered division of labour within society and within Chilean homes, become significant political aspects that need to be addressed if we desire to understand the complex formation and dynamics of domestic work. Domestic work does not only mirror power relations, it also reproduces them due to its performative capacity. In this sense, a central argument of this thesis –revealed in the situations already discussed – is that domestic work, in its performative power of reproducing racial, class and social status, becomes an intimate and political site of sociological enquiry. It is a site where both intimate relations and political distinctions between social classes and racially (un)marked bodies are produced at the same time.

The problematisation of domestic work, within a broader history of class and racial forms of distinction, has been explored within the academic domain. Domestic work, as a series of practices (Anderson, 2000) that involve both productive and reproductive tasks, has been problematised within the social sciences and the humanities, as well as within the Western feminist movement, in the last four decades at least. These efforts have explored the importance of domestic and reproductive labour – from both a Marxist and neo-Marxist perspective – within the economic organisation of capitalist societies (Federici, 2012), showing how this labour exemplifies the links between racism and the sexual division of labour (Glenn, 1992). More contemporary readings have researched the international division of domestic work in neoliberal globalised economies (Sassen, 2003), its commodification process (Gutiérrez, 2010), the emergence of global care-chains (Hochschild, 2000), new organisations of the international sexual and racial division of labour (Salazar Parreñas, 2001; Hondagneu-Sotelo, 2001; Cox, 2006), and the new ways in which transnational families of domestic workers are built. Drawing upon this contemporary literature, an interesting line of research has been focusing on domestic work as affective labour (Gutiérrez,

2014; Brites, 2014; Anderson, 2014). We will further discuss in the first chapter main arguments of this literature, but it is important to note here that this approach enables us to understand both the structural features of this labour – based on racial, class and gender forms of exploitation – and also the intimate everyday relationships between employers and workers that reproduce social boundaries, while at the same time negotiating their *fixity*. In addition, these contemporary readings conceive of intertwined structural forms of exploitation and everyday negotiations which are based on collective narratives of the nation, the family and the home – on distinctions between ‘us’ and ‘them’ (Anderson, 2014). Based on these ideas, I propose to problematise these readings with a post-colonial analysis on intimacy and politics, to understand domestic work as a performative practice of national narratives and as an intimate–political site. Hence, while the focus is on paid domestic work, I not only emphasise the construction of otherness within this practice, but also explore further the production of the national ‘us’, reorientating our eyes towards the formation of hegemonic discourses and the strategies of reproduction of the upper classes in Santiago.

Drawing upon these features – domestic work as an intimate–political performative site, and a space of production and negotiation of forms of exploitation and national narratives – the research questions that guide this thesis are: how does the performance of paid domestic work produce and reproduce class, racial and gender discourses and practices in neoliberal Chile? What gender, ethnic, racial and class distinctions are performed through everyday practices within domestic work and what national narratives and forms of difference do they produce and challenge? The three main contributions of this thesis are related to aspects unsuccessfully explored by Chilean literature: to research domestic work within a broader national history, by using a theoretical perspective based on the notions of performativity, affects and intimacy, and to analyse ethnic, racial and class tensions within everyday practices. In this introduction, I discuss the central themes on which this thesis will focus, and interrogate the particularity of the Chilean case. I also describe the main features of domestic work within the Latin American and Chilean context as well as providing a description of each chapter.

Studying domestic work, studying intimate–political practices

Domestic work has long been a subject of interest for feminists, social scientists and scholars of the humanities, and research efforts have been deeply encouraged by the understanding of this activity as a historical form of exploitation towards women in general, and migrant, rural, black, indigenous and poor women specifically (Federici, 2012). In addition, recent studies have focused on the emotional (Hochschild, 2008) and affective (Gutiérrez, 2014; Brites, 2014) aspects of domestic work, with the intention of understanding how these historical class, gender, racial and ethnic-based forms of exploitation are lived, performed and negotiated within homes and relationships between employers and workers. Furthermore, in a recent publication of the Women's International Forum, Gutiérrez et al. (2014) describe domestic work as an emotional and affective labour where structural dynamics of national forms of inclusion/exclusion – based on race, ethnicity and migration – are navigated in intimate everyday relationships. Domestic work becomes a site of constant building and negotiating of social boundaries between ‘us’ and ‘them’ within national and international narratives. Although Federici (2012) reminds us not to reduce domestic work to emotional labour, as it involves a broader historical form of exploitation towards women and racialised women (which makes it different from other types of emotional labours within capitalist and neoliberal societies), we can still agree that domestic work is a special site for sociological enquiry due to the ambiguities of it being a affective and historical form of exploitation, performed within an intimate space, and a micro-site for political forms of the creation of distinctions within national discourses and struggles, and a key feature of capitalist exploitation.

Gutiérrez et al. (2014) also pay special attention to the modes in which public and political discourses and policies on migration and care services affect everyday interactions between employers and domestic workers, and are intertwined with narratives of nation, family and home. These authors do not only reaffirm the political definition of domestic work, but also assert how domestic work is constantly affected by political and public instruments through ‘distant governmentality’ (Gutiérrez, 2010). Within this thesis, while incorporating key historical approaches towards domestic work, I join these more contemporary debates about affective aspects of domestic work, and add particular aspects inspired by studies on intimacy and politics (Stoler, 2009; McClintock, 1993; Berlant, 1998). While understanding the importance of structural forms of exploitation and complex emotional bonds within domestic work, I problematise this labour as an intimate–political site: that is, a practice based on political distinctions reproduced within an intimate rhetoric.

Historical forms of exploitation need domestic work as a strategy of social organisation and use political distinctions such as ‘women’s labour’ or ‘poor women’s labour’ to reproduce – as intimate and in intimacy – class, gender, racial and ethnic distinctions between people. Furthermore, I argue – especially in chapter two – that this problematisation allows us to comprehend everyday forms of negotiation, production and reproduction of social boundaries and class status, distinctions and oppressions, while at the same time establishing the power of domestic work in the production of social values and how it affects political definitions of home, family and nation, and also public debates regarding women’s labour, the role of families and the right to care provision. In this sense, by problematising domestic work as an intimate–political site, I do not only acknowledge the ways in which political discourses affect domestic work, but also intend to understand its performative power in both the reproduction of socio-historical forms of differentiation and in the mediation of national anxieties. This thesis endeavours, in the following aspects, to understand domestic work’s performative power within intimate and political regimes.

First, I propose to problematise domestic work as a long-lasting form of organisation of reproductive labour, marked by a process of feminisation. By feminisation we do not only refer to the fact that it is mainly women who perform this work, but also that domestic work transports ‘feminine stereotypes and legacies’ (Gutiérrez, 2010, 2014). Modern liberal theory separated the private and the public spheres, locating women within the domain of the domestic and the family, and defining this domain as apolitical (Pateman, 1988). Domestic work transports this ideological division, which naturalises this work as ‘women’s work’. However, as I will argue, domestic work is not only an activity performed within the domestic sphere, it also possesses a performative power that transcends public/private divisions, and actually works through political domains. Furthermore, it is a political site of production, reproduction and negotiation of moral and gendered notions regarding the nation and the family. In this sense, domestic work is affected by (Gutiérrez, 2014), but also affects, the public and political domains, becoming a site for political struggles. Because of the feminised character of domestic work, we can observe how sexual division of labour, gender relations and gendered national narratives are produced and managed in everyday practices within homes and families, and in the relationships between employers and workers.

Second, I understand that this feminised history of domestic work is also marked by class and racial/ethnic differences and, at the same time, mirrors how lower, middle and upper classes relate to each other in order to define racialised ‘others’ (workers) and the national ‘us’ (employers), facilitating upper-class lifestyles. A central argument in this thesis is that the understanding of paid

domestic work as a significant element of economic growth based on the exploitation of women, underlines the ways in which the enrichment of middle and upper classes – and consequently the obtainment of social status by possessing the power to ‘have’ a domestic worker – is only possible by the extraction of economic and cultural value from a basic human activity: the reproduction of life and of everyday life and by the racialisation and inferiorisation of domestic workers. Domestic work is defined as an ‘exceptional’ sociological site of enquiry for specific relationships between lower and upper classes based on racial difference, and the ways in which they are maintained and reproduced across generations by using gendered notions of housework. The reproduction of upper-class lifestyles, and therefore their status, reflects how class differences between these groups are gendered and racialised, and use the historical feature of feminisation and racialisation of domestic work to justify the employment of lower-class women to perform the ‘dirty work’. Understanding the gendered and racialised form of class reproduction that domestic work reflects, motivates research into how these differences are managed, reproduced and questioned within upper-class family homes, and what aspects are revealed in relation to the role of ‘women’s labour’ in the production of upper-class status. In addition, I am interested in understanding the role of middle- and upper-class women (employers) in the reproduction of their families’ racial status within the management of the home and within their relationship of ‘guidance’ and ‘correction’ with domestic workers; and the role that family memory of their ‘natural status’ plays within employer’s narratives.

Third, not only gendered and racialised, but also national discourses circulate, affect and produce gendered class differences within domestic work, providing justifications for the reproduction of upper-class status. Domestic work reveals the enrichment of the upper class created by employing low-waged and racialised ‘women’s’ labour and shows us the ways in which upper-class lifestyles and status are culturally justified through political and intimate rhetoric. I will argue, an upper-class lifestyle – a luxury for only a minority with power, but extremely desired by the new middle and upper classes in Chile – acts as a normative ideal of the *Chilean happy family*, representative of the ‘normal’ national family; and for upper-class families to perform such an ideal is seen, by employers, as only ‘natural’, ‘right’ and ‘un-marked’. Therefore, domestic work not only mirrors the gendered and racialised relationship between lower and upper classes within society, but also the cultural basis of this relationship based on normative national definitions of the ‘proper family lifestyle’. The upper classes make it their own ‘right’ to have the luxury of exception from performing the ‘dirty work’, while lower classes are those who do their own and others’ dirty work within homes and within the nation.

Drawing on this exceptionality, upper-class families create conditions for the production of their daily lives, their social status and cultural values of distinction. In addition, having an upper-class lifestyle becomes the desire of wealthy families, as it represents the ideal national lifestyle – the ‘normal’ model to which families aspire. But, as I have argued, this model can only function by ‘having’ lower-class women doing the ‘dirty work’. I am interested in this thesis in analysing how discourses regarding upper-class families, ‘proper national families’, and lower classes’ ‘obligations’ to serve ‘proper families’, justifies a political and economic relationship between lower and upper classes today. I am concerned with the historical and contemporary justifications of the ‘normal’ servitude of the lower classes in relation to middle and upper classes, how upper-class status is reproduced by hiring a domestic worker, and what roles lower and middle/upper classes have in relation to reproducing the ideal notion of the *Chilean happy family*. I propose working with the hypothesis – based on employers’ narratives from interviews done in Santiago – that it is only ‘natural’ for employers to perform a specific lifestyle because of their relationship to the nation (as representative of the ‘proper national family’), and it is only ‘natural’ for lower classes to perform a *servitude* role, because that’s their responsibility to the nation as racialised and feminised others. Even though the desire to perform ‘upper-class lifestyles’ becomes central for both middle and upper classes, in this thesis we will focus specifically on the practices within upper-class homes. The fact that the ‘upper-class lifestyle’ is appealing to the middle classes shows us the importance of this ideal as the normative base for the Chilean national narrative regarding ‘proper families’, and the normalising power of the representation of upper-class families.

Fourth, scholars have shown that domestic work is embedded with racial and ethnic hierarchies, which are socio-historical constructions that intertwine with economic forms of labour organisation based on cultural distinctions between groups of people (Glenn, 1992). Historical aesthetics change over time, but what does not necessarily change is the social expectation that specific groups become *servants* and the upper classes have the exception of avoiding domestic duties – this non-performance of domestic work becoming a marker of social status, of ‘cleanliness’ and of superiority. In this sense, racial and ethnic divisions of labour are, indeed, constitutional to the naturalisation of domestic work as a *servant’s* labour and crucial to the extraction of economic and cultural value of this activity. I base these ideas within the analytical framework of coloniality of power (Quijano, 2000) and a gender system of coloniality of power (Lugones, 2008), both of which argue that – with colonisation – a racial and sexual division of labour was spread in Latin America, organising social differences using these labour forms of distribution of bodies. I am interested in

understanding the reproduction of racial and ethnic boundaries within everyday interactions in homes, and how conceptions about ‘origin’ justify workers’ and employers’ positions and duties within the family and the nation.

Following the presentation of the main concerns of this thesis, I argue that domestic work is understood as a site of political and intimate relations between the lower and upper classes, and functions under the logic of ‘servitude labour’ (a labour based on the expectation of a ‘servile’ attitude) orientated at the reproduction of the national idealised ‘proper upper-class lifestyle’, justified and organised around gender, class, racial and ethnic forms of difference, and based on social distinctions such as dirty/clean, uneducated/civilised, rural/urban, among others. I will now go in-depth in my observation, and critically challenge the history and characteristics of this servitude labour, and its relation to upper-class lifestyle in Chile. I argue that narratives about the nation, the family, the upper-class, gender and racial difference are re-enacted, performed and questioned within routinised practices of cleaning, cooking and caring. I focus on this performative capacity of domestic work to produce difference, not only related to the production of gender, class, ethnic and racial distinctions, but also to how these distinctions articulate specific cultural values related to national and family narratives and practices: however, what is the specificity of the Chilean case? What are the specific conditions of possibility and features of the performative power of domestic work within Chile? How have lower and upper classes related to each other within Chilean history?

In this thesis, I interrogate the specific forms in which domestic work produces narratives and practices of the ‘Chilean home’ and the ‘Chilean family’ within different public aesthetics and relations between social classes – that is, between employers and workers. I argue that rigid readings focused on dichotomies of structure/agency, or domination/exploitation, are not able to explain the more complex formations of difference, normative discourse or practices of the ‘Chilean home and family’. I propose a different perspective – based on emotions, affects and narratives – that is able to grasp everyday forms in which domestic work demonstrates its performative power in producing social values through workers/employers relationships.

To understand the relation between intimate–political practices within domestic work in Chilean homes, and the specific social values they produce in the Chilean context, I draw upon theoretical reflections regarding nation, gender and labour, looking at how these may coordinate in different modes of ‘exceptionality’. My objective is to comprehend how domestic work – as an intimate–

political site of national narratives and practices – mirrors deeper social wounds and the relationship between the lower and upper classes, drawing upon two specific ‘exceptionalities’: ‘Chile as an exceptional country’ and the ‘care crisis’.

Domestic work in Chile: making the case

What makes the Chilean case interesting for the study of domestic work? What are the specific conditions of intimate relations between employers and workers in the Chilean case? Why are the Chilean upper classes so interested in ‘having’ domestic workers? These questions about the specificity of the Chilean case emerged throughout my fieldwork and in many workshops, seminars and conferences where I presented my reflections. On the one hand, the question about ‘specificity’ is one that every researcher poses regarding her or his own territory or subject of study. Sociology has had an interesting preoccupation with ‘making a case’, justifying the ‘value’ of a subject in becoming worthy of sociological enquiry. It does this by ‘problematising’ a subject, meaning, in some cases, looking at statistics and secondary literature with the aim of finding a ‘problem’, tension, or specific aspect that either no one has given answer to, or too many have tried to solve without apparent success. In this thesis, together with problematising the case study, I will further focus on the ‘problem’ of domestic work as a way of researching current practices within a specific history related to ‘Chilean identity’ debates, the formation of the Chilean elite, and the specific relationships between lower, middle and upper classes. The exercise of ‘situating’ the ‘problem’ within a specific history follows a Foucauldian approach of problematisation. It is bound in the understanding of the performative power of this labour within several regimes of knowledge and power relations regarding discourses and practices concerning the nation, the family, and the home in the Chilean context. In this sense, I suggest problematising the ‘exceptionality’ of the Chilean case, by arguing that the case is ‘exceptional’ because it narrates a specific memory of this territory, and by critically addressing the ‘exceptionality’ rhetoric within Chilean identity discourses from its conformation as a nation-state. I also critically address current debates about the ‘care crisis’ – specifically experienced in Chile – as the absence of proper solutions to the care needs of society (Acosta, 2015), and the ‘nanny problem’ (Staab and Maher, 2005) affecting middle- and upper-class homes, where employers argue that there is high demand and a lack of women willing to perform this duty. However, I will show how this ‘demand’ or ‘crisis’ has more to do with the crisis of the family – as the national referent – and with historical expectations of employers that domestic

workers perform their duties with love, devotion and a servile attitude, rather than with a practical problem related to demand/offer conditions of domestic work.

1. Reading domestic work within the Chilean ‘exceptionality’ frame

The ‘siutiquería’ of Chileans – the need to feel ‘more’ than what they are, more white, more upper class and more ‘civilised’ – can be linked to a historical rhetoric of ‘exceptionality’ used by different actors in the production of national narratives and identities. Chileans as ‘different’ from their internal ‘others’ (indigenous people) and from their ‘external’ others (Latin American neighbours) is a ‘feeling’ based on the need for differentiation, filled with racial stereotypes and – as I will argue in this thesis – class status wounds. This ‘exceptionality’ – a common rhetoric within the national narrative (Hutchison et al., 2014) – has materialised in different discourses and practices within Chilean history, and is a response, I suggest, to a broader Latin American phenomenon related to the ‘original scene’.

Because this research aims to understand domestic work as an intimate–political site of reproduction of the upper-class lifestyle, national narratives of the nation and the Chilean family, and the role of servitude and domestic work in the negotiation between lower and upper classes, I suggest we consider the complex historical traces of the social organisation of racial and ethnic boundaries, which frame current practices of paid domestic work in Chile. These racial and ethnic boundaries are seen, for example, in what Staab and Maher (2005) have described as employers’ preferences; according to these authors, employers prefer Peruvian domestic workers because of their ‘docile’ and ‘servile’ attitude, in contrast to Chilean and Mapuche women, who ‘know their rights too much’. However, little further sociological enquiry has been developed in relation to broader historical links between servitude and ethnic/racial differences. I propose that these differences should be addressed in the light of historical legacies of colonisation, racial conflicts between social classes throughout the Chilean history of nation building, and current everyday practices between employers and migrants. I suggest that although ‘history’ does not determine current dynamics, certain historical ‘scenes’ are rearticulated and cited in ethnic and racial tensions today.

The process of colonisation and, later, mestizaje,⁴ became a common experience within the Latin American territory, printing marks of an ‘original scene’ (Taylor, 2003) which was lived and performed differently within the territory, and later framed national processes of independence. This ‘original scene’ is crucial, I suggest, for the understanding of racial and sexual divisions of labour on the continent, and the specific social roles that servitude and domestic work obtained within the Chilean context. This scene established a series of economic and cultural relations between colonisers and indigenous communities, relations based on power and social difference. The Peruvian sociologist Anibal Quijano (2000) has named these sets of relations as ‘coloniality of power’.

The new world order – based on racial distinctions between the indigenous and colonisers – not only created new subjectivities based on race but also a racial division of labour that enabled economic and political control of the population. Through the relation of salary to labour, a new form of domination emerged. Paid labour became the privilege of whites, while non-paid and slave labour was associated with ‘inferior races’. Indigenous and local people of America were seen as ‘inferior’ and integrated work positions labelled also by this mark. This ‘class’ system or social stratification – which was installed in Latin America through the ethnic/racial division of labour – ensured the incorporation of slaves, rural, immigrant and poor women into service work (including domestic work), producing the inferiorisation of these groups. I argue that this inferiorisation became a way of directing and ‘educating’ their bodies, marked by the distinction civilisation/barbaric, the aim of which was to produce docile bodies for labour exploitation.⁵ In this sense, racialised bodies and labour control became part of a complex gendered system of domination (Lugones, 2008) based on low-waged salaries (Anzaldúa, 1987; Quijano, 2000).

Within the Chilean territory, this ‘scene’ was managed by its colonisers, and later by its upper classes, by them defining themselves as exceptional, as ‘different’ to Chile’s internal others and its neighbours: in other words, ‘whiter’. Two main domains were used within the rhetoric of ‘exceptionality’: racial/ethnic and economic (Hutchison et al., 2014). In relation to the first, we can distinguish between practical forms of racial divisions between people, and broader national narratives related to, in general, the Chilean people.

⁴ Mestizaje is understood as both the process of racial mixing and as the ideology used in the 19th and 20th centuries to unite the new nation-states in Latin America.

⁵ Rural families ‘sending’ a young daughter to ‘good’ wealthy homes in Santiago – in order for them to obtain education and better life conditions – was a common practice in Chile until the late 20th century. In addition, studies (Neira, 2004; Milanich, 2011) have also shown how criminalised women in the 18th and 19th centuries were sent to reformatory centres to become domestic workers, or how domestic workers’ children were sent to homes to become servants themselves.

Regarding broader national narratives, the Chilean elite and intellectuals defended the idea that Chile was more ethnically homogenous than its neighbouring countries, highlighting its ‘whiter’ complex. With independence in 1810, a nationalist feeling emerged, still very much based on the European heritage; however, by the centenary (after the Pacific War between Chile, Bolivia and Peru) a different nationalism appeared, much more related to the racial specificity of Chile – the perfect mix between the Spanish and Mapuche (Subercaseaux, 2002) – and which highlighted only the masculine attributes of the Mapuche people. In this sense, different strategies were used to homogenise the Chilean nation, one of them being an underestimation of mestizaje with the indigenous population, highlighting the European heritage of criollos.⁶ In addition, indigenous and Afro-descendent people have been erased from national history, the Europeanisation of Chile (Hutchison et al., 2014) becoming a common rhetoric up until today. Thus, racial and ethnic hierarchies have formed specific forms of class and national narratives.

Regarding the practical aspect – a legacy of the gendered coloniality of power system – the distinction between those considered inferior (indigenous) and those considered superior (criollos) spread through the system of castas,⁷ leaving an ‘original wound’ within the social fabric. During the colonial period, the Spanish very much feared Mapuche revolts, justifying their domination (which became only possible in the 19th century) due to their ‘moral backwardness’: the elite’s fear was justified in moral terms. A distinction between those indigenous who revolted and those who became slaves or servants became clear to the local elite and upper classes. Indigenous and poor people could either be enemies or loyal servants, the latter becoming educated in the ‘values’ of the elite by working in their households.

Later generations of upper classes, those who were born in the colonies (criollos) and after independence (1810), had to manage their positions within this new social order, creating specific strategies to differentiate themselves from the rest of the poor mestizos. According to Contardo (2008), the forms of distinction used by the upper classes are less about economic individual achievements and more about the closure of their ‘borders’ through relations of kinship and emotions of belonging. For example, in the 19th and early 20th centuries, origin, ancestry and having a European surname (Spanish, Basque, English and French) became markers of distinction (Giesen, 2010). Also during these periods, moral justifications appeared in order to distinguish themselves

⁶ People with Spanish mothers and fathers, born in Chile.

⁷ The population, in the colonial period, was divided into castas – criollos, indígenas, mulatos, mestizos and esclavos – based on economic and racial distinctions.

from the poor and indigenous population, the latter being seen as alcoholics, idle and sluggish. These distinctions became moral justifications for the upper classes' privileged power position within society: poor and indigenous population 'naturally' belonged to low-wage and servitude positions.

In relation to the economic domain, Chile has historically been 'read' by its own intellectuals and by others as different from its neighbours because of its economic achievements. From the 19th century onwards, Chile has been portrayed as an 'economic miracle' due to its stable, centralised and 'democratic' political system, especially after Pinochet's coup and the 'success' of the neoliberal project. Today, Chile is seen as the most stable, modern and neoliberal democracy in Latin America, becoming the first country of the region to join the OCDE (Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development). According to Hutchison (et al., 2014), although many of these achievements are real, the economic exceptionalism of Chile has functioned much more as a 'myth' for national identity formations, serving the ruling class with nationalist and ideological agendas. In addition, an important hypothesis of this thesis is that, together with this ideological function, the 'economic exceptionalism' of Chile is also a 'modern' strategy to obscure an older 'emotional wound'. The wealth of the Chilean colony, and later the country after independence, was far below the level of other Latin American colonies, producing an 'insecurity', a wound in the upper classes' subjectivity related to their economic status. This insecurity, I interpret, is crucial in the formation of the Chilean upper class and affects the relationship between the upper class and its internal and external 'others'.

One important way of concealing this wound in order to differentiate itself was the possession of servants. Servitude – within upper-class homes – became a form of social status: 'having', 'educating' and 'controlling' servants became a marker for local upper classes. This is key to understanding current employers' discourses and feelings, which I will later discuss in chapters four and five. Whenever the employers interviewed felt that the boundaries between them and domestic workers became closer or blurrier, they argued how 'ridiculous' it was for domestic workers to 'want to be like them' due to their economic, educational and 'origin' differences. The need to differentiate themselves by self-defining as richer, better educated, and with more 'decent origins', says much about the wounds related to their own ethnic, racial and economic 'origin'.

This 'exceptionality' rhetoric becomes a starting point from which to research the wounds of insecurity of the upper classes – wounds that have shaped specific relationships between them and

the ‘service’. Thus, the narrative of ‘exceptionality’ of Chileans allows us to understand: 1) the ways in which the upper classes were formed and are constantly reproduced, as well as their internal and external ‘otherness’ (poor, indigenous, foreign); and 2) how the relationships between social classes in Chile have been constructed based on class, racial and ethnic forms of differentiations. A working hypothesis regarding the ‘exceptionality’ rhetoric is that: upper classes, by treating their ‘others’ as in servitude, conceal their original wound and position themselves as ‘naturally’ in a higher position in the social order because of their ‘different’ and ‘better’ ‘origin’ to poorer classes. Paid domestic work is a manifestation of this strategy. Because of this, domestic work becomes a ‘must’ for the reproduction of the ‘modern Chilean dream’. I will follow this line of research when I look in-depth at the interviews with employers in chapters four and five.

2. Reading domestic work within the Chilean ‘care crisis’

A second important dimension for ‘making the case’ regarding the study of domestic work as a performative site of production and reproduction of social distinctions, is its relation to public narratives concerning the ‘care crisis’. The ‘care crisis’ rhetoric not only became predominant in European public discourses, but also travelled throughout Latin American debates, and to Chile, both within the State and in academia. According to Pérez-Orozco (2006) and Acosta (2015) –the first studying the Spanish case and the second the Chilean context – the ‘care crisis’ arises from the tensions between social forms of organisation of care and the neoliberal economic order that prioritises capital over human needs. They argue that while welfare states retreat from their responsibilities and care programmes, ‘private’ solutions expand, generating a highly unequal care market (Farris, 2015), removing access to care for those families and individuals with limited economic resources. However, in the case of Chile, there was never a proper welfare state to begin with. Private solutions to care needs have always been part of lower-, middle- and upper-class families’ strategies to reproduce their lifestyles. What varies are the ways in which each group finds ‘solutions’ to this need, paid domestic work being a historical privilege for upper-class families, and a more recent privilege for the middle classes.

Therefore, we can question the ‘newness’ of this ‘care crisis’ in the era of neoliberal globalisation drawing upon historical forms of privileged ‘private’ solutions to care needs, but also by ‘reading’ the ‘care crisis’ in the light of other ‘crises’. I propose to read this ‘care crisis’ in the footsteps of other socio-historical processes related to discourses on families’ ‘moral crises’ and the call for the ‘re-ordering’ of society. Influenced by the studies on intimacy and power (Stoler, 2009;

McClintock, 2003), the ‘care crisis’ is not only defined as a current crisis of the modes of organisation of reproduction and demand/offer conditions of domestic work, but also as a process that is part of a broader genealogy of ‘anxieties’ regarding modernity, families, the nation and its technologies of social re-ordering.

I suggest that the so called ‘care crisis’ not only responds to the lack of state-based support facilities for families, but most importantly is related to three other aspects that can only be critically addressed by incorporating a socio-historical perspective. First, the ‘care crisis’ responds to a historical anxiety regarding the crisis of family ‘values’ and practices, which is assumed – by conservative consensus – to be the product of the incorporation of middle- and upper-class women into the workforce and the emergence of different family lifestyles (non-heterosexual, or non-bi-parental). This situation, at the same time, ‘puts in danger’ the figure of the ‘normal’ family – representative of the ‘national family’. I suggest that the ‘normal family’ is represented by the ‘upper-class lifestyle’, which is defined as the ‘proper family life’. This representation of the ‘normal family’ in crisis functions within the spectacle of the nation. Understanding the ‘upper-class family’ as the ideal ‘national family’ enables the research of the importance of paid domestic work as a ‘solution’ to the ‘care crisis’ and the basis of the production of the ‘national family’. The fact that domestic labour works as a ‘solution’, allows us to understand the crucial role it plays in the reproduction of upper-class lifestyles and the ‘Chilean family’. In addition, within the context of the ‘cult of appearance’ (Montecino, 2007) – that is the relevance of appearing to be a ‘proper family’ – domestic workers become a crucial object of the national spectacle, representative of the ‘Chilean family’ and reproducing its normative status.

Second, this ‘care crisis’ also reflects the ‘nanny problem’, that is, upper-class women’s complaint about the lack of women willing to work as domestic workers. However, as we will see in chapter four, this complaint conceals a nostalgic view of domestic workers’ attitudes towards the job in earlier decades – an attitude supposedly based on devotion and love and performed with ‘servility’. We will see the ways in which these nostalgic perceptions are very much racialised, as they use ethnic, racial and ‘origin’ differences to construct the ‘ideal nanny’ for the proper home. Third, based on these two features – the national family crisis and the ‘nanny problem’ – upper-class women are called upon to ‘save’ both the national family and domestic workers, who have ‘forgotten’ their social position. I propose to work with the hypothesis that this ‘saviour’ discourse enacts the historical role of upper-class women saving national morality and tradition, and therefore reproducing their status and moral superiority. As we will see in chapters four and five, this

‘saviour’ role is based on an emotional labour performed by employers towards workers, in order to obtain their ‘servile loyalty’.

2.1 *‘Family crisis’*

The socio-historical discourses, based on the ‘crisis’ rhetoric, operate as mechanisms and technologies of power (Foucault, 1990) that emerge in times when moral and institutional order is in a process of transformation, and a national ‘us’ becomes in need of re-enforcement. The ‘us’ is linked with emotional and material practices of community and nation-state building (Anderson, 1991). The figure of the family, in turn, is the ideal ‘space’ for the re-introduction of notions of ‘us’ (Foucault, 1990). Thus, we feel ‘part’ of a nation and of the ‘political’ by having intimate relationships within familial practices in the domestic ‘we’ – in this case, the ‘Chilean we’. The national is built within the family, the domestic and in intimacy, and, therefore, has a highly gendered effect (McClintock, 1997). The ‘us’, although it may be raised upon inclusive terms, is always based on class distinctions and forms of ethnic exclusion. The Chilean nation has tended to build an ‘us’ based on homogenising racial versions, claiming its distinctive ‘whiteness’ (Subercaseaux, 2002). In this version of the ‘white’ Chilean nation, the ‘ideal’ family is pictured as the ‘white-mestizo nuclear family’, a bourgeois construction born in the 20th century, which is represented by the bourgeois family lifestyle. Thus, subjective expectations of having a ‘normal’ family is linked to the political and ideological project of defining certain family lifestyles as appropriate, the ‘white upper-class family lifestyle’ becoming normal and desirable. Within this scenario, women – housewives – are seen as the protectors of traditions and the guardians of morality, both in relation to their families and to the nation, as citizen breeders.

Now, while the upper-class lifestyle was perceived as the norm and representative of the Chilean nation, the political project of the ‘nuclear family’ was promoted by the state with the intention of extending this norm throughout the social fabric, transcending class differences. The ‘nuclear family’ or the ‘modern family’ – a bourgeois ideology – emerged in Chile in the early 20th century with clear political and economic objectives. Its initial purpose was to solve the ‘social problem’ (regarding hygiene and child health in poor sectors), and to stabilise the new industrial economic order. The ‘nuclear family model’ – as a state policy – with the figures of the ‘masculine breadwinner’ and the ‘moral mother’ was widely successful in the 20th century (at least until the 1970s) in various social strata (Valdés, 2007), normalising traditional values and defining upper-

class lifestyle as the ideal version of the nuclear family. The proliferation of this model required lower-, middle- and upper-class women to stay in their homes and perform their ‘motherhood’ within the domestic sphere. However, in practice, only middle- and upper-class women could afford to stay home and were able to perform the ‘mother’ role by hiring other women to do the ‘dirty work’. In this sense, although the nuclear family, as a norm, was extended to all social classes, only wealthy ones could actually try to perform it and, even then, only with the support of lower-class women employed as domestic workers.

Today, families have a new challenge with the emergence of the ‘new modern family’. This family is part of a move by the state to have less direct intervention – now tending to focus primarily on poor or vulnerable families – whereby families are called upon to include ‘modern’ aspects without losing their traditional attributes. Thus, the decrease of direct intervention has not meant a decrease in the production of ideological discourses about the family and its role in society. Today, the ‘new modern family’ is asked to self-manage its existence following various media and discursive patterns (Valdés, 2007). On the one hand, it incorporates ‘modern’ elements – such as gender equality and children’s rights – and on the other hand, women continue to possess their moral role: the breeding of ‘good’ and decent citizens.

However, today the definition of the ‘new modern family’ – that is white, nuclear, heterosexual and bi-parental – is questioned or tensioned by different members of society, putting in ‘danger’ the national order, producing mechanisms aimed at reintroducing the traditional family as the norm. Thus, I understand that the modernisation of gender roles (introduced by the Chilean government in the beginning of the 2000s) and new family practices performed in contemporary Chile have a double effect. While they progress towards greater equality between men and women within households, and other non-traditional forms of family proliferate, a counter-motion of re-traditionalisation is also generated (Valdés, 2007).

Faced with the possibility of social transformation of gender relations, this counter-movement emerges based on fear and anxiety regarding the ‘crisis of families’ and ‘family values’, and consequently, an interest in preserving traditional family forms (Varikas, 2006). But this emergence is not only related to the containment of the changes in the gender order, but also to the power given to families to maintain political order. In post-dictatorship Chile, the ideas of consensus and reconciliation called for moderation in politics and in the family, the latter being a strategic technology for the reorganisation of the homeland and the nation (Grau, 1997; Vera, 2009). The

family appears hyper-represented in the media as the solution to the crisis of politics, social cohesion and national unity.

There is no doubt that from the 1990s, Chile experienced important changes within gender relations (Valdés, 2007), however, the bourgeois invention of the division between public and private and the definition of the traditional family as the ‘natural’ basis of the nation, still has an impact on public policies orientated to solve the issue of care (Arriagada and Todaro, 2012). The Chilean government continues to see care and housework as part of ‘women’s work’, turning the crisis into a ‘private’ matter. Consequently, the hiring of domestic workers has become a widespread strategy for families of the middle and upper classes as a solution to the care crisis. I suggest that paid domestic work, in regards to the ‘care crisis’, makes possible the maintenance, re-traditionalisation and harmonious functioning of wealthy families, so that they may continue to fulfil their role within society – to be the class-based ideological foundation of the nation-state (the normal and the non-marked national family) – and, in turn, maintain the image of the ‘modern’ middle- and upper-class woman, capable of balancing her roles as wife, mother, and worker (Vera, 2009).

2.2 ‘Family crisis’ and domestic work

The dialogue between the ‘care crisis’ and the ideological crisis of the traditional family can be seen in the specific case of paid domestic work in Chile in both its practical terms – increase in the demand of care – and in its socio-historical dimension concerning the link between the intimate and the political. In relation to the practical dimension, there is an increase in the demand for care (Arriagada and Todaro, 2012) and, due to the lack of solutions by the state, this is managed by families and housewives by hiring a domestic worker. In Chile, the increase in demand for domestic work is due to various factors (Arriagada and Todaro, 2012): the increase of life expectancy, decline of the birth rate and the increase in female employment. However, this demand is also based on the relative small changes to traditional gender relations within households. In a study conducted by the National Institute Statistics INE (2007), it is shown that household work is still mainly performed by women, demonstrating the continuity of traditional gender patterns regarding the sexual division of labour within households and families. Thus, the ‘practical’ demand for care is also a claim for a reproduction of traditional forms of sexual division of labour within homes, especially in the case of wealthy households who can afford paid domestic work. Despite the

increased awareness of gender equality in the country, the ‘traditional’ functioning of the traditional family is perpetuated.

In relation to the socio-historical dimension and the relationship between intimacy and politics, there are other factors behind the increase in demand for care tasks, linked to the processes of reproduction of upper-class families and the role of housewives in this process. On the one hand, studies show employers’ expectancies to have more ‘recreational’ time with their children and families (Arriagada and Todaro, 2012), and on the other hand, hiring a domestic worker is still seen as a sign of social-class status (Rodgers, 2009). These factors not only respond to the maintenance of a patriarchal organisation of care, but also show the co-modulation between the sexual and class division of labour (Cox, 2006). Thus, the ‘care crisis’ claim becomes an upper-class privilege that is, in part, made possible by the recruiting of *other* women for the provision of care. Understanding the ‘care crisis’ within broader concerns regarding the ‘family crisis’ allows us to analyse the ‘care crisis’ as a ‘crisis’ lived – specifically in the case of the upper classes – by families in relation to their possibilities of social reproduction. The danger of defining these demands as a part of a ‘care crisis’, is the naturalisation of the ideological reproduction of the bourgeois family.

2.3 *The ‘nanny problem’*

Another important aspect to consider with the ‘care crisis’, is how it is not only a problem of a lack of women willing to work as domestic workers, but also a lack of commitment to perform this labour with love, devotion and a servile attitude. While in the 19th century, and most of the 20th, those who worked as domestic workers were mostly internal migrants from rural communities and/or indigenous Mapuche (Paláez, 2002), from the 1990s until now those working in this occupation are mainly Chilean working-class women from urban sectors and Latin American immigrants, in particular Peruvian women. Several studies (Arriagada and Todaro, 2012; Stefoni, 2002; Staab and Maher, 2005; Stefoni and Fernández, 2011) have demonstrated the existence of a definition of the ‘ideal nana’ among employers: one who is docile, able to care and look after the family for which they work while ‘knowing her (subordinated) place’. The employers interviewed in the studies above indicate that today it’s hard to find such an ideal woman because workers are ‘highly empowered’ and ‘know too much about their rights’, and are, therefore, unwilling to work long hours or do absolutely anything that is required. Also, in the interviews performed in this thesis, employers narrate – through a nostalgic rhetoric – that domestic workers ‘before’ gave much

dedication and love to their daily tasks, many times becoming ‘second mothers’ for employers. However, they complain that today workers do not genuinely ‘give themselves’ to the job, demonstrating a lack of ‘authentic’ devotion. Therefore, I suggest, the ‘care crisis’ cannot only be seen as a lack of the ‘offer’ of domestic work, but also a lack of women willing to perform their duties with ‘care’ and, at the same time, know their place, maintain undisturbed social boundaries between employers and workers, and hence, reproduce employers’ class status.

In addition, the hiring of racialised women: poor, immigrants from rural and urban areas, and now Peruvians, draws upon a genealogy of the figure of the *servant*. A genealogy that defines those for whom it is morally ‘right’ to be subordinate and serve the nation and upper-class women, who are, in contrast, best suited to ‘teach’ the worker how to behave. Thus, reproductive labour performed by working-class and racialised women subsidises wealthy Chilean families and the ‘family national model’.

2.4 Upper-class women’s roles

Historically in Chile, those actors more interested in re-introducing ‘family order’ in moments of ‘social crisis’ have been the state, the Catholic Church and the traditional elite (Larraín, 2001). However, we can also address the role of upper-class families and of housewives in the management of ‘social balance’ (Milanich, 2011; Zárate, 2007). I argue – based on interviews with female employers – that the role of housewives in the management and maintenance of discourses on social crises through care practices, specifically in their relationship with domestic workers, is based on the civilizational rhetoric of ‘salvation of the family and the homeland’, fulfilling the function of maintaining order in the house and in the nation (Chaudhuri and Strobel, 1992). Thus, paid domestic work and upper-class housewives (the figure of the ‘saviour’), are seen as solutions to repair the ‘lost morals’ of Chilean families. We can understand the ‘care crisis’ not only as a current demand for care tasks, but as a historical demand for the ‘care to the nation’ and the wealthy family as its founding figure and representative. Both housewives (as savours) and domestic workers (as servants) are called to satiate reproductive demands, as well as maintaining order and harmony in homes and in the nation.

I name the employers interviewed for this thesis as both employers and housewives. I use the term housewife because employers define and name themselves as such when they are referring to their

role in their homes, with their families and to differentiate with domestic workers (who are not perceived as housewives but as servants or *nanas*). In this sense, housewife is a term used by employers to appropriate a traditional and whitened gendered role (Butler, 1999) and gain status within their homes and in relation to domestic workers. Being a housewife, in this context, is an appropriation of the positive values and affects associated with moral superiority, purity and motherhood. This does not mean that they solely identify as housewives as many of them struggle with this term and its cultural and historical legacies. These legacies are related to the private/public modern division and to the ideology of domesticity (Pateman, 1988). In Latin America, the notion *madresposa* is useful to understand local articulations of the cultural legacies of housewife. Marcela Lagarde (1990), a feminist anthropologist studying gender relations in Mexico, argues that women in Latin America have been defined as subjects for others, *cautivas* of this historical gendered condition. In different ways, depending on the multiple oppressions women live (gender, class, ethnicity, nationality), women are captives of the notion of *madresposas*.

'Thus, to be madresposa is a captivity constructed around essentialist and positive definitions of women: her reproductive sexuality, and her relationship of vital dependency with others through maternity, filiality and conjugalit.' (Lagarde, 1990; 38) (author's translation).

Madresposa becomes a term that highlights the *positive femininity*, a racial domesticity marked by the status of whiteness, where women's desires and sexuality are aligned with the demands of their husbands and children, and which labour is oriented towards the reproduction of the home. Although this stereotype may seem rigid and explanatory of middle-class women's subjectivity of the 1960s, and critical feminists will argue that women's experience is much more rich and diverse especially if we look at different social classes, ethnic/racial origins, and nationality, we can argue that the stereotype – as a hegemonic gendered norm – continues to circulate and to be cited in modern Chile, and women who do not attempt to fulfil this gender mandate are questioned. This does not mean that in everyday life gender roles associated with *housewife* are truly accomplished (Butler, 1999), but the norm is vital for women's understanding of what is expected of them. While *housewife* is insufficient to understand modern subjectivities, it is still useful to analyse middle- and upper-class women's experiences in relation to their reproductive roles with their families and their homes, experiences which carry legacies of the domesticity code and the ideology of the family (explained in the second chapter). This is also confirmed by Montecino's (2007) research on the notion of motherhood in Chile, suggesting that still in modern subjectivities prevails a traditional notion of womanhood related to the domestic code.

Furthermore, I argue that housewife is particularly relevant to understand the relationship between employers and domestic workers. Elsa Dorlin (2006), focusing on the subjectivity of housewives in the 19th century, suggests that the femininity of housewives (defined in terms of purity, submission and domesticity), was not opposed to the masculinity of the head of the household, but to the femininity of the black house servant (defined as rustic and dirty). She argues that the femininity of middle- and upper-class housewives is a racialised norm of domesticity. Based on this argument, I claim that in Chile it is still relevant to use the term housewife to understand both its history (related to domesticity and the formation of the Chilean nation) and its actualisation today in the relationship with domestic workers. We will see in chapters four and five this actualisation, as employers morally and racially differentiate themselves from workers and define their gender subjectivity through the racialisation of domestic workers by defining them as dangerous, dirty and inferior.

Now, the prevalence of the *madresposa* mandate is clearer in upper-class women than in the lower classes, and it coexists with other modern mandates of womanhood. This is what I found in my interviews with employers who both suffered and yet desired to be seen as good mothers and wives of their happy families. This echoes what Gutierrez (2010) sees in her study regarding the persistence of the housewife gender norm even in ‘egalitarian societies’.

‘Domestic work, thus, is negotiated between these two women who are constantly interpellated as “housewives” and “mothers” by society.’ (Gutierrez, 2010; 106).

As we will see in this thesis, employers desired to be housewives but also to be autonomous women, being good mothers and wives without losing their freedom, for which they hire other women to support them. Here, housewife is not a given but a gendered norm with which employers identify and reject, producing a complex relation; even creating new definitions of housewife through their relations and negotiations with domestic workers. In this sense, housewife is a useful concept to understand how employers survive – in a neoliberal and postcolonial context – the gendered mandate in their own ways.

Domestic work in Latin America and in Chile

Paid domestic work is not only a relevant sociological point of enquiry because of its performative power to reproduce status and class relationships, it is also a significant source of economic income for many women in Latin America in general, and in Chile in particular. Today, domestic workers constitute 15.3% of occupied women of the region, continuing to be a relevant port of entry to the labour market (OIT, 2012). Furthermore, in many countries it is still the main source of non-agricultural female employment (Valenzuela and Mora, 2009). Workers are no longer young women from rural areas, as it was during the 1970s and 1980s; nowadays 95% of them are concentrated in urban areas (OIT, 2012), are older (between 35 and 50 years old) and have their own family. In addition, internal migration has declined giving rise to inter-regional immigrant domestic workers. However, women employed in this labour are mainly poor, have low wages and low social protection (Arriagada and Todaro, 2012). In addition, little legal advancement has been made in relation to improvements of their working conditions. In fact, in many countries in Latin America this labour is still regulated by specific laws that are not the same as those for the rest of the work force. Added to this, their isolation, and consequently the difficulties of coming together in a common space, makes it harder to coordinate with others to struggle for their rights.

In Chile, between the 1950s and 1980s, most domestic workers were young internal immigrants that came from rural areas and from Mapuche communities, willing to work in live-in format. However, today, fewer Chilean women want to work this way and prefer to be employed on a daily or hourly basis, or to change to an occupation with better status and wages, especially one in the commerce and service sectors (Arriagada and Todaro, 2012). Scholars have demonstrated that fewer Chilean women being ‘willing’ to perform this job has produced a new demand from middle- and upper-class families to hire live-in and live-out domestic workers; it being Peruvians who started to fulfil this new demand from the 1990s (Stefoni, 2002). Therefore, a new scenario of paid domestic work emerged. Today, it is not only lower-class and Mapuche women being employed, but also immigrants. Before I continue to explain this new scenario, I will present some significant statistics regarding domestic work in Chile.

1. Who is doing domestic work in Chile today?

It is difficult to estimate the exact number of domestic workers in Chile as many of them work per hour or per day in different homes, remaining invisible in surveys. In addition, the statistics from the last census performed in Chile in 2012 have not been fully released due to criticisms about the data gathering process. The 2009 National Socioeconomic Characterization Survey stipulated the existence of 313,789 domestic workers in Chile. According to the International Labour Organisation (ILO, 2012), 11.7% of employed women in Chile are domestic workers, their level of education is 8.9 years (average) and their age is 46.6 years (average). However, according to Fundación Sol, they constitute 10% of the female labour force, adding a total of 322,654 domestic workers, of which only 3.1% are men. Approximately 80% work in live-out format, but only 29.3% of this group work in ‘protected’ conditions (a written contract, access to health, pension or unemployment insurance, etc.). Domestic workers in live-in format tend to have better conditions (80% are ‘protected’). In both formats, 54.3% do not have a written contract (61.7% in live-out and 16.2% in live-in format don’t have contract). In terms of hours of work, 63.1% live-in domestics and 20% of live-out domestics work more than 45 hours per week. Unlike other sectors, over the past four years domestic work has not recorded variations in relation to these aspects.

These conditions need to be addressed in the current situation of ‘care’ demands. Arriagada and Todaro (2012) argue that today there is more demand for domestic and care service, generating what the authors define as the ‘crisis of care’. This crisis is produced by various factors: the increase in life expectancy from 54.8 years in 1950/55 to 78.5 years in 2005/10 (CEPAL-CELADE, 2007); the decrease of fertility from 4.6 children in 1959 to 1.9 children in 2008, producing fewer sons and daughters to take care of the elderly; and the increase of women in the employment market, leaving fewer women in charge of only household tasks. According to CASEN 2006, 54.5% of women with children under 18 years old are working outside the home, a percentage that varies in relation to class distinctions (31.5% in the case of the poorest families and 74.5% in the richest families). This crisis is also due to the increase of families with a single female parent and families with only elderly members, as well as to the slight transformation of gender roles within the household. A study performed in the Metropolitan Region with 2,000 families by the National Institute of Statistics in 2007 showed that, in relation to taking care of people in their homes, the distribution between men and women was 21.2% and 78.8% respectively, and regarding doing household tasks the distribution was 32.6% and 67.4% respectively.

According to Rodgers (2009), two other factors that favoured the demand for domestic help have been: employing for ‘recreational economy’ (to have time to do sports, cultural and social activities) and employing to obtain status. These aspects are not only a result of patriarchal forms of organising care, but also show how class difference modulates the demand for domestic workers. In this sense, the ‘need’ for better life conditions, having more time to do ‘personal’ and ‘enjoyable’ activities, becomes a privilege that is, in part, possible by hiring other women to perform the unwanted work. Therefore, not only is the sexual division of labour within households not fully questioned, but also class privileges are reproduced.

The solutions from the public sector to the ‘care’ crisis have been insufficient (Arriagada and Todaro, 2012), making it a ‘private’ matter that has to be resolved by those considered responsible for the reproduction of family life: women. In this sense, the Chilean State still sees care and domestic chores as part of ‘women’s labour’, reinforcing traditional notions of femininity within the population. Strategies used by housewives in Chile are: unpaid domestic work (relatives, friends or neighbours that help each other); public services mainly focused on children under 6 years old and the elderly; and private options including nursing schools and homes for seniors. Paid domestic work is a privileged form of resolving the crisis of care, as the employer has, at her discretion, for a number of hours (depending on live-in or live-out format), another woman replacing her in the tasks of cleaning, cooking and caring for the dependant children and adults.

In the study done by Arriagada and Todaro (2012), women employers argued that their motivations for hiring live-in domestic workers were: first, the possibility of having permanent and continuous domestic aid, giving stability to the household and avoiding the constant change of the person in charge of children and the household tasks; second, the opportunity to have free time for personal development and recreational activities (although they stated that this was not enough to have time to rest); and third, the comfort of having a domestic worker taking care of everyday tasks for the family. The main function for which employers hired domestic workers was the satisfaction of the needs of the ‘dependants’ of the house – in their cases, of children – regarding food, shelter and hygiene, and in addition the constant ‘surveillance’ to prevent ‘something’ from happening. Although the authors of the study argue that paid domestic work becomes a ‘gendered solution’ for a care problem, they do not further study how this also becomes a class organisation of care work and how race and ethnic differences modulate the options of employment. In addition, studies have not further analysed how specific gender and class differentiations are promoted and reproduced by the state and by the upper-class notion of the domestic sphere.

As I have argued, the importance of hiring a domestic worker is not only to satisfy an economic need, but also to reproduce a social status. I propose that this status is not only based on class distinctions, but also racial and ethnic difference, that in the specific case of domestic work requires a special definition of the ‘ideal’ nanny. This includes a ‘docile’ woman that is capable of caring for the family and at the same time ‘knowing her place’. This has appeared as a ‘servant problem’, as employers in Staab and Maher’s (2005) research claimed that nowadays it is not easy to find a ‘good’ nanny, at least, not like those of the ‘past’. The memory, and nostalgia, for those ‘docile’ and ‘submissive’ women is evident in literature, films and music (Hutchison, 2006), and in the narratives of elderly upper-class women (Stefoni and Fernández, 2011). This ‘past’ domestic worker does not only refer to the young rural Mapuche women from the 1920s, as some scholars have argued (Staab and Maher, 2005; Steffoni, 2002), but also to normative ideas on the servant of the colonial period.

In the study performed by Staab and Maher (2005) in Santiago, employment agencies stated that still today many women recruited as domestic workers are from the south, especially Mapuche (an indigenous group in the south of Chile). According to Saavedra Paláez (2002), around 25% of Mapuche women work as domestic workers. The 2002 Census shows that 34.3% of Mapuche women in urban areas and 25.4% in rural areas were employed as domestic workers. If we include all ethnic groups, 32% of indigenous women are employed in ‘private homes and domestic service’, making it the economic activity with the greatest presence of indigenous women.

However, in the study performed by Staab and Maher (2005) in the 1990s, ‘southern’ girls started to obtain other work opportunities which meant a decrease in the supply of this ‘historic’ help provided from poor and indigenous groups. According to employers in their study, rural and Mapuche domestic workers started to know ‘too much’ about their rights, making them unsuitable for performing this role. This process of empowerment of Chilean women can be understood through their social and political organisation. Domestic workers have organised into different groups, the most important being the National Association of Household Workers (ANECA) and the Household Workers Union of the Metropolitan Region (SINTRACAP RM). The efforts of these groups have been focused on the promotion of dignity for this type of labour, the formation of labour rights and campaigning for legislative changes. Until 2010, domestic workers were entitled to only 75% of the minimum wage, a situation that has now been changed to equate with the conditions of general workers.

In this sense, this situation and the creation of laws orientated to protect domestic workers in the 1980s produced difficulties, according to the employers interviewed by Arriagada and Todaro (2012), in finding a ‘good’ domestic, a woman able to reproduce that ideal and nostalgic figure of the ‘southern girl’ and of the colonial servant. The main problem for these employers was that Chilean domestic workers knew too much about their rights and, therefore, were able to negotiate and even reject certain working conditions (like the live-in format), performing their duties with ‘resentment’ and not with love.

‘All these comments illustrate the contemporary ‘servant problem’ (Katzman 1978; Romero 1992), in which employers feel discontent when domestic workers do not accept their place as traditional servants, or – as one employer expressed it – do not have the right attitude.’ (Staab and Maher, 2005; 75).

The supposed ‘resentment’, as opposed to ‘real love’, opens interesting questions for this thesis that purposes to see domestic work as a performative site. Does demanding rights tension the ‘ideal performance’ of domestic work? What happens when domestic work is not seen as a ‘true’ act of love? What does the ‘servant problem’ create for everyday reproduction of family life? What threats or dangers can it produce? While these studies have been able to show the relationship between Mapuche workers’ empowerment and the ‘servant problem’, they have not further analysed what is put in ‘danger’ and how this is managed and lived in everyday life within domestic work relationships. In addition, they have not explored domestic work’s relationship with the processes of mestizaje and gendered coloniality of power, and with racialised and ethnic normative stereotypes in the construction of national narratives. Furthermore, no studies have analysed the ways in which race, class distinctions and gender roles are constructed within domestic work between groups such as employers, Mapuches and immigrants.

2. Peruvian immigrants

Although the live-in format has decreased in the last 30 years (from 55.8% in 1980 to 21% in 2007, CEM 2010), Peruvian immigrants represent the possibility of the continuation of this format. In this context, the incorporation of Peruvians into domestic work becomes important, as there is a family and social necessity to maintain the conditions of reproduction of the Chilean society. At the same time, Peruvian immigrants apparently appear to solve the ‘servant problem’ detected in the study of Staab and Maher (2005) mentioned above. Due to the transformation of Chilean domestic workers,

employers ‘claimed that Peruvians were more hardworking, educated and clean; that they spoke better Spanish; that they cooked well; and that they were more devoted, caring, submissive and service-oriented’ (Staab and Maher, 2005; 76).

Peruvian immigrants became more visible in Santiago from the mid-1990s, and today they are the most important community of immigrants in Chile (DEM, 2012). Peruvians in general, together with Bolivians, take up the most precarious jobs (Stefoni, 2002), specifically in the sectors of service and commerce (CASEN, 2009). This labour segmentation not only sharpens the migration conditions, but also leads them to certain types of work for the ‘Peruvian immigrant’: that, in the case of women, is domestic work (Valenzuela and Mora, 2009). In recent years, the jobs to which migrants have access have seen little change, remaining within the commercial and service sectors despite the high human capital they possess. This phenomenon results in a labour segmentation where nationality becomes a parameter that defines the types of work which they can access (Valenzuela and Mora, 2009).

The Peruvian case is especially relevant, as it is part of the feminization of migration (Castles and Miller, 2001; Sassen, 2003; Kofman, 2004) and the incorporation of highly qualified women into gendered activities such as domestic work. According to CASEN 2006, 69.6% of Peruvian women that live in Chile work as domestic workers: 85.5% of them are 45 years old or younger; 44% of women between 25 and 34 years old work in live-out format; live-in workers are more predominant in the range of 35 and 44 years old; 71.7% have social security and 82% have a contract of employment. Those working live-in have higher wages and only 8% have children, while 55.1% of those in live-out format have children. In the case of domestic workers in general, only 41.8% have a contract; but in the case of Peruvians, 79.7% have a contract. This difference reflects the importance of having a contract for Peruvians, as they need to have one for a period of two years with the same employer in order to get access to a permanent visa, reflecting their dependency on employers. These two years become a ‘waiting time’ where exploitation and abuse is ‘tolerated’ by workers in order to later obtain the visa.

In the interviews with live-in Peruvian domestic workers performed by Arriagada and Todaro (2012), women said that their main function was caring for children, but in some cases this task became difficult as they perceived they were in need of ‘specific training’. Taking care of children, using household appliances, preparing Chilean food and performing all household tasks in the ‘Chilean way’, were seen as difficult functions that, in some cases, they had to learn through

unpleasant experiences. These descriptions are an important starting point in interrogating how difference is produced in everyday practices. We can reflect on how this process of ‘training’ is performed both by employers and workers, what it involves and what the emotional and physical implications are for them. It also impels us to question how gender, racial, class and national stereotypes of the ‘Peruvian nanny’ and the ‘Chilean employer’ are cited, reproduced and challenged in everyday encounters. In order to research these questions, it is important to consider the historical and current stereotypes of Peruvians in Chile. Historical studies show how from the Pacific War (1879 to 1883), that included Peru, Chile and Bolivia, distinctions from Peruvians were used for the reinforcement of a Chilean identity.

‘... representations of Peruvian immigrants in Chile rebuild a position of domain, which in turn allows a reconstruction of the national identity that has tended to be in terms of superiority over our neighbours, especially after the Pacific War. In this sense, the construction of Chilean nationalism is part of a political instrument used to consolidate an idea of nation’ (Stefoni, 2001; 20) (author’s translation).

The ‘dominant position’ of Chile as a nation in relation to its neighbours is constructed in opposition with Peruvians. Although these stereotypes have changed over time, the study done by Quevedo and Zúñiga (1999) shows how Peruvian immigrants in the media are associated with ideas of danger, illegality, crime and poverty. However, this negative view coexists with a positive one. Specifically, in the case of Peruvian domestic workers a positive view tends to appear in the imagination of Chilean employers. They are preferred because according to employers they speak better Spanish than Chileans (due to their higher educational qualifications), have a more developed culinary tradition and establish good relationships with the children. These characteristics are naturalised, in the same way as, in past decades, was the case for stereotypes of ‘girls from the south’; now with the inclusion of ‘Peruvians’ in the ‘white’ Chilean family. However, the negotiations and conflicts between Mapuche, Peruvians and the Chilean ‘white’ family has not been fully studied and is a central focus of this thesis.

Thesis outline

I am interested in the specificity of domestic work in the Chilean case because domestic work mirrors, on the one hand, socio-historical wounds related to ‘Chilean identity’, and on the other hand, the roles of lower- and upper-class women in the reproduction of the nation and the ‘Chilean culture’. The first aspect is related to the wounds and traumas of the Chilean upper classes regarding their ‘racial origin’ and ‘original poverty’, and the identity conflicts this creates, issues that I will develop in chapters four and five. The second aspect is related to the role of upper-class women in the reproduction of elite families and their role in national narratives regarding ‘proper families’ (towards the end of the 19th century), as well as the role of lower-class women in ‘serving’ upper-class homes, a discussion developed in chapters four and five. These socio-historical backgrounds are crucial to understanding intimate forms of politics, and the role of domestic work within Chilean society. I argue that while upper classes use servitude to reinforce their fragile social status, upper-class women are called to protect the main unit of the nation: the family. We will see throughout this thesis that these factors, together with the rhetoric of exceptionality, shape and configure complex intimate domestic relations between employers and domestic workers today. Together with the historical wounds of the upper classes, lower-class women are also ‘exceptional’ actors within the formation of Chilean society, as reproductive of the Chilean upper-class lifestyle.

As Yuval-Davis (2007) argues, women (and we can add women’s labour), together with other social actors, reproduce nations, biologically but also culturally. They are called to do so by hegemonic discourses – which are based on gender discourses on womanhood and manhood – but they also embody this role in their own. Upper-class women perform the mother of the nation. But most importantly, nations and national narratives are embedded within ideological definitions of the family and the social positions of people based on a class, racial and ethnic ‘natural ordering’ of society. Therefore, everyday practices of hiring racialised indigenous or a migrant woman as a domestic worker reproduce the notion of the employer’s position: as white-mestizo families. The ‘other’ women of the nation clean, cook and care in the homes of the women of the nation, of Chilean homes and families.

I will study how the production of social values – such as the ‘national family’, ‘good’ or ‘decent’ homes, ‘good housewives’ and ‘good workers’ – are grounded in everyday practices and in relationships between employers and workers. I argue that it’s through intimate relations that values are enacted and reproduced (in chapters four and five) and questioned (in chapter six), not only

making the ‘private’ a political matter but also the political an intimate product. In this sense, I consider the political and the intimate interdependent, nurturing economic and cultural forms of production of difference.

Chapter two is dedicated to a critical review of the literature on domestic work in order to problematise the understanding of domestic work as an intimate-political site of production and reproduction of social distinctions in neoliberal Chile, based on its historical legacies and its performative power. I will discuss historical approaches to domestic work from the 1980s and 90s, looking at the feminist, Marxist and neo-Marxist perspectives, giving a close reading of emotional work, care work and care crisis, and affective labour, and finishing with the performative perspective. Chapter three discusses the methods used in this thesis and provides reflections regarding the study of intimacy. Chapter four will focus on the ways in which employers define their lifestyles, reproduce their class status through the employment of domestic workers and the emotional labour and boundary work they perform in their relations with workers. I argue that employers benefit from boundaries and define *good nanas* in order to reproduce their own status, using ‘differences’ as a gendered justification of their ‘right’ to a ‘good life’, constructing the figure of the *Chilean happy family*.

In chapter five, I discuss the anxieties that arise from closeness with workers and the effect of employers’ need to perform the *authentic employer*, exploring how closeness becomes a threat when there are those who do not ‘fit’ this norm or are not ‘as different’ as employers desire them to be – defined in moral terms as *bad nanas*, and classified as racially different because of cultural ‘origins’ and sexual practices. In chapter six I analyse how servility and the *culture of servitude* – that in the Chilean case, was articulated in colonial periods and is maintained today in complex relations of proximity – are affects transmitted onto workers’ bodies, and how workers feel and react to this culture. Chapter seven describes the main arguments of this thesis and reflects about the Chilean modern democracy.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

Discussion on paid domestic work.

This chapter provides a critical review of the literature of domestic work in order to problematise this activity as an intimate-political site of production and reproduction of difference in neoliberal Chile, based on its historical legacies and its performative power. First, I will present the research field within the Chilean context, looking at key gaps and their consequences, then justify the analytical relevance of studying domestic work as a space of enquiry both for its own sake, and for its relationship with other forms of social reproduction of the Chilean society, especially of upper classes' 'exceptional' lifestyles. Second, I propose to outline an understanding of domestic work by focusing on its four main dimensions mentioned in the introduction: feminisation, class relations, racial and ethnic differences, and national discourses. I will develop these aspects by looking at relevant historical and contemporary literature produced within Chilean, Latin American, and wider international contexts, as well as specific examples related to Chilean history. Third, drawing upon the relationship between the political, intimacy and performativity, I suggest my own problematisation of this labour as a site of production and tension of difference related to nationhood, motherhood and 'proper' versions of upper-class family life.

Feminist and social studies of domestic work in Chile

Middle- and upper-class feminist critique in Chile has maintained a curious silence regarding the relationship between domestic work, patriarchy, sexual division of labour and ethnic and racial difference (Feliu, 2014). During Pinochet's dictatorship (1973–1989) the feminist movement played a lead role in revealing practices of torture, the disappearance of political activists and in the promotion of human rights; its engagement in questioning and challenging basic forms of reproduction of traditional gender roles, class distinctions and ethnic difference has been less effective. Influenced by liberal notions of democracy, emancipation from European and North American feminist movements (Mendoza, 2008) and the 'gender turn' in public policies from the 2000s, women in Latin America were encouraged to seek their liberation in the public and political arena – considered a, supposedly, privileged space for the demand and exercise of their social and economic rights. As in other parts of the region, middle- and upper-class feminist movements in Chile politicised 'private matters' by taking them to public debate, including aspects such as reproductive rights and domestic violence. However, introducing 'political matters' to the private,

for example, questioning the sexual division of labour within homes, proved to be a broader challenge. This was not only a problem for feminists, but for society in general and traditional institutions – such as the Catholic Church – in particular, which tolerated the inclusion of women within the ‘public’ field and acknowledged the importance of men’s ‘help’ in domestic tasks within homes but did not perceive it necessary to deeply challenge gendered ‘private’ arrangements.

The difficulties in questioning ‘private gendered labour arrangements’ – or even to conceive of domestic work as a form of work – can be explained, in part, by a bourgeois heritage of the figure of the *servant*, that is, the privilege of ‘having’ a woman who supplies her time and presence as a ‘natural’ privilege of the elite, which today is cited as becoming the condition of possibility for middle- and upper-class women to leave their homes, be part of the labour market and of political life, allowing domestic work and its sexual distribution to remain within its traditional terrain. I will discuss further the figure of the *servant* in this chapter in the section regarding class relations. Traditional gender order was reproduced, and the middle- and upper-class feminist movement became a hegemonic force, in part, and in very practical terms, due to the delegation of their domestic tasks and their gendered ‘domestic slavery’ towards ‘other women’: domestic workers.

Moreover, middle- and upper-class feminists not only vacillated in questioning ‘private matters’ in the private, but also on whether to include ‘race’, ethnicity and racism within their political and research agendas (Feliu, 2014). By focusing on ‘women’s’ issues, they struggled to fully criticise the notion of ‘woman’ itself, homogenising white middle-class women’s experiences of oppression to all women. Indigenous, African-descendent and lower-class women’s specific positions within society were marginalised from the analysis of gender oppression (Espinosa, 2010) and regarded as ‘development’ and poverty issues, especially in the case of poor women, sexual workers, rural women and domestic workers. This situation not only silenced these women but also suspended complex models of analysis of power relations and reproduction of societies that include race, class, gender and sexuality as mutually dependent axes (Hill Collins, 1990).

In the case of gender and social science studies, a handful of scholars have taken into account or focused specifically on paid domestic work as a research topic. These studies emerged in the late 1970s (Alonso, Larraín, and Saldías, 1978; Gálvez and Todaro, 1985, 1987 and 1989; Moreno, 1989; Hojman, 1989; Montecino, 1993; Hutchison, 2006), concentrating especially on domestic workers’ labour conditions and their forms of social and political organisation. Gálvez and Todaro’s text ‘Paid Domestic Work. Concepts, facts and data’ (1987) was the first publication dedicated

entirely to describing the situations of Chilean domestic workers, following years of research on the topic, developed between two feminists of the Women's Studies Centre of Chile and women from domestic workers' organisations. In the first part of their research they defined domestic work as reproductive and productive practice, and in the second, they provided statistical information of work conditions. Influenced by Marxist feminism and concerned with the political demands of workers, their hypothesis suggested that the relations of production based on 'servile attitudes' within the workplace determined the behaviour and conscience of the workers and their capacities to organise.

This topic was not developed further until the 2000s, when literature about domestic work and migration partially reappeared within the social sciences (Stefoni, 2002 and 2009; Staab and Maher, 2005 and 2006; Mora, 2008; Stefoni and Fernández, 2011; Arriagada and Todaro, 2012; Del Campo and Ruiz, 2013) focusing mainly on the entrance of Peruvian immigrants into paid domestic work and the intersection between nationality and gendered division of care labour. These publications agreed that domestic work possessed very low social status and one of the worst legal frames and economic conditions within the labour market (Valenzuela and Mora, 2009; Del Campo and Ruiz, 2013), a situation that was more critical in the case of workers who lived in their workplaces (CONLACTRAHO, 2004). For these authors, the lack of social valorisation is mainly due to the perception of it being 'women's' work and therefore, 'non-productive' labour (Gálvez and Todaro, 1989).

From the 2000s onwards there has been an increasing interest in the new dynamics of domestic work in relation to the incorporation of external immigrants: a phenomenon produced by the feminisation of migration in Latin America and the increase in employment of middle- and upper-class women who need support in household tasks due to the lack of public services for childcare (Martínez, 2003; Stefoni, 2009), as well as the lack of a true challenge to the sexual division of labour within homes. This labour has been related to the history of women's labour participation and forms of organisation, and to public issues such as care policies (Arriagada and Todaro, 2012). In addition, the justification for the analytical relevance of racial, gendered and class distinctions that lead certain women (poor, rural, immigrant) towards this job has been hinted at (Stefoni and Fernández, 2011).

Nevertheless, gender and social science studies have given scant attention to domestic work, underplaying its role in the reproduction of social differences in general, and of class, racial and

ethnic distinctions in particular. As I argue through this thesis, this situation has less to do with the relevance of domestic work in the reproduction and production of society, and more to do with class, ethnic and racial anxieties that this labour mirrors and creates within middle- and upper-class homes. Further analysis is necessary to understand the ways in which paid domestic work reproduces and questions historical forms of difference and otherness within the production of family and national rhetoric. For example, the construction of racial and ethnic distinctions between ‘Chilean’, rural and Peruvian immigrants, and the relationships these distinctions have to discourses of the ‘Chilean family’ is still an unexplored field. In this sense, even though researchers have acknowledged the importance of race and ethnicity in the marking of who becomes a domestic worker (Stefoni, 2002; Valenzuela and Mora, 2009), they have not yet analysed how gender, race and class mutually construct moral boundaries (Lamont, 1992) within everyday practices in homes.

For instance, the literature in Chile has assumed that domestic workers play a particular gendered role – traditional and servile – not taking into account alternative roles that both workers and employers perform. This has led to a scarcity of studies which consider the performativity of workers and employers relations, and how they co-construct moral notions of domesticity, family and nation. In the interviews carried out between September 2014 and January 2015, I listened to different versions of gendered roles of domestic workers – including housewife, servant, hard-working, sacrificial, loving, and untrustworthy – and how these roles were linked to different class, racial and ethnic stereotypes, mirroring complex relationships between upper-class employers and lower-class workers. One can argue that there are multiple characteristics for domestic workers, which can reinforce or contradict each other in everyday practices. A series of intriguing questions about these interrelations arose: does performing a servant role mean to be indigenous? Does being hard working represent a way of becoming Chilean? Are Peruvian workers more authentically loving? Which moral distinctions are performed between employers and workers? What definition of workers is needed for the reproduction of the ‘proper’ upper-class Chilean family? What kind of class and ethnic status does ‘having’ a domestic worker provide upper-class families within the national terrain?

These questions justify the importance of considering the multiple performances of gender roles of workers and employers produced within domestic work, their relationship with race and class dynamics, and their connection to the construction of the nation and the family. This last aspect – that is, the relation between domestic work, the traditional constructions of ‘Chilean family life’, and the reproduction of upper classes – has not been developed in Chile. This thesis aims to relate

these topics to neoliberal subjectivities that, despite their movement towards more ‘modern’ gender and class relations, still rely on domestic work to be ‘women’s labour’. This is especially evident when we see the results of the Encuesta Images Chile (2011) that suggest that women today are still the ones who carry out almost all the domestic tasks within households, perpetuating a traditional gender division of labour within homes.⁸

Finally, the literature of domestic work in Chile has focused on work conditions, migration and gender roles by looking at perceptions and discourses of domestic workers, employers and other agents. Hence, there is a great need to apply other theoretical and methodological approaches that consider both narratives and everyday interactions within domestic work, with a special emphasis on practices, forms of cooking, caring and cleaning. By focusing on performance, we can go beyond the division between structural meanings and agency and understand the ways in which domestic work brings together material, historical traces and current dynamics of production of social differences through everyday practices (Bell, 1999a; Butler, 1999; Taylor, 2003; Alexander, 2004).

Problematising domestic work

Scholars studying domestic work suggest that defining this work is a difficult endeavour as it involves both reproductive and productive processes, crucial for homes, families and the wider economic organisation of societies (Oakley, 1974; Schwartz, 1983; Colen, 1995), and also because it not only implicates physical but also mental and emotional labour. In order to approach this complex challenge, I propose to problematise domestic work as an intimate–political performative site, which includes both structural forms of domination and exploitation, and everyday practices that show the affective, emotional and even contradictory forms of reproducing social and moral boundaries (Lamont, 1992). In this sense, I intend to explore a problematisation – to see how domestic work becomes a problem (Foucault, 1972) – that includes both temporal and spatial dimensions to situate this labour within the understanding of the complex form of reproduction of the Chilean society. I will further develop this argument by situating its four main dimensions, mentioned in the introduction: feminisation, class relations, ethnic and racial difference and

⁸ According to the survey, 63.7% of men declare that it’s always the women who take care of the children, 50.2% think that women have the most important role in taking care of the home and the family, 4.6% declare they are in charge of cleaning bathrooms and 2.4% say they are the ones who generally clean the house.

reproduction of notions regarding the nation, the family and the home. However, before I analyse these four dimensions I position domestic work as ‘work’.

I define paid domestic work as ‘work’ in alliance with the feminist debates which define both care and reproductive labour as work, and both as sites of exploitation and resistance. Although I may use domestic labour and domestic work indistinctively, I understand this activity as part of what women and racialised women have historically done because of the feminised and racialised legacies that devalue their position in society. Gutierrez (2010) argues that for the case of domestic work:

‘... the feminization of this labor is not only given by the high percentage of women doing this work, but by the quality attached to it. Considered as “unskilled labor” this labor is generally perceived as “naturally given,” intrinsically related to women’s socialization. No training or education seems to have been invested in this labor. Perceived as women’s natural faculty, domestic work is naturalized and taken for granted in society.’ (Gutierrez, 2010; 101).

The author returns to the debate around domestic and care work by looking at Negri’s (2003) notion of biopolitics and of *trabajos de cuidado* of Precarias a la Deriva (2004). According to Negri (2003), post-Fordist societies have incorporated communicative, conceptual and affective dimensions of labour into the production process, that is, life itself has become an interest for capital. However, Negri (2003) defines power in Foucault’s sense, both as *potentia* (productive) and *potestas* (oppressive), a biopolitics that tensions life and power.

‘...power is not solely perceived as a system of oppression and exploitation, but also as a transformative and productive force. Power in this sense is not one-directional, but multisited and dispersed, empowering subjects to counter the mechanisms and logics of subjugation.’ (Gutierrez, 2010; 102).

While power can be oppressive, it can also be productive and give space for resistance. Life, in ‘its capacity for creation, invention, production, subjectivation’ (Negri, 2003; 64) becomes a site of resistance within power. According to Gutierrez (2010), Precarias a la Deriva – a feminist group which studies the contemporary working conditions of women – enter this debate arguing that current precarious labour conditions also generate new survival strategies. Precarias use the notion *trabajos de cuidado* (domestic work) to reflect upon the precarity of feminised labour.

'Challenging Marxist debates, Precarias refuses to reproduce the division between reproductive and productive labor. Rather, they attempt to conceptualize trabajo de cuidados within the tension of precarious, exploited feminized labor relations and the struggle for a better life.' (Gutierrez, 2010; 109).

Domestic work, in the context of *trabajo de cuidados*, is a feminised (re)productive work that both exploits women because of the feminine quality attached and is a site of biopolitics and resistance.

'... domestic work as trabajo de cuidados is a site of contestation where the immediate investment of "life" clashes with the exploitation of "life." Thus, as a site of biopolitics, it is not irrelevant who does this work. The feminized and racialized character of this labor is not a coincidence, but its social disposition and cultural predication through which the devaluation of this labor is predetermined and reified. It is always clear then who does the cleaning.' (Gutierrez, 2010; 104).

In this sense, I use the term domestic work to underline its (re)productive power to reproduce oppressive power relations; construct gendered, racialised and classed notions of the Chilean nation and the Chilean family; and to resist labour exploitation. I also focus on the labour force which is doing this work and the feminised and racialised legacies of this work, engaging with the affective transmission of these legacies and the performative capacity to produce and contest difference. Thus, paid domestic work – as a site of biopolitics – allows us to understand both its performative power in citing and producing normative notions of women, the Chilean nation and differences, as well as a site of resistance through life itself, its performance and affects (such as anger, which we will see in chapter six).

1. Feminisation

According to Gutiérrez (2010), domestic work becomes socially and economically devalued because of its cultural prediction as feminised labour and, therefore, un-waged. The author discusses the value of domestic work in Marxist terms of 'exchange' and 'use' value, suggesting that this work is socially considered 'low-wage' labour. However, its devaluation is more related to the 'social process of meaning production' (Gutiérrez, 2010; 92) rather than to its economic value. The devaluation of domestic work is explained more by its cultural codification than by its practical productive labour.

'Rather, the analysis of value demands a perspective that takes into account the cultural dynamics through which value is symbolically predetermined, revealing the epistemological foundations constituting the ontological character of domestic work and its racialized and feminized labor force.' (Gutiérrez, 2010; 8).

Feminised – and racialised as we will see further on in this chapter – divisions of labour are materialised in private households, becoming an ontological predicament for the reproduction of ‘white’ patriarchal ideology, allowing middle-class white women to enter the labour force by hiring a domestic worker and allowing sexual division of labour inside households and men’s privileges to remain unquestioned (Duarte, 1989; Pereira de Melo, 1989).

Understanding domestic work as part of a ‘legacy of feminisation’ (Gutiérrez, 2010) draws upon different trajectories of thinkers that have problematised gender and ‘feminine’ aspects of this practice. Each of them provides key axes that enable a complex reading of domestic work in the following ways: as ‘women’s’ reproductive and productive work, as part of the public/private liberal distinction, and as emotional and affective labour, including its relation to the ‘care crisis’. I will review these three clusters of literature in order to critically discuss key political questions they put forward.

A first trend is related to the feminist debates on reproductive labour. A specific field of research emerged in the United States, as in other parts of the west, during the 1970s, influenced by the second wave of feminism grounded on Marxist ideas on value, labour and commodification. These Marxist feminists focused their attention on the relation between domestic and reproductive labour using theories of development and women’s oppression in capitalist forms of production. Two visions emerged from this field, proposing a direct critique to Marxist definitions of value: one group defined the importance of domestic work as ‘socially reproductive’, that is, its role in the physical reproduction of labour force and in the ideological reproduction of society (Seccombe, 1974; Saffiotti, 1978; Gardiner, 1989; and Coulson, et al., 1975); the other argued for the relevance of domestic work as a ‘socially productive’ form of labour which created surplus value through the production of human labour as commodity and in the transmission of services that capitalist organisation did not provide, such as care and food provision (Dalla Costa, 1972; Hartman, 1976; and Boydston, 1986). Both groups shared the idea that reproductive and domestic work are part of a capitalist organisation of society, questioning the division between productive and reproductive and

public and private spheres, and criticising the ideological biases of previous Marxist conceptualisations of labour that excluded the importance of reproductive labour in capitalist production. Furthermore, this body of work was able to criticise Marxist theory, arguing that class oppression was not the only form of subjugation suitable to explain women's position in society and patriarchy as an ideology.

The literature of domestic work in Latin America that emerged in the 1970s (Safiotti, 1978; Souza, 1989; and Jelin, 1976) was influenced by theories on dependency and modernisation and by the previously cited neo-Marxist feminists from the USA. These early reflections focused on the material and economic conditions of domestic work, particularly its importance in class relations and race/ethnic hierarchy formation. This literature suggested that the increase of domestic workers was due to changes in international economies, arguing that after World War II more women began to work in domestic labour due to the expansion of capitalist industries, and the consequent rural to urban migration of women looking for jobs (Tinsman, 1992). This mass migration expanded the informal economy and women living in poor conditions in the cities became an available work force for middle- and upper-class women who were integrating the labour market. Domestic workers became necessary for the expansion of the labour force and for the development of capitalism in Latin America.

'... domestic service operates as a holding tank for cheap female labor and frees middle and lower middle-class women to work in the expanding white-collar and tertiary job sector by providing underpaid household services that would otherwise be required of government or private enterprise.' (Tinsman, 1992; 42).

Authors like Enloe (1989), Nash and Fernandez-Kelly (1983) further developed this argument by positioning domestic work in the discussion of world system, third-world debt and globalised capitalism, demonstrating women's subordination under a global system of exploitation. These studies are a key precedent for later studies of migration and global economy, which will be discussed later. A key text was published in 1989 by Chaney and Garcia Castro titled 'Muchachas no more. Household workers in Latin America and the Caribbean'. This was the first to gather descriptive articles, both by scholars and by domestic workers, focusing especially on the work conditions of this labour rather than on theoretical debates. It became a key reference as it was the first 'Latin American' account of this labour that critically addressed the fact that it is mainly

women from rural and poor backgrounds performing this job, identifying both the reproduction and production aspects by looking at case studies and the stories of politically active domestic workers.

In this time, domestic work became to be understood both as reproductive and productive labour since it involves practices necessary for the organisation of homes and upbringing of children, as well as providing labour force for the wider economy. Federici's (2012) more contemporary work is part of this legacy and is crucial for the understanding of reproductive and domestic work in the formation of capitalist societies. From a radical, autonomist, feminist Marxist tradition, Federici (2012) argues that reproductive labour is crucial for primitive accumulation and, hence, foundational of capitalism. She studies how women's oppression in general, and domestic work in particular, is key not only for the organisation of capitalism, but also today for neoliberalism. Together with the group Precarias a la Deriva (2004), Federici (2012) and others (Benería and Floro, 2004; Carrasquer Oto, 2013; Carrasco Bengoa, 2013) analyse the relation between feminisation, care work and the crisis of capitalism, arguing that the current 'care crisis' is a direct impact of neoliberal policies based on the privatisation of care, and that domestic work is today part of the historical legacy of feminised labour that continues to simultaneously be both devalued, and substantial for the sustainment of the economic and social organisation of societies.

This line of work is important as it invites us to analyse how domestic work is crucial today for neoliberalism and, in the case of Chile, of the 'neoliberal democracy' – an aspect that will be further developed in this thesis. I will suggest, in chapter four, that neoliberal Chile today conceals the value of domestic work in order to reproduce the auto-image as a 'modern', gender-friendly and liberal democracy, as well as reproducing a definition of the 'ideal' upper-class lifestyle as the normative and moral basis of the Chilean nation. It does so by extracting the value of a labour that is undervalued by its cultural predicaments as feminine labour. Furthermore, I will suggest how upper-class families and women manage paid domestic work in order to visually reproduce their status, both by employing a domestic worker and by creating intimate relations that produce difference. A contribution of this thesis is to name this process as the making of the *Chilean happy family*, a product of upper classes lifestyle in neoliberal Chile which both rearticulates traditional and modern notions of womanhood and class and racial status by concealing domestic workers' labour. This notion, further explained in chapters four and five, emerges from the interpretation of employers' narratives regarding their desires and ways in which they negotiate their subjectivities and reproduce their family lifestyles in relation to national discourses by racially differentiating

with workers, allowing for ‘modern’ subjectivities to coexist with the continuity of a culture of servitude.

A second feminist trend that analyses the feminisation of domestic work can be drawn from the debates regarding private/public, feminine/masculine and domestic/political distinctions, which understand ‘women’s work’ as an ideological definition based on political predicaments. Debates concerning these distinctions emerged from early feminist critique of the patriarchal ordering of society and became an important topic in feminist theory during the 1970s and the 1980s (Davidoff, 1974; Schwartz, 1983; Waerness, 1984; Olsen, 1985; Romero, 1988 and 1992; Brenner and Laslett, 1989; Cock, 1989; Palmer, 1989; Sayer, 1991; Glenn, 1992; Tinsman, 1992; Gregson and Lowe, 1994; Bubeck, 1995).

In her ground-breaking publication, ‘The Sexual Contract’, Carole Pateman (1988) argues that the ‘social contract’ in liberal theory is based on a patriarchal relation between men and women. This social contract is built upon a sexual contract that divides public and private spheres and justifies men’s power over women with three types of contract: marriage, prostitution, and surrogate motherhood. For Pateman (1988), to understand why the political life has been seen as part of the public sphere, and why domestic and private life are left aside, we must return to the role of reproductive labour and the emergence of the family as a paradigm of the private. In the West, patriarchal order – in which women were related to nature – became modernised and incorporated into liberal thinking and capitalist society through the dichotomy feminine/masculine, the first associated with nature and the second with culture. The feminine role, and its relation to nature (motherhood), was defined as part of the domestic and of family life – both defined as non-political. This proximity to nature was what produced her subordinated condition, not recognising the social and cultural construction of the idea of nature and domestic life. In this sense, these divisions were used by liberal theories to invent the modern man that allegedly belonged to the public and market spheres. Together with this invention, the inclusion of women in ‘modern’ society was possible through a ‘sexual contract’ that situated them ‘naturally’ in the private sphere, under men’s power, and created a ‘domestic code’ based on ideas of decency and cleanliness. This naturalised separation became the cultural precedent for the undervaluation of reproductive work and domestic labour as ‘work’. Hence, domestic work, defined as a ‘private matter’, underlines the very foundations of modern and capitalist occidental societies (Federici, 2012).

While this argument has been central for later discussions of women's reproductive and productive roles in society – and also for this research – as it explains the concealment of domestic work as work, it also assumes a specific notion of domesticity and femininity based on middle-class white women's experiences as universal and homogenous. Thus, while it demonstrates the devaluation of domestic work, because of its definition as 'naturally women's labour' and the emergence of the 'domestic code', it does not address who is doing this labour and who is hiring them to do it. Specifically, in Latin America and in Chile, the figure of the 'domestic woman' functioned as a hegemonic ideology imposed, first, by the Spanish Crown in the colonial period (from the 17th to the 19th century) and, later, by the new nation-state (from the 20th century onwards). However, the 'domestic code' was not applied in the same way to upper-class women as it was to paid domestic workers, the latter becoming the exception to this discourse. Towards the end of the 18th and beginning of the 19th century, women and women's labours were attributed, by the elite, a normative function in relation to the process of independence initiated in 1810.

'We think of the image of female labour as something exceptional, an image reinforced by the vindictory discourse of the domestic woman, of the virtuous mother, not only in the moral sense, but also in the national and patriotic sense. A woman's 'must be' is installed, related to the processes of independence and construction of the republic. It is the overlapping of the domestic to the field of the unproductive, more related to affects and transmission of values that will educate the good citizen.' (Zamorano, 2008; 63) (author's translation).

For the elite, women were essential in the construction of the new nation, specifically as mothers and wives. The 'domestic code', and the figure of the mother, reproduced the modern social contract by separating the domestic from the public and the political, and by using the role of the domestic in creating political subjects under the veil of motherhood. However, what the historian in the quotation does not note is that in order for 'some' women to fulfil this maternal call, 'other' women were needed to undertake the work necessary for maintaining a 'proper' household. In this sense, these feminine roles implicitly included a class position, which was only possible with the existence of those not named: domestic workers – those who allowed upper-class women to fulfil their national duty.

This period of independence was also a moment of economic change that involved the process of industrialisation, characterised by the discipline of bodies within workplaces and factories. The economic elite promoted the importance of ideas of progress and modernisation of the Chilean

agriculture sector. Therefore, labour was now valued under specific codes of efficiency and productivity. Elite women were engaged with this mentality and began to develop charity work in order to reaffirm their role and status in society (Serrano, 2008). They also had access to education, an aspect considered necessary for the evolution of the nation. Elite women, together with religious entities, organised themselves to develop their position as mothers and educators of society, assuring their moral and national role in the reproduction of tradition (Hutchison, 2006) which provided them with another role in society: the saviours of lower-class women (argument that I will return to later on).

Furthermore, poor and working-class women integrated industries and public workplaces, organising themselves to struggle for better labour conditions. This was questioned by the elite, even by women, who saw the inclusion of them in the workplace as a threat to woman's traditional role, putting in danger the emotional aspect of their motherhood and the importance of the family in society (Serrano, 2008). However, during the 1920s, more domestic workers were 'needed' by the economic elite, especially women who were willing to live in their workplaces, for the reproduction of the elite's new family life in the emerging big cities. This contradiction between the elite's negative view of poor women becoming workers and the demand for more domestic servants became a crucial node of enquiry in order to understand several phenomena, such as: the transformation of domestic work during this period, the class tensions of the discourse focused on the importance of family, the complex dynamics within elite households and the contradictions of an emerging capitalist mode of production.

In this sense, discourses about feminine roles directed towards both poor and elite women were not 'applied' to domestic workers, who became an 'exception' – which is, as I argue throughout this thesis, an invisible condition of possibility for the existence of upper-class families and elite women's status. Domestic workers became those who could not fit feminine discourses. Even though they were considered poor women, they were mainly viewed as *servants*, needed for the gendered and class performance of elite families, constructing a *culture of servitude* (an aspect that I will develop in further chapters). However, while domestic workers are the un-named within the public discourse of the 'domestic code', they are also expected to – as I show in chapter four – do their duties in the workplace with maternal devotion and efficient dedication. Thus, denied in the public domain, they are called upon within upper-class homes to dedicate themselves (in some cases for almost all their lives) to the care and protection of elite families, supplying support to upper-class women.

By reviewing this example, we can agree with Gutiérrez (2010, 2014) who suggests that paid domestic work transports ‘feminine stereotypes and legacies’ which naturalise the ideological location of women within the domestic sphere, but we also need to critically address the different ways in which paid domestic workers and housewives experience these legacies. While both can be compelled to perform this duty, it is only housewives who can afford to delegate part of this duty towards other women. I suggest that Pateman (1988), as others, assumes ‘occidental-liberal’ ideas of family and women’s role in society, and fails to question who it is doing the ‘dirty work’ (Anderson, 2000) while upper-class women perform the ‘domestic code’ in the private sphere. Afro-descendent, indigenous and poor women have not necessarily performed this feminine role as they have become workers for middle- and upper-class families. Therefore, the ‘domestic code’ has not applied in the same way to everyone (Davis, 1999; Hill Collins, 1990), and for it to be successful in middle- and upper-class women – and, hence, the patriarchal social contract – the labour of domestic workers is not only essential, but also economically and culturally undervalued and unrecognised by society.

‘The wife’s labor of leisure and the servant’s labor of invisibility serve to disavow and conceal within the middle-class formation the economic value of women’s work. Female servants thus became the embodiment of a central contradiction within the modern industrial formation. The separation of the private from the public was archived only by paying working-class women for domestic work the wives were supposed to perform for free. Servant’s labor was indispensable to the process of transforming wives’ labor power into their husband’s political power. But the figure of the paid female servant constantly imperiled the “natural” separation of private home and public market. Quietly crossing the thresholds of private and public, home and market, working and middle class, servants brought into the middle-class home the whiff of the marketplace, the odor of cash.’ (McClintock, 2003; 653).

As we will see in more detail in the next section, the figure of the housewife hides the economic value of domestic work – defined as servants’ labour – and later transmits this concealment towards her husband’s political power and reproduces the distinction between private and public. Thus, domestic work becomes both the exception and the condition of possibility of the ‘domestic code’ and of the private/public distinction.

As McClintock (2003) suggests, domestic work possesses an intrinsic tension between being a work related to the economic market and being care, connecting ‘feminine’ roles with post capitalist logics of labour. ‘Care’ is bounded by gendered values where women are expected to engage in specific roles for the normal functioning of the family, making care a ‘natural’ aspect of their job. Thus, families employ domestic workers to perform ‘caring’ by applying two mutually dependant stereotypes: that of the servant that performs the physical labour of care, and that of the wife/mother, that plays the emotional role of care.

This line of enquiry, focused on care, is part of the work of a third cluster of thinkers who have engaged with understanding domestic work as emotional and affective labour. A key figure that has inspired many scholars in this field is Arlie Hochschild and her text ‘The Commercialization of Intimate Life’ (2003). She argues that the ‘private’, as the ‘public’, has become commodified because, while ideas of care have obtained social and economic value, doing care has become undervalued. Hochschild defines emotional labour as ‘the management of feeling to create a publicly observable facial and bodily display: emotional labour is sold for a wage and therefore has exchange value’ (Hochschild, 1983; 7). In this sense, emotional labour is the management of emotions in social interactions in workplaces, where people perform and act using different props to transmit feelings according to a set of social rules on how we should feel and behave according to specific roles. It involves micro-acts of repetition that contain emotional memories and changes over time. In the case of domestic work, these emotional memories are marked by ‘feminine’ roles and the figures of the *servant* and the housewife.

The role of caring performed by domestic workers does not only include the emotional task of providing comfort, but also a certain moral idea of comfort. Hochschild (1983) distinguishes emotional labour from emotional work – that is the management of feelings but in the private sphere, where this work possesses ‘use value’. This distinction is interesting in the case of paid domestic work as, on the one hand, it is a formal work with a legal contract, duties and obligations and, on the other hand, it is performed in a private setting, reducing its ‘exchange value’ to ‘use value’. Therefore, the division between private and public management of feelings, proposed by Hochschild (2003), does not completely ‘fit’ in the case of paid domestic work. This helps us understand the complexities involved in defining domestic work as work: it is work produced in the private sphere where the management of emotions have different social and economic values. In the public sphere, emotional management can lead to the increase of sales and income; in the private

sphere, however, it leads to definitions of ‘proper’ performance of the role of caring and does not necessarily lead to economic recompense for the worker.

The understanding of domestic work as emotional or care work was later discussed by Precarias a la Deriva (2004), but a more contemporary reading (and a dialogue and distancing from Hochschild’s perspective) is provided by Gutiérrez (2010, 2014) who defines domestic work as affective labour. In her text ‘Migration, Domestic Work and Affect. A Decolonial Approach on Value and the Feminization of Labor’ (2010), she argues that the social fabric of domestic work is shaped by affects. These affects are not just emotions and feelings but also intensities and body reactions that disturb, stretch and reaffirm power relations. Gutiérrez distinguishes between affects and emotions. She defines affects in Spinoza’s terms, who conceives affects as body excitations that drive us to act, transforming passion into action. This drive (or energy) emerges in encounters. Gutiérrez (2010) studies the translation of historic legacies related to feminisation of the position of women’s labour and to the racialisation of this labour, an aspect that we will discuss further on. In relation to feminisation, Gutiérrez (2010) suggests that the fact that domestic work is considered ‘women’s work’ and, therefore, un-waged and unvalued, means that paid domestic work transports affects, attributes and social values related to traditional notions of femininity and dirtiness. In this sense, the author is interested in the different affects domestic work transmits – such as servility, disgust, well-being, happiness – and how they are produced as body excitations in encounters between employers and workers.

‘In short, the devaluation of the productive character of labor does not depend on the concrete quantity of time expended on it, but on the quality attributed to it by society. The value assigned to this labor is compounded by gender colonial legacies, expressed in a hierarchical epistemological system that favours rationality and discredits corporeal, emotional and sustainable qualities.’ (Gutiérrez, 2010; 92).

Gutiérrez et al. (2014) continued with this work in the Special Edition of Women’s International Forum (2014), analysing how employers and workers are affected by this feminisation legacy and manage boundary work, providing substantial material on the ways in which broader public policies on migration and economic relations affect interactions within homes. Feelings of disgust, boredom, and dirtiness are transmitted within homes and attributed to domestic worker’s labour. Rosie Cox (2006) suggests a similar line of enquiry:

'The status of both domestic work and domestic workers is caught up in complicated feelings about pollution and the people who deal with 'polluted' matter. These feelings transfer to domestic workers and affect their relationships with employers and then influence the ways domestic workers are treated.' (Cox, 2006; 6–7).

As I am interested in looking at domestic work as a performative site of difference within intimate households, understanding the transmission of disgust, dirtiness and pollution provides key elements that enable the comprehension of these feminised legacies and their performance within homes and in relations between workers and employers. I will discuss this aspect in the last part of this chapter, with the definition of domestic work as a performative site. What is interesting to note here, is how not only gendered but also class, ethnic and racial distinctions are performed in intimate spaces; hence, sexual division of labour cannot be understood without understanding class relations between workers and employers.

2. Class relations

As I have previously suggested, feminist scholars have argued that domestic work is foundational for the establishment of the capitalist and liberal, economic organisation of labour through the reproduction of labour force and is now key in the provision of care within neoliberal precariousness and crisis (Federici, 2012; Farris, 2015). However, in this section I will further argue that domestic work is not only key for the maintenance of structural forms of hegemonic economic order, but also for two interrelated aspects performed in everyday practices: first, the enrichment and the gain of class status of upper-class families and housewives, and, second, the sustainment of today's definitions of the *Chilean happy family* in the neoliberal Chilean democracy. In relation to the first aspect, domestic work is a significant practice that allows upper-class families to obtain economic and social status. As Cox (2006) perfectly describes:

'Employing domestic help is at best an individual solution to a social problem. At worst is the use of another human being to enhance and display wealth and status.' (Cox, 2006; 3–4).

The undervaluation of domestic work, due to its feminised legacy, is used to create a symbolic class power and status for upper-class families that can hire a domestic worker – mirroring the ways in which upper and lower classes relate to each other in a gendered way and co-construct each other

through boundary work (Lamont, 1992). In order to understand this argument, I suggest we look at the figure of the *servant* and the formation of the elite.

The *servant* is a central figure in past public and private debates in the West regarding morality and differences between groups of people in colonial settings, and in more contemporary analysis about class formation and the bourgeois family (Stoler, 1995). We can review a line of historical and post-colonial thinking that traces from Foucault (1990) to Stoler (1995) and McClintock (1995), thinkers who have looked at this figure as a way of studying the formation of the modern European self. Based on reflections in the ‘History of Sexuality’ (Foucault, 1990), Stoler (1995) draws upon the figure of the *servant*, suggesting that it produces both anxiety and provision of care of bourgeois children. She also suggests that the sexual differences between *servants* and the family are key for reproducing moral distinctions between both groups, magnifying the construction of the bourgeois ‘superior’ class position. However, for Stoler (1995), the formation of bourgeois morality and class identification did not only appear through and with the control and differentiation of sexuality, but also in the back steps of imperialism. Thus, not only class but also racial difference between *servants* and families were constitutive of the European self and conformation of the new European nation-states. Children not only needed to be protected because of possible sexual ‘contamination’ with *servants*, but also because servants could transmit cultural beliefs, endangering their racial and class identities (Stoler, 1995). Because *servants* were neither distant (living in the same house) nor near (considered as ‘others’), they posed a special danger. The modes of differentiation and boundary work between *servants* and colonisers are key aspects for this thesis. As mentioned in the introduction, domestic workers’ class – but also ethnic and national – ‘origin’ becomes a point of anxiety and, hence, management for employers interviewed for this thesis. I will further develop this aspect in chapter four, when we look at how differences are managed through political and intimate rhetoric and moral boundary work (Lamont, 1992).

In addition, ‘having’ a *servant* was crucial for the formation of the European self in colonial settings, as it publicly showed their social status and justified – in ‘natural’ terms – their position in the social hierarchy. In the case of Chile, we are able to understand the importance of the *servant* not only for the reproduction of the coloniser’s identity, but also for the local growing elite. Having slaves, and servitude, was a sign of social and economic status in the colonial period (Araya, 2005), and allowed the reproduction of gendered and racialised social order. It also enabled upper-class women to free themselves from the ‘dirty work’ (Anderson, 2000), protecting their decency and the honour of the family (González, 2008), both aspects crucial for the formation of the Chilean elite

and upper classes (Undurraga, 2012). Domestic work was seen as a dirty business, but essential for the moral construction of households. As Douglas (2002) argues, cleaning is an important aspect of reinforcing certain behaviours, and eliminating dirt ‘is not a negative movement, but a positive effort to organise the environment’ (Douglas, 2002; 2). However, not all women were adequate for this task as cleaning is also a form of class distinction, and in the case of Latin America, a form of racial and ethnic distinction. The ‘dirty work’ of cleaning, in this sense, is considered poor, indigenous and black women’s labour, an aspect that we will further review in this chapter.

At the same time, not only was ‘having’ a domestic worker to do the ‘dirty’ work – in the Chilean colonial period – essential for the formation of elite identity, but it also morally glorified upper-class households and families, who were seen as ‘knowing’ the ‘proper’ ways of being and lifestyles. ‘Having’ a domestic worker enabled the moral self-definition of the elite and upper classes as having alleged superiority and a ‘mission’ to ‘correct’ and ‘civilise’ women from the lower classes, prostitutes and adulteresses. In fact, the Spanish Crown and other religious authorities encouraged elite and upper-class families, as well as correctional homes, to ‘take’ these women so that they could learn how to behave, make their own clothes, cook and clean (Zamorano, 2008) so they could be ‘saved’.

‘Domestic occupation was also understood as a form of civilian life. In fact, the normative discourse of the crown and church authorities required the collection and detention without trial of prostitutes, the adulterous, and those in concubinage, in the House of Harvest (Casas de Recogidas), founded in 1735. There the white ones had to learn how to make their own clothing, while blacks, mulatas and indias (‘indians’) performed domestic labour such as kitchen labour and the washing of the clothes of the prisoners. The destiny of these women once released could be marriage, returning to a prior married life or service in a ‘house of good’.’⁹ (Zamorano, 2008; 66) (author’s translation).

Thus, through the identification of lower-class women as ignorant of the ‘proper’ ways of life, the elite and upper classes defined themselves as ‘experts’ and judges of the ‘good’ way of forming families and households. Rather than being a ‘private matter’, domestic work performed a public role in the formation of the local elite’s self and in recruiting poor and ‘lost’ women for a ‘better’ and more ‘proper’ way of life, thereby contributing to the representation of elite homes as ‘proper’

⁹ The idea of the ‘house of good’ meant a specific definition of gendered social organisation of a home that materialised in the ‘white mestizo’, heterosexual and legally married relationships and family.

(or houses of good). Hiring women from the lower classes became a way in which people of the upper classes related to them, both by using their labour to reproduce their upper-class lifestyles and gain social status, and by creating a relation of subordination based on the idea that upper-class families ‘knew’ the ‘correct’ way of being, which domestic workers needed to learn. The educational differentiation produced distinctions between these groups, naturalising their class status.

As was suggested in the introduction, I argue it is necessary to problematise these modes of differentiation – based on class and educational distinctions, as well as in ‘origins’ – between upper and lower classes, in both the colonial period and today in Chile, by looking at the ‘exceptionality’ rhetoric – one created in favour of healing a historical wound of impoverishment of the local upper classes. We can identify links between this historical wound and domestic work with both the need to conceal upper classes’ poor past and the importance of domestic work in concealing this very past. While there are many studies on the condition of insecurity and inferiority of Latin Americans, I suggest that the special poor conditions of the Chilean territory created a unique ‘wound’ within the local upper classes, in relation to their Latin American counterparts, based on extreme poverty. This condition is what makes the Chilean elite quicker to promote their class status, differentiate themselves from the rest of the population and define themselves as exceptionally different from their neighbours, domestic work becoming a key site to observe such legacy (an aspect that is further developed in chapter five).

Thus, together with enabling the enrichment and accumulation of the upper classes’ social status, by ‘having’ a domestic worker, upper-class families have been able to conceal their wound and social inequalities, and also to pursue their political projects. While in colonial periods the intention was to settle imperial order, with independence the aim was to homogenise society with the figure of the ‘white’ mestizo and the patriarchal family (Subercaseaux, 2002). These projects have changed over time and, as we have seen in the examples provided of the Chilean case, women and women’s labour have played crucial roles in the reproduction of such projects. I argue that, together with addressing these historical legacies, we need to analyse contemporary political projects and the performative power of domestic work in reproducing and challenging them. Hence, I suggest that domestic work today enables the image of the *Chilean happy family*, a key figure of the ‘Chilean neoliberal democracy’ – being the ideal representation of the upper-class family. I will explore, in more detail, the relation between domestic work and social values such as the family, the nation and the home further in this chapter, but it is important to note how employing a domestic worker

mirrors a specific way in which upper classes in Chile reproduce both their lifestyles and their status through boundary work (Lamont, 1992).

Before I explore the contemporary political project of upper-class families and the figure of the *Chilean happy family*, I will look at the relation between the reproduction of upper classes and paid domestic work through the concept of the symbolic boundary of Michèle Lamont (1992). Symbolic boundaries are defined within social relations (Lamont and Molnár, 2002) that create forms of differentiation between different groups, excluding those considered ‘others’, and bounded in power dynamics of inequalities (Lamont et al., 2015). They are a tool to think about social processes due to their relational aspect (Somers, 1994; Emirbayer, 1997) such as class distinctions and gender relations, among others. Drawing upon the work on morality (Durkheim, 2001 [1912]; Douglas, 2002 [1996]; Elias, 1982) and reproduction (Bourdieu, 1984), cultural sociology has focused on symbolic boundaries to understand migration, nation and communities, race and gender, among other topics. Lamont (1992) draws on this legacy to study, through qualitative interviews, the symbolic boundaries of upper-middle-class French and North American men – subjects that represent the ‘model’ for other classes regarding status and ‘ideal’ lifestyles promoted by advertisements and mass media. As Bourdieu analyses in ‘Distinction’ (1984), class struggles are extended to taste and lifestyle representations and practices, and symbolic boundaries are key in reproducing class privileges that transform them into the dominant class, legitimising their culture as superior, and exercising symbolic violence towards those considered inferior. This legitimisation produces proximity and distance between lower and upper classes, normalising relations of domination. In this sense, middle and upper classes become the hegemonic group through cultural distinctions. However, Lamont (1992) suggests not dismissing the importance of moral boundaries in the construction of class differences. This is useful in analysing the case for upper-class families in Chile, which are visually and morally represented through images and discourses, not only through mass and virtual media, but also through State institutions and politicians (PNUD, 2012). I will show in chapters four and five how they perform boundaries between themselves and domestic workers, by creating closeness and distance.

The symbolic boundaries created by the people interviewed by Lamont (1992) use and dramatize publicly available cultural repertoires and classification systems predominant in each country, in order to distinguish and differentiate from and hierarchise themselves in relation to other groups. However, it is important to interrogate how boundary building works (and does not work) when the

‘others’ are ‘inside’, as in the case of upper-class families and domestic workers, looking at Hill Collins’ (1986) metaphor of the ‘outsider within’.

According to Lamont (1992), boundaries are not only drawn upon social forms of stratification such as race, class and gender, but also – and more evidently in her study – on moral, cultural and socioeconomic standings related to national patterns (Lamont, 1995). Symbolic boundaries are created within distinctions of worthiness between ‘us’ and ‘them’, and, hence, reproducing social status. She suggests that moral boundaries ‘are drawn on the basis of moral character … centered around such qualities as honesty, work ethic, personal integrity, and consideration of others’ (4). Socioeconomic boundaries are based on ‘judgements concerning people’s social positions as indicated by their wealth, power, or professional success’ (4). Cultural boundaries ‘are drawn on the basis of education, intelligence, manners, taste, and command of high culture’ (4). Finally, national boundary patterns are defined as ‘institutionalized cultural repertoires, that is, as publicly available categorization systems, and national stereotypes as byproducts of collective process of the definition of identity’ (351).

As I have mentioned, in the case of both employers and domestic workers interviewed for this thesis, cultural judgements (especially regarding education and manners) are intertwined with moral judgements about workers’ ‘origins’, creating both justifications for workers’ inferior position and anxieties regarding the effects of their ‘origins’ on their performance within and outside of the household. Drawing upon these reflections, we can question how these moral ‘concerns’ about workers’ ‘origins’ translate into the class and racial status reproduction of employers. I suggest we need to consider both symbolic and more practical forms of difference based on race, ethnicity, gender and class in order to understand how boundary work is performed within intimate spaces specially in regarding whiteness (Echeverría, 2007). In addition, I propose we problematise this reading by questioning the role of gendered ideologies, and the ambiguous position of domestic workers as both part and not part of the household by discussing the importance of emotions, affects and the figure of the ‘outsider within’ (Hill Collins, 1986).

Taking into account the ideological aspects enables the consideration of those publicly available cultural repertoires in a certain time and space, for example, related to motherhood, family and the nation, which provide guiding rubrics on how to define ‘us’ and ‘them’ through emotionally affected everyday practices. For example, in her study on ‘family devotion’ and ‘intensive mothering’, Blair-Loy (2001) explores how cultural and moral discourses affect the gendered

boundary work of women. We will explore in chapter four how the employers interviewed desired to perform both traditional notions of motherhood and more ‘modern’ gendered subjectivities, by delegating their work to and differentiating themselves from domestic workers. However, not only ideological definitions, but also broader forms of distinctions based on manners and ‘proper’ ways of being, are key aspects to consider within households. Thus, culturally available repertoires, traditions and national narratives contribute to the boundary work.

In addition, considering the figure of the ‘outsider within’ (Hill Collins, 1986) we can problematise the work of symbolic, and more institutionalised, boundaries in the case of paid domestic work. Hill Collins (1986) describes the position of Afro-American domestic workers within ‘white’ homes, and how their cooking, cleaning and caring has made them both part and not part of the private ‘white’ world, obtaining a privileged position. Being considered as both ‘part of the family’ and ‘others’, domestic workers have a different position as they are racialised ‘others’ emotionally and bodily embedded within the ‘us’ – which in this case is upper-class Chilean families. We need to then consider how this special position, marked by political and intimate features, enables a specific form of class formation. I do not wish to understand these definitions as standard and given, but rather as affectively built and re-built, and contested, within interactions between workers and employers.

As I have argued, paid domestic work is central for the reproduction of upper-class status and lifestyle, and the boundary work performed within social relations in intimate homes is an stimulating place to analyse how this occurs. Workers being portrayed as both ‘part of the family’ and external agents producing fears and anxieties, makes boundary work a more complex process than that which takes place between two groups not living in the same place. For example, in her study, Lamont (1992) identifies different figures based on the moral boundaries of North American upper-middle-class men: the phony and the social climber. As I will analyse in chapter four, authenticity becomes a fundamental aspect of employers’ boundary work in relation to the evaluation of domestic workers. Anxieties regarding how much workers ‘really’ care about the children they look after, or about the intentions of workers to imitate their employers, become interesting focus points that will later be developed.

In the Chilean case, domestic work is a historical practice founded in colonial servitude and in the sexual and racial division of labour, that today works as a condition of possibility for the reproduction of upper-class families in the neoliberal democracy – a highly unequal system initiated

in Pinochet's dictatorship (1973–1989) with the privatisation of basic needs (health, education, among others), which not only maintains but also extends the power and status of upper classes. A way in which this materialises is through the employment of an undervalued labour force. Thus, as a central argument of this thesis, the daily work of cleaning, cooking and caring performed by poor, rural, migrant and indigenous women in wealthy houses in Santiago becomes a condition of possibility for the upper classes to obtain visual and practical power, to portray their status as 'natural' and their lifestyles as 'the' example of the *Chilean happy family*. Clean children, spotless bathrooms, guests served until late at night, ironed shirts, washed cars and paraded dogs – just some of the many things performed by workers and from which wealthy families extract status.

Domestic workers do not only reproduce upper-class status, but also their political self-definition as the representatives and models of the *Chilean happy family*. Materialised in the image of the happy family, upper-class lifestyles are seen as a 'natural' feature and not as a direct result of the privilege of 'having' a domestic worker at their disposal to reassure the reproduction of their distinction.

'... our government is committed to the country's growth, to defeat underdevelopment, that we manage to make investment grow, employment, but we cannot forget that what really matters is not economic growth, is the happiness of the family.' (President Sebastian Piñera in the TVN programme 'Good Morning to All', April 1, 2011, in PNUD 2012).

Drawing upon Lauren Berlant's (2011) reflections based on the case of North America and the neoliberal project that echoes the Chilean economic context (being defined as the Latin American 'economic miracle'), I suggest that the figure of the *Chilean happy family* becomes an object of desire and a form of distinction for upper-class families, associated with 'appropriate' ways of having a 'home', which requires not only the illusion of children and parents as happy but also as having clean, organised and supervised houses: an achievement performed, in part, by the domestic worker, who does so by doing the 'dirty work'.

In chapters four and five I intend to analyse the role of paid domestic work in the reproduction and questioning of the *Chilean happy family* and, hence, of the neoliberal Chilean democracy. I do this within the context of neoliberal policies developed in Chile during the civil–military dictatorship (1973–1989) and subsequent governments of transition (1990–present) – a context marked by contradictory policies: privatisation of basic services such as health, care, education and provision; government programmes that promoted 'gender equality'; and the promotion of work–family

balance policies so that more middle-class women could enter the labour market. All these policies have resulted in the circulation of ‘modern’ subjectivities that promote men and women’s self-realisation. As an aftermath, the emergence of a new efficient and nuclear *Chilean happy family* grows as a moral must and object of desire (PNUD, 2012). I suggest that while these neoliberal policies circulate in the media, advertising and from State representatives, the lifestyle of the upper classes is seen as representative of the new neoliberal and ‘modern’ Chilean family. While women are compelled to become more autonomous, the unity and survival of the Chilean family is simultaneously placed in the figure of the mother.

However, as we will later see in chapter four, in my interviews with employers and following the ‘modern’ call for greater autonomy, some upper-class women do not wish to sacrifice their lives and opt to employ domestic workers in order for them to perform their ‘caring’ role by cooking and cleaning for their children. Upper-class women are able to continue the ‘family’ mandate without questioning the sexual division of labour within households and are able to reproduce their class status without having to sacrifice their lives to the maternal mandate. Therefore, domestic workers make possible the maintenance and appearance of the upper-class family and women’s autonomy, and the ‘modern’ promise of neoliberal Chilean democracy.

3. Racial and ethnic differences

Domestic work not only mirrors and reproduces gender and class distinctions but is also marked by racial and ethnic colonial difference. It is crucial to consider its relationship with multilayers of oppression (Azerêdo, 2002; Brito da Motta, 1977; Chaney and Garcia Castro, 1993; Chaney and Garcia Castro, 1989; Phizacklea and Wolkowitz, 1995; Kofes, 1994; Rollins, 1985; Romero, 2002). Literature focusing on the intersection between race, class, sexuality and gender (hooks, 1981; Crenshaw, 1989; Hill Collins, 1990) has informed us of the analytical significance of including diverse forms of distinction to understand how different women live under the patriarchy and class oppression. According to Gutiérrez (2010), the value of domestic work is marked by processes of racialisation, ‘race’ and ethnicity becoming key cultural predicaments of current domestic labour practices. Racial and ethnic differences are historical forms of differentiating, which transform through time and space, but that also leave legacies and traces of how groups of people are hierarchised upon ‘natural’ and cultural definitions. I propose to consider the role of coloniality of power (Quijano, 2000) and of the gender system of coloniality of power (Lugones, 2008) when studying domestic work. Quijano (2000) and Lugones (2008) suggest that a racial and sexual

division of labour was spread throughout Latin America with colonisation, organising social differences and distributing bodies marked as superior/inferior and civilised/barbaric. These authors argue, in the case of Latin America, that class formation is intertwined with sexual, racial and ethnic distinctions. In addition, this economic and racial division is related to both the process of mestizaje and the ‘whitening’ of national identities.

Within this distribution, poor, Afro-descendent, rural and indigenous women were orientated towards domestic work, marking their bodies as ‘naturally’ situated within this practice. These ‘colonial stereotypes’ continue to operate throughout history (Palmer, 1989) – as we will further analyse and due to the fact that it is still mainly these women who are hired as domestic workers – justifying the importance of studying this stereotype within the current dynamics of domestic work and in the process of racialisation in the context of global economy. Few studies in Latin America have focused on how these processes have influenced domestic work in the region (Gorski, 2013), especially in relation to how ethnicity, racialisation and nationality interact with class and gender forms of classification, the effects of current dynamics of migration and the role of domestic work in the reproduction of national narratives. In addition, despite a few exceptions (Santos, 1983; Souza, 1989; Bunster and Chaney, 1985; Bernardino-Costa, 2007; Durin, 2008; Montemayor, 2008; Stefoni and Fernández, 2011), there is a general silence in the literature regarding indigenous women in paid domestic work, the importance of black slavery and the colonial period in the history of domestic work, and the relationship between ethnicity/race and current migration flows (Gorski, 2013; Tinsman, 1992). Furthermore, some researchers assume racial or ethnic identities among indigenous and immigrant domestic workers, disregarding not only women’s own cultural ascriptions, but also complex racial dynamics in Latin America regarding ideologies on ‘racial homogeneity’ (Graham, 1990; Leys Stepan, 1991; Radcliffe and Westwood, 1996; Wade, 1997; Saldaña, 2013).

I propose a more complex reading of the relation between gender, class and ethnic/racial classifications – inspired in the works regarding black domestic workers in the USA (Rollins, 1985) – by using as a starting point the link between servants and mistress in colonial periods. Using race and ethnicity as categories of explanation, scholars have shown how domestic work requires a social relation based, at the same time, on intimate bonds and on racial/ethnic/class distinctions, which change over time dependent upon economic need. To that effect, class formation is produced through the employment of a servant from different racialised groups, selected using stereotypes regarding their ‘abilities’ to care and clean within intimate homes, and their proximity to or cultural

distance from the family (Dudden, 1983; Katzman, 1978; Romero, 1987, 1988; Glenn, 1980, 1987; Colen, 1995).

I will suggest a ‘Chilean reading’ of the relation between intimacy, ‘racial’ difference and domestic work. ‘Having’ a domestic worker or a servant within homes provided social status for the local elite in the colonial period. This status, I propose, was not only based on economic standards, but also on moral, racial and ethnic ones: providing ‘superiority’ status to those who ‘had’ and ‘inferiority’ status to those who worked as servants. Thus, the elite was associated with ‘whiteness’ and cleanness, while doing domestic work was associated with being indigenous or racially marked and with ‘filthiness’, making the division between labour ‘for’ the elite and ‘for’ servants justified – both during this period and after independence – in ‘natural’ terms within intimate spaces. However, it is exactly this differentiation that becomes a necessity for creating intimate bonds of loyalty between employers and servants. In this sense, racial and ethnic difference is what makes possible the relation of subordination between servants and employers, and therefore, the success of domestic work. I will further develop in chapters five and six the emergence of a *culture of servitude* that enables the reproduction of relationships between employers and workers based on superiority/inferiority positions.

In addition, this line of thinking allows us to reveal the importance of domestic work in the process of status formation after independence (1810) during the 19th century in Chile, a fundamental aspect for the construction of the nation-state through racial and ethnic distinctions, also reproduced within public and intimate spaces. These racialised distinctions were used by the Chilean elite of the 19th century in the promotion of a modern nation. Public discourses on racial, class and gender distinctions distributed bodies and placed women in the sphere of the private as a ‘natural’ condition. However, poor, indigenous and rural women were not only seen as nearer to the ‘private’, but also as ‘closer’ to the primitive and, therefore, the duty to perform service labours – like domestic work – for the nation (Ochoa, 2014).

After independence (1810), both in Chile and in the rest of Latin America, the elite named ‘citizens’ as the core of the new nations. Under the ideas of progress and liberty, together with the processes of republicanism and illustration, the elite intended to educate and ‘civilise’ the people in order to ‘forget’ the Spanish and indigenous legacies and construct a modern future within one nation-state of shared traditions (Bengoa, 2002). By using the ‘citizens’ category, the new national elite attempted to construct an ‘us’ based on a homogenising perspective where ethnic and cultural

differences were hidden as they become an obstacle for the nation. One example of this homogenised perspective is the migration policy. From 1845 until the end of the 19th century, the political elite in Chile developed public policies aimed at civilising and educating the population through the inclusion of European migrants (from Germany, Italy and France) in order to populate the ‘south’ (from Lake Bio-Bio onwards), a place considered indigenous territory. The objective was not only to assimilate European culture, but also to establish sovereignty in a territory still held by an indigenous population (mainly Mapuches) in an attempt to eliminate ethnic differences and homogenise the Chilean race.

‘... [the] dream of the elite was to Europeanize America, a dream of whitening ... and to import the colour of their eyes and the secret of their material civilisation.’ (Illanes, 2006; 192) (author’s translation).

Thus, mestizos, Afro-descendent slaves, mulatos, zambos, indigenous and rural people were invisibilised under the homogenising umbrella of ‘Chilean culture’ (Subercaseaux, 2007). By, the 1920s, the ‘Chilean nation’ was able to gather ‘others’ towards the aristocratic elite, towards tradition, and towards ‘our own nation’ (Illanes, 2006). Many reacted to this narrative – for example José Martí wrote in 1891 Nuestra América ‘se averguenzan del delantal de su madre india’¹⁰ (Martí in Subercaseaux, 2007; 21). For the traditional elite, ethnic diversity and indigenous people become the touchstone for the construction of national identity, but – as we will see throughout this thesis – the counter and necessary contradiction for the construction of national narrative. Either hiding, assimilating or eliminating racial and ethnic difference is at the core of the construction of the ‘white Latin American elite’, and in the case of Chile, an elite that feels and represents itself as even ‘whiter’ than its neighbouring countries.

‘... since the 19th century the discourse of homogeneity was implemented by the elite and by the State with extraordinary success, generating self-awareness of a nation that was perceived to be culturally European, hence the myth of the “Switzerland or the England of Latin America”, hence also the myth (nationalist) of its exceptionality in the Latin American context.’ (Subercaseaux, 2007; 22) (author’s translation).

Therefore, indigenous culture in Chile, from the colonial period, has been invisibilised, denied (Quijano, 2000), made a ghetto (Subercaseaux, 2007), and even had a conflictive relation to official

10 Our America is ashamed of the uniform of our indigenous mother.

national identities (Larraín, 1996). However, it is precisely through the indigenous and rural workforce that the new nation was built. The new cities and elite homes were founded and reproduced thanks to servants. Domestic servants, as well as outsourced domestic work (washers and seamstresses) – which were mainly those racialised others – reproduced and sustained the new national project in the cities and the upper-class lifestyle. This contradiction, as we will see in chapter five, is reproduced within homes today, especially in relation to employers' and workers' supposedly different 'origins'.

Furthermore, the rural/urban distinction becomes important in this period. The indigenous people from the north and the south of Santiago, or even from the haciendas, become the racialised 'other' in contrast to the capital city, synonymous of civilisation (Bengoa, 2002). The rural and the haciendas represent the traditional and the old, and the rural in particular is seen as barbaric, criminal and dangerous as people living there still possess 'savage instincts'. As we saw in the introduction of this thesis, many domestic workers in this period had rural and indigenous backgrounds. While in the first half of the 20th century, these women are portrayed by employers as submissive and docile, today they represent a threat to employers who claim to feel, according to my interviews, that their rural 'origin' can have negative effects on their performance. In this sense, the 'rurality' of domestic workers becomes a point of distinction from the 'whiteness' or 'Europeanness' of employers. In addition, in the interviews with workers, we see that being labelled as 'huasas' (ignorant, from rural areas) becomes a way of reproducing their inferior social status. Thus, racial, ethnic and rural/urban distinctions are crucial to understanding boundary work within intimate spaces today.

While during the 19th century nationalisation of 'Chilean identity' took a more illustrated slant with the term 'citizens', during the first decades of the 20th century nationalisation included a more culturalist, romantic perspective based on the notion of racial nationalism, and lasted until the 1950s. In the specific case of paid domestic work, we must conceive that – because it is performed in this period mainly within upper-class families – the notions of family, the home, 'race', the nation and women's roles of this period influenced the relation between employers and workers, their views about each other and the social tensions that emerged from their class and origin differences. The need to become one race and one nation provoked the need to 'civilise' domestic workers, who had to assimilate themselves into upper-class lifestyle.

The ‘racial’ narrative often took violent and xenophobic forms, from both the State and grassroots organisations. In the first decades of the 20th century, the Ligas Patrióticas (a grassroots organisation supported by the Chilean State) initiated a campaign to ‘Chileanise’ the north of Chile (territory expanded after Chile took land from Peru and Bolivia during the Pacific War between 1879 and 1883). The Ligas aimed to remove dangerous elements of the Chilean territory, that is, Peruvians or anyone that ‘looked’ like a Peruvian (González, 2004). Consequently, an anti-Peruvian and anti-Andean culture was developed in Antofagasta, Iquique, Tacna and Arica, using symbols such as the flag, the National emblem, which now carries a xenophobic legacy in anti-Peruvian discourses (Stefoni, 2014; Tijoux, 2011). The formation of the Chilean nation, and the different uses of racial difference become crucial in understanding paid domestic work and the racialisation of servants for the reproduction of upper classes.

International studies on domestic work and migration have problematised the relation between race, ethnic and class distinctions, and the racialisation of domestic workers. During the 1990s and the 2000s, sociologists granted relevance to this labour in the global era of international division of care work (Hondagneu-Sotelo, 1994; Bakan and Stasiulis, 1995; Hondagneu-Sotelo and Avila, 1997; Stiell and England, 1997; Momsen, 1999; Anderson, 2000; Chang, 2000; Escrivá, 2000; Cock, 2001; Salazar Parreñas, 2001; Ehrenreich and Hochschild, 2002; Tronco, 2002; England, 2005; Duffy, 2005; Herrera, 2005; Yuval-Davis, 2006; Bowman and Cole, 2009; Gutiérrez, 2010; Moras, 2010; Lutz, 2011; Cox, 2006). This new literature revised the importance of Marxist theory of value (Anderson, 2000; Gutiérrez, 2010), in the context of what has been defined as the ‘feminization of international migration’ (Castles and Miller, 2001; Sassen, 2003; Kofman, 2004). Scholars have shown how, from the 1980s, more women have become international immigrants, accounting for gendered patterns of migration flows. However, the feminisation of domestic work is not only related to the number of immigrant women doing this labour but to the ‘quality’ assigned to it: as naturally women’s work, that requires no training or socialisation, and as unskilled (Gutiérrez, 2010).

According to Gutiérrez (2010), the massive entrance, from the 1970s, of middle-class women to the labour market, provoked the questioning of the ‘domestic code’ and the ‘housewife’ model. However, this did not necessarily change gender order within households (Gutiérrez, 2010), as middle-class women opted to hire an ‘other’ racialised woman to avoid conflicts within household arrangements, producing a ‘bond of exploitation’ (Romero, 2002; Rollins, 1985). These ‘other’ women are immigrants from third-world countries that have migrated to the United States

(Hondagneu-Sotelo, 1994; Chang, 2000; Salazar Parreñas, 2001), and Europe (Anderson, 2000; Lutz, 2011; Araújo, 2010; Cox, 2006).

Thus, migration is a key aspect in the study of racialised domestic workers. Chang (2000) has demonstrated how different ideologies and public policies have reproduced the idea of immigrant women as exploitable, low-wage labour, while Anderson (2000) has shown how immigration status leaves women in a more vulnerable situation, affecting their working conditions. In addition, authors such as Salazar Parreñas (2001) and Hondagneu-Sotelo (1994) have illustrated how women create specific forms of resistance by producing support networks or questioning their position within the household. These studies have criticised theories based on methodological nationalism, reconceptualising concepts such as citizenship and forms of belonging in a transnational context (Anderson, 2000).

Hondagneu-Sotelo (2001) indicates that migrant domestic workers are not only stratified by gender, but also by their immigration status, their nationality and their racialisation. Salazar Parreñas (2001) adds that the international division of reproductive labour is not only related to gender and race, but also includes a hierarchy between nations. Thus, women are ‘pushed’ and motivated to migrate from their country to work in another and are orientated towards domestic work due to racialised stereotypes that select women from certain nationalities as ‘ideal’ for the performance of this job. Moreover, in this context, studies of domestic work and migration have also shown how certain women are preferred by employers, due to specific gender and racial representations (Momsen, 1999; Pérez-Orozco, 2010; Busch and Cox, 2012).

These studies have focused only on migration into first-world countries, and therefore the need to understand racial and ethnic dynamics within domestic work in Latin America and in Chile still persists. Only a few efforts have focused on racial relations that are reproduced within domestic work, as in the case of Bolivia (Gill, 1994), and on how indigenous women negotiate work conditions as in the case of the studies in Mexico (Chavarría, 2008; Gutiérrez and Rosas, 2010; Saldaña, 2013). Therefore, it’s important to research new dynamics between domestic work and migration within the region (Stefoni, 2002; Mora, 2008; Courtis and Pacecca, 2010; Dutra, 2012), engaging with the emergence of south–south migration flows from poorer countries to more developed countries in order to understand how today domestic work is organised through economic, class and racial arrangements in intimate spaces. We will see in chapters four and five which stereotypes are being used in the Chilean case today, especially the case of Peruvians in

Chile where Steffoni (2003) and Staab and Maher (2005, 2006) have shown the ‘preferences’ of Chilean employers, due to class, gender and ethnic stereotypes.

By racialisation I intend to understand the ways in which different groups, employed as domestic workers, are categorised by racial, ethnic, national origins to define them in terms of inferiorisation and dehumanisation (Ochoa, 2014). It does not rely solely on ‘race’, but also on ethnic, national and legal status to define subjects as inferior (Yuval-Davis and Anthias, 1992). Rather than a product, racialisation refers to a process, one which is ‘an ideological process; a historically specific one’ (Omi and Winant, 1986; 64), and which produces racial stereotypes. These ideological and historical legacies are related to the gendered colonial system (Lugones, 2008), colonial difference (Gutierrez, 2010) and with the inferiorisation of racialised and feminised groups: mestizos, indigenous and black people who were defined as inferior at the service of those superior (Ochoa, 2014).

‘Over and over again, feminists, critical “race” and decolonial scholars have discussed the effects of racialization and feminization as coupled to a process of devaluation or “dehumanization.”’ (Gutierrez, 2010; 6).

This dehumanisation and inferiorisation of racialised groups has a specific effect on paid domestic work.

‘Domestic work is not only badly paid because it is signified as non-productive, but because those doing this work are feminized and racialized subjects considered as “inferior” to the hegemonic normative subject.’ (Gutierrez, 2010; 15).

As I have noted, it is racialised women who have historically performed paid domestic work. The devaluation of this labour is a product both of its conception as women’s reproductive work and because of the racialisation of women who have done it. In the specific case of Chile, different groups have had different forms of racialisation and inferiorisation, a situation that is a product of colonial difference and the feminisation of indigenous groups (Ochoa, 2014). In the case of this thesis, the domestic workers interviewed are defined by employers in three groups: Mapuche, Peruvian and from rural areas. All are defined by citing the norm of inferiorisation, however, as we will see in chapters four and five, the specific characteristics attributed to each group varies. This variation shows the shifts in production of difference within paid domestic work, shifts that relate to

internal and international migration and the possibility of defining each group in close/distant terms with the nostalgic view of the servant. Thus, while Mapuche domestic workers were defined as ideal workers in the first half of the 20th century because of their naïve attitude (which was a positive attribute for disciplining) they later became seen as a danger to the home's social order because of their empowerment. In the case of rural internal migrants, they were perceived as ideal servants in the second half of the 20th century because of their 'docile' and 'submissive' attitudes (Staab and Maher, 2005). However, this also changed and became seen as problematic because they were no longer willing to perform their duties with genuine desire. It was in the 1990s when Peruvian migrants became the new modern model of the figure of the servant because of their supposedly submissive and attentive personality.

The transformations of these classifications, together with the citation to inferiorisation and dehumanisation, show us the performative power of race. According to Gilroy (1995) 'race' is a performative effect of norms regarding racism and ethnicity. Tate (2005) defines race as performative by looking at black mixed-race women and their identifications with blackness against race empire. She questions black authenticity by looking at hybrid racial subjectivities within dominant 'race' regime of hypodescent, concluding that race is performative, it's not a being but a becoming, a process that cites the white/black racial norm. While Tate (2005) looks at how mixed-raced women perform race by negotiating with blackness and whiteness, I also consider how employers perform their 'whiteness' by differentiating and racialising domestic workers because of their ethnic, rural or national origin.

This notion of the performativity of race ties with Echeverría's (2007) notion of *blanquitud* (developed in chapter five) which is not a given, but rather obtained through reiterative behaviour in time providing moral status to those who suggest are whiter. Rather than a real identity, it is a performative effect. Employers may perform their whiteness by wanting an upper-class lifestyle and by differentiating with racialised workers. Now, whiteness is never fully accomplished, and thus we can understand employers' constant need for differentiation.

'Recognition is not conferred on a subject, but forms that subject. Further, the impossibility of a full recognition, that is, of ever fully inhabiting the name by which one's social identity is inaugurated and mobilized, implies the instability and incompleteness of subject-formation.' (Butler, 1993; 226).

Together with the difficulty of fully accomplishing whiteness, workers' racialisation is also never fully accomplished. As we will see in chapter six, workers may also contest the racial and gendered norms of colonial difference.

4. Nation, family and the home

National discourses circulate, affect and are produced within domestic work, providing justifications for the reproduction of upper-class status through a political and an intimate rhetoric. As I have proposed, the upper-class lifestyle acts as a normative ideal of the 'proper family life', representative of the 'normal' national family, domestic work becoming essential for the everyday reproduction of such moral notions. I have also suggested that employers naturalise their lifestyle because of their moral relation within the nation (as representative of the 'proper national family'), and by concealing and using paid domestic work to reproduce such lifestyles. In this section, I further argue that domestic work reproduces cultural values of the nation through its relationship with normative and hegemonic discourses regarding the home, the family and motherhood. To justify this argument, I discuss feminist colonial studies to later explain the importance of domestic work in the reproduction and challenging of national narratives.

By focusing on the relation between servants and mistresses, and its connection to national narratives and colonial periods, scholars have studied the importance of reproductive labour in the symbolic and material construction of societies. As I have discussed, Ann Stoler (1995, 2002, 2009) and Anne McClintock (1995, 1997, 2001) characterised domestic service by its tension between a 'border' and intimate space, and as a specific site for the understanding of the colonial period, the formation of European identity, middle- and upper-class identity, and national narratives of the self based on racial and gendered production of difference. This is important literature to help understand how the performance of domestic work is a central part of – and not only affected by – the reproduction of national narratives based on notions of home, family and motherhood.

In relation to how domestic work is affected by public and moral discourses, Gutiérrez (2010) does a more contemporary analysis of the importance of public policies in the shaping of domestic work and the private sphere through the idea of 'distant governmentality'. She is inspired by Michel Foucault's concept of governmentality which concerns his analysis of 19th century European liberal societies, where governing became a human technology not necessarily attached to the Church or

the sovereign (as monolithic powers), but to the ability to govern through the population and through ‘self-governing’.

‘The techniques of governing the family work through the self-managerial abilities of the household members ... Therefore, while the family seems to function outside a State regulative modus operandi, it is actually regulated by it. The family is governed by the State at a distance as the State introduces itself into the family through the beliefs and strategies of its actors. It governs this sphere through the mentalities, rationalities and practices of the individuals.’ (Gutiérrez, 2010; 71).

In this sense, families are governed by the State and the political through the circulation of specific subjectivities and rationalities, which individuals engage with and reproduce in their intimate life. We can also understand this movement through Berlant’s (2011) notion of ‘intimate attachments’, as a way in which available cultural discourses are attached to each individual who struggles to be part of the collective and live their personal desires. Today, Berlant (2011) argues that neoliberal subjectivities circulate within the North American territory, something we can also see in Chile, where the neoliberal notions of self-made man and autonomous woman navigate within public and intimate discourses since the implementation of neoliberal policies during Pinochet’s dictatorship. In addition, more ‘modern’ gendered versions of women’s subjectivity began to circulate in Chile during the 1990s, related to their autonomy, aspects that will be discussed in chapter four. These neoliberal and ‘modern’ subjectivities co-exist with ideas of happiness regarding family life. According to PNUD (2012), men and women from different social backgrounds today desire to be ‘happy’, which requires – according to the result of the PNUD study – self-determined subjectivities and stable and united families. Not only ‘modern’ subjectivities are proposed as ideal, but also the reproduction of traditional notions of family.

Today the family is an important topic of public agenda for political parties and is used to articulate society as a whole with individuals by ‘transmitting a national consensus to the micro-level of the everyday’ (Gutiérrez, 2010; 71). In the case of Chile, according to Valdés (2009), the family and its ‘unity’ became a key figure in the rhetoric of the ‘reconciliation’ period (1990–2000s) after the dictatorship, being portrayed as the pivotal point of social order and of the new democracy. This tendency was reproduced by later governments, existing even today, and carries moral definitions of the ‘ideal family’. Thus, the ‘ideal and proper’ way of life is to be heterosexual, bi-parental, have specific body features (whiter than the majority of the population) and material aspects (types of consumption) – all the things represented by the upper class (PNUD, 2012). This definition has a

direct impact on private arrangements within domestic work: ‘having’ a domestic worker – as has been argued – enables the reproduction of the *Chilean happy family*.

These definitions of ‘ideal’ or proper families – the figure of the *Chilean happy family* – become a public issue but are expected to be performed and carefully looked after within private homes, resting in women’s roles as mothers. According to McClintock (1995), women have an ambiguous relation to the nation as, on the one hand, they are seen as ‘symbolic bearers’, and on the other, they are denied direct relation to it. Yuval-Davis and Anthias (1989) identify five ways in which women have been related to nations: as biological reproducers of members; as reproducers of the boundaries between groups of the nation; as transmitters and creators of national culture; as symbols of national difference; and as participants of national struggles. In the case of employers, we can see – through the historical examples previously presented and in later chapters – that they have performed a specific role in guarding and expanding traditional gender roles towards lower-class women and towards domestic workers through ideologies of motherhood. We will see in chapters four and five that these ideologies are transmitted through their relationship with workers by assuming a ‘saviour’ attitude. Practices of teaching workers special recipes, how to set the table and receive guests, or even asking them to dress in certain ways, can be interpreted as ways in which upper-class women reproduce a *culture of servitude* with workers in modern times.

McClintock (1993) suggests, national collectives are expressed and experienced through ‘commodity spectacle’, however, I propose that national collectives – like the model of the *Chilean happy family* – are not only produced in fetish objects or fetish spectacles, but in the ‘intimate’ and private life through domestic work. Since the home is the ‘natural’ micro-place of the nation, and women its protector, social tensions and social order are made through domestic work. If nations are performed, so too is domestic work a performative site of the nation’s reproduction. As I argue throughout this thesis, the actions of cooking, caring and cleaning not only reproduce forms of social subordination, but also produce national narratives through boundary work, which supports moral ideas on gender roles, forms of parenting, and doing family life. Thus, I suggest that domestic work is both affected by and affects the notions of family that circulate in the political arena, due to its performative power. I will further develop this notion of the performative power of domestic work – that is, how it affects and produces cultural and moral boundaries – in the next section.

Domestic work as a performative intimate–political site

As proposed above, domestic work is not only affected by but also produces moral and normative definitions of the family, the nation and the home through its performative capacity. In this sense, domestic work has a performative power to produce political definitions and social status through intimate practices. I argue that domestic work is a performative site where both workers and employers construct, produce and reproduce cultural values, normative and non-normative notions of gender, racial and class differences – all linked to national narratives. In addition, the performative power of this labour enables us to understand how this production is not always coherent. I argue that through acts of repetition, domestic work cites and even transforms gender roles, ideas of the Chilean nation and ethnic/racial difference. The ‘domestic’, traditionally viewed as a place of intimacy and refuge, may actually function as a conflictive field where ethnic and racial politics are negotiated.

I define domestic work as an intimate–political performative site, because not only does it involve doing specific tasks at the same time, but it is also a labour that is spatially and physically embodied in a set of practices where people reproduce social and cultural meanings through their interactions. Different disciplines and perspectives have used performativity and performance as theoretical and methodological tools. A first group uses what can be defined as the ‘theatrical’ approach, inspired by the works of Erving Goffman (1959, 1961, 1963, 1967) and basing its analysis of society in the idea of it as a social scenario (Turner, 1988; Schechner, 2002; Singer, 1972; Geertz, 1973). A second group uses what can be defined as the ‘performativity’ perspective, and includes the writings of Austin (1962), Butler (1999, 1997) and Derrida (1976, 1978), among others, in which discursive and speech acts have greater centrality.

Performativity, as a theoretical standpoint to understand the production of difference, becomes valuable to define the reproductive power of paid domestic work beyond the economic axis. It makes it possible to expose the power of paid domestic work as a site – and not as a natural disposition of racialised women – of production of racial, class and gendered differences. By looking at both the subject (racialised women) and the practices (work), performativity enables us to read the effects of feminised and racialised norms cited in repetitive everyday acts of domestic activities. In her works ‘Gender trouble: feminism and the subversion of identity’ (1999 [1990]) and ‘Bodies that matter: on the discursive limits of “sex”’ (1993), Butler draws upon Austin’s theory of speech acts, Foucault’s notion of discourse and Nietzsche’s critique to the metaphysics of substance

to understand how gender is not an expression of a pre-existing identity – an original and natural gender – but an effect of discourses and practices, something which is done.

'In this sense, gender is not a noun, but neither is it a set of free-floating attributes, for we have seen that the substantive effect of gender is performatively produced and compelled by the regulatory practices of gender coherence. Hence, within the inherited discourse of the metaphysics of substance, gender proves to be performative – that is, constituting the identity it is purported to be. ... There is no gender identity behind the expressions of gender; that identity is performatively constituted by the very "expressions" that are said to be its results.' (Butler, 1999; 33).

Vikki Bell (1999b) suggest that the performative character of identities invites us to rethink how these continue to be reproduced.

'... taking the temporal performative nature of identities as a theoretical premise means that more than ever, one needs to question how identities continue to be produced, embodied and performed, effectively, passionately and with social and political consequences.' (Bell, 1999b; 2).

As there are no pre-existing genders and thus gender needs to be continuously reproduced, I suggest that there are no pre-existing employers and domestic workers, as well as no pre-existing *Chilean happy family*, home or racial and class status, and rather these are all continuously reproduced today in employer/worker relationships. These are not original or authentic realities, rather effects of not 'the same' but cited norms which intend to present themselves as authentic and natural by concealing their fabrication. These are all effects of the performative power of paid domestic work. As we will see in the following chapters, naming workers as *nanas* and employers defining themselves as different and superior to *nanas*, creates the very notion of *nanas* and of class and racial difference. It is through performative utterance that gender is produced through the citation of norms related to femininity and masculinity inscribed in the bodies of subjects; it is through the citation of the feminisation and racialisation colonial legacies that hierachal positions between employers and workers are produced in everyday practices of paid domestic work and within affective relations. Domestic work, as a performative site, cites and reproduces racialised, gendered norms that, as I argue, produce employers' status and the very notion of the *Chilean happy family*. Now, employers and workers do not wilfully produce status and hierarchies, rather it is a citation and repetition of norms regarding racialised and feminised colonial differences. Thus, domestic

work is not in itself inferior, but is perceived as such by the citation of these legacies and of servitude that naturalises and inscribes difference.

This is also seen in the everyday performance of domestic activities. Performativity and performance have theoretical differences but are also complementary viewpoints that see the ways in which the *Chilean happy family* is performed in the narratives of employers and how affective forms of resistance are employed by workers.

*'First, it is important to distinguish performance from performativity: the former presumes a subject, but the latter contests the very notion of the subject. The place where I try to clarify this is toward the beginning of my essay 'Critically Queer', in *Bodies that Matter*. I begin with the Foucauldian premise that power works in part through discourse and it works in part to produce and destabilise subjects. But then, when one starts to think carefully about how discourse might be said to produce a subject, it's clear that one's already talking about a certain figure or trope of production. It is at this point that it's useful to turn to the notion of performativity, and performative speech acts in particular – understood as those speech acts that bring into being that which they name. This is the moment in which discourse becomes productive in a fairly specific way. So what I'm trying to do is think about performativity as that aspect of discourse that has the capacity to produce what it names. Then I take a further step, through the Derridean rewriting of Austin, and suggest that this production actually always happens through a certain kind of repetition and recitation. So if you want the ontology of this, I guess performativity is the vehicle through which ontological effects are established. Performativity is the discursive mode by which ontological effects are installed.'* (Butler, 1994; 33).

However, Butler later suggests – in the preface to the 1999 edition of ‘Gender Trouble’ – that performance is also an interesting notion to think about gender performativity.

*'Moreover, my theory sometimes waffles between understanding performativity as linguistic and casting it as theatrical. I have come to think that the two are invariably related, chiasmically so, and that a reconsideration of the speech act as an instance of power invariably draws attention to both its theatrical and linguistic dimensions. In *Excitable Speech*, I sought to show that the speech act is at once performed (and thus theatrical, presented to an audience, subject to interpretation), and linguistic, inducing a set of effects through its implied relation to linguistic conventions. If one wonders how a linguistic theory of the speech act relates to bodily gestures, one need only consider*

that speech itself is a bodily act with specific linguistic consequences. Thus speech belongs exclusively neither to corporeal presentation nor to language, and its status as word and deed is necessarily ambiguous.’ (Butler, 1999; xxv).

Performance is useful to analyse how identities, status and norms are reproduced in everyday practices rather than to think about these performances as voluntary or guided by will. As we will see in chapters four, five and six, both employers and workers affectively perform their status: employers by naming workers *nanas* or by asking workers to clean the bathtub after showering, and workers by feeling inferior or becoming angry against such position. Both employers and workers, in these performances cite the feminised and racialised legacies and a culture of servitude which reproduce hierachal relations and the Chilean happy family. Now, because of the performative possibilities of proliferating difference production and of the biopolitical character of this work, resistances and transformations within paid domestic work – and the norms cited in this practice – are analysed in chapter six. As Butler reminds us, ‘just as bodily surfaces are enacted as the natural, so these surfaces can become the site of a dissonant and denaturalized performance that reveals the performative status of the natural itself’ (Butler, 1999; 186).

Thus, drawing upon Butler’s reflections on the performativity of gender (1999) I suggest that domestic work is also a performative practice of normative notions of women’s work, the ‘proper’ or traditional family figure, and of ‘motherhood’. Rather than reproducing ‘original’ versions of these notions, domestic labour works towards naturalising and normalising these as ‘authentic’, concealing their fictional or historical formations. Through everyday practices, and the constant repetition, of cooking, cleaning and caring, domestic work produces social and cultural values. However, as Butler suggests regarding gender norms, these practices are based on but not determined by power relations and structural forms of oppression. Thus, I suggest in later chapters, through boundary work (Lamont, 1992) and differentiation between employers and workers, these normative notions are reproduced, challenged and imperfect. I will further problematise this transformative capacity by looking at Berlant’s work on intimacy, however, now a review Taylor’s (2003) notion of performance to see that domestic work’s performative capacity is also reproduced in everyday performances of gender, class and racial difference. Performativity and performance are complementary perspectives to understand both the citational and the practices of paid domestic work. As we will see, performativity allows us to explore the productive power of paid domestic work regarding the figure of the *Chilean happy family* and of difference, and performance helps us to understand the importance of making visible authenticity and difference.

Taylor (2003) proposes to use the word *performático* (performance in Spanish), to understand how performance functions as an act of transfer and transmission of social knowledge, memory and sense of identity through reiterative behaviour in bodily and material experiences. Therefore, cooking, cleaning and caring can be defined as practices that transmit specific embodied social knowledge on how to belong to a specific class, how to behave as a ‘woman’, and how close or distant different racialised groups should be. In other words, in agreement with Gutiérrez’s (2010) conceptualisation of domestic work as affective labour:

‘Affects not only unfold context, but they emerge within a concrete historical and geopolitical context. While they emanate from the dynamics of our energies, impulses, sensations and encounters, affects also carry residues of meaning. They are haunted by past intensities, not always spelled out and conceived in the present. Immediate expressions and transmissions of affects may indeed revive repressed sensations, experiences of pain or joy. Although not explicitly expressed as such, they are temporal and spatial constellations of certain times, intricately impressed in legacies of the past and itineraries of the present/future.’ (Gutiérrez, 2010; 5).

Domestic work is affected by historical intensities and sensations of the feminised and racialised features of this labour, of servitude, which are performed in everyday performances. In this sense, domestic work possesses a performative character and it is performed due to the affective property within employer–worker relationships. Furthermore, as Taylor (2003) suggests, performances are able to show how traces of specific histories are rearticulated in the present, in an immediate situation that can both reproduce and challenge these traces at the same time. It is not only linguistic aspects of discourses that are concerned, but more importantly non-linguistic, such as the visual, digital and corporeal. They are both real and constructed practices, as they bring together ontological (forms of being) and epistemological (forms of knowing) discourses. These historical traces are materialised in scenarios which:

‘... exist as culturally specific imaginaries – sets of possibilities, ways of conceiving conflict, crisis, or resolution – activated with more or less theatricality.’ (Taylor, 2003; 13).

It is ‘theatrical’ because one can ‘predict’ its content, but also this predictability is an accounting of its artificial construction. Therefore, scenarios are material that has already been worked on, constituting frameworks that can have the weight of accumulative repetition, making visible

specific ghosts or stereotypes. In the case of Chile, domestic work is performed in a specific scenario that, although it works with and through the private and public distinction, cannot be determined by it. Rather than just being a product, domestic work produces this distinction and also produces other distinctions that do not fit the private/public separation.

The scenario that domestic work cites is related to multiple discourses, but especially to the gendered class and ethnic conflict introduced with colonisation – where poor, rural and Mapuche women were ‘included’ in society as domestic servants, a trace that today is rearticulated within current migration dynamics, in what we can define as a *culture of servitude*, a notion later developed in chapters four, five and six.

“... domestic work is not definable in terms of tasks but in terms of a role which constructs and situates the worker within a certain set of social relationships.” The domestic worker within the family setting represents the position of “servant”. (Gutiérrez, 2010; 114).

The scene described by Gutiérrez (2010) regarding the relation between migration and domestic work in Europe, and its relationship with a ‘colonial’ legacy, can also be seen in the case of domestic work in Chile, as well as the importance of this work in the production of upper-class status. Following Taylor’s (2003) work, we can think of this historical legacy in terms of scenarios marked by an ‘inaugural scene’. Taylor (2003) argues that western narratives of discovery and colonisation create a specific scenario defined by gender and racial distinctions. I will argue throughout this thesis, that this scenario works towards the reproduction of the ‘modern’ family that conceals racial and class conflict between indigenous groups and the ‘Chilean’, and between these two groups and Peruvian immigrants in everyday practices.

Rather than conceiving scenarios as static situations where there is little place for individual agency, Taylor (2003) argues that performances include ‘reiterative process and carrying through as well as its potential for historical specificity, transition, and individual cultural agency’ (14–15) and that the scenario both ‘predates the script and allows for many possible endings’ (28), an aspect that I will develop in chapter six. Indeed, reiteration is key for understanding performance as not a cultural or historical determination (Butler, 1999). It is precisely because it involves repetition of practices that every repetition is the condition of possibility of ‘newness’; that is, new articulations of social and economic dynamics of power relations, and the plausibility of cultural change through individual and collective agency. In this sense, scenarios are not mimetic as they work more through

reactivation than through duplication. ‘Rather than a copy, the scenario constitutes a once-againess’ (Taylor, 2003; 32). Therefore, performances are understood:

‘As a term simultaneously connoting a process, a praxis, an episteme, a mode of transmission, an accomplishment, and as a means of intervening in the world, it far exceeds the possibilities of these other words offered in its place.’ (Taylor, 2003; 15).

Scenarios do not determine ideologies regarding domestic work, but ‘authenticity’ is expected from workers. Domestic workers are trained to be a certain way, care a certain way, in order to perform ‘real’ caring in the ‘Chilean way’, displayed towards ‘others’ (the audience) that can be the children or guests of the family. For example, in the process of caring, workers have to perform a modified version of the ‘Chilean’ way of taking care of children, that has to seem both ‘real’ Chilean and at the same time ‘different’. What is understood as the ‘real’ Chilean way of performing family is a topic to problematise in this thesis. By reading the ‘essentialised’ version of the ‘Chilean family’ through domestic work, we can question how the nation and upper classes are created through taste, care, etc., and through the contact between working and upper classes.

Furthermore, domestic work involves a process of learning but also a performance that requires an interaction between domestic workers, employers and other actors. ‘Domestic work’, ‘employer’ and ‘domestic worker’ are not given definitions as they involve embodied practices where, together with other categories such as gender, class, ethnicity and nationality, they are constantly being acted, reproduced and transformed through reiterative acts (Gutiérrez, 2010). These acts produce and transmit cultural content related, as I show in this thesis, to gender roles, national narratives and ethnic/racial distinctions between the family and the workers, that is, between different social classes and ethnicities.

An important aspect of performance is that social legitimacy is achieved and valued in terms of ‘authenticity’: that is, actors must show that the feelings and actions are ‘natural’. Therefore, authenticity of performance is fulfilled when its ‘theatricality’ is hidden (Alexander, 2004; Hochschild, 1983). In the case of domestic work, the concealing of the ‘theatricality’ becomes a source of the reproduction of power relations, of the naturalisation of ‘feminine’ roles and racial difference and justifies its social and economic devaluation. This process becomes more complex with the commodification of care work and the consequences of ‘deep acting’ for domestic workers (Hochschild, 1983). Emotional work has become commodified in the market place, that is,

emotions become ‘stretched into standardized social forms … [and feelings] more susceptible to estrangement’ (Hochschild, 1983; 13). The consequences for workers appear when their performance – deep acting – is not easily separated from their private feelings. Domestic work is intrinsically linked to emotional labour – it involves caring, attention and communication skills to provide a ‘proper’ comfort space. When a domestic worker is hired, feelings become more complex as the private and the family are seen as intimate spheres. For the family, the hiring of a domestic worker can mean the entering of positive emotions because it provides more ‘caring’ labour (Gutiérrez, 2010). However, this is contrasted with the commodification of the relationship and the gender division of labour within the home. ‘Thus, the idyllic image of the family as the locus of love and care is disrupted by the structural inequalities that determine this sphere’ (Gutiérrez, 2010; 103). The analysis of emotional labour reveals the tension between care work and ‘women’s’ work in the composition of domestic work.

Domestic work is also a site where social tensions are negotiated. The person doing the cleaning is not the wife, but the ‘other’ racialised woman, who not only cleans the dirt but does it because she represents a specific filthiness – ‘dirt expresses a relation to social value and social disorder’ (McClintock, 2003; 648). Race, gender, ethnicity, nationality and social class all shape who is doing the hiring and who is performing the work. In the specific case of immigrants, being part of the dynamics of globalisation, they have connected different places, and economic and social forms of labour organisation. This too occurs in the case of Chile with internal and international migration. From the colonial period until the 1980s, young southern and Mapuche women went to work (not always willingly) in wealthy homes in the major cities and to the capital to learn, be protected and serve upper-class families, and also to become, in some cases, the main breadwinner of their homes (Gálvez and Todaro, 1987). This phenomenon consisted in the organisation of gender roles and class distinctions, in service of the distribution of bodies and labour in local economic production. From 1990s, the number of women – especially from Peru and Bolivia – started to increase in the country, becoming a ‘new’ available female labour force.

However, domestic work does not only involve specific tasks but the performance of these tasks in relation to ‘others’ and in relation to a social ‘intimate’ space embedded with gendered meanings on motherhood, childcare and family. Thus, I propose to think about the relation between intimacy and politics in everyday practices and in the relations within homes. According to Berlant (1998), intimacy is a form of communication based on the expectation of creating familiar and comfortable spaces of shared stories based on happiness and love. This ‘inward’ process of intimacy is

connected with a corresponding ‘publicness’. In this sense, people want ‘a life’ based on long-lasting and beautiful experiences, and they trust ‘intimate institutions’ (families) to provide such experiences. Under these expectations, disruptions and difficulties to creating this ‘intimacy’ are repressed and the problems surrounding, for example, family life are concealed to create a ‘perfect image’ of intimacy. These difficulties constantly haunt the promise of happiness, making life itself vulnerable. We do not actually know how to do intimacy, but we have the traditional promise of intimate happiness which may or not relate to ideological, normative and institutional everyday practices of people that impact on the ‘categorization of experience and subjectivity’ (Berlant, 1998; 282). Berlant (1998) proposes that we can find an aesthetic of attachment of intimacy that is crossed by ideologies.

‘This is where normative ideologies come in, when certain “expressive” relations are promoted across public and private domains – love, community, patriotism – while other relations, motivated, say, by the “appetites,” are discredited or simple neglected.’ (Berlant, 1998; 285).

Ideologies move through the public/private and beyond, creating new forms of attachment that make innovative forms of imagining ‘life’. Thus, intimacy is understood as a communicational process that occurs within the movement of different publicly available repertoires and ideologies that are attached to experiences and subjectivities (Berlant, 2011). These ideologies may come from the ‘public’ sphere, but they move through different channels and people make their own adjustments to produce a normative version of intimate life. Taking into consideration the US context, Berlant (1998) argues that intimacy enters the discussion about the appropriate relation between the private and the public, a discourse that associates these ‘separate’ spaces with traditional gendered divisions of labour. People still relate the private with the controllable and affective space, while the public is seen as the uncontrollable and instrumental space.

‘... the continuing attraction of the attachment to this division because the discourse world described by the public and the private has, historically, organized and justified other legally and conventionally based forms of social division (male and female, work and family, colonizer and colonized, friend and lover, hetero and homo, “unmarked” personhood versus racial-, ethnic-, and class-marked identities). A simple boundary can reverberate and make the world intelligible; the taken-for-grantedness of spatial taxonomies like public and private makes this cluster of taxonomic associations into facts within ordinary subjectivity as well.’ (Berlant, 1998; 283).

The public/private divisions organise spaces ‘supposedly separated’ in relation to an ideological division of labour, where women are related to the private and to the ideological understanding of woman’s role in the reproduction of society; normative ‘feminine subjectivities’ emerging such as mother and housewife. Agreeing with Berlant (1998) enables us to propose how public/private divisions and their consequential normative positions (woman’s role in reproduction) intend to define the private as the ideal space for the creating of intimacy (the project of a happy and loving life) due to its ‘feminine’ features; at the same time, it helps us to see the intrinsic relation between public interest of the State, politics and intimacy. In this sense, for the State to define woman’s role as primarily a reproductive one it engages women to participate and ‘live’ up to this normative ideal and contribute to society through the private sphere. Therefore, the political interest of social and economic order is intertwined with the ‘private’ and the making of intimacy, which becomes a public mode of identification and self-development (Berlant, 1998).

I argue that the relation between the domestic and the public sphere is an interdependent one. They rely on each other in order to produce subjects and subjectivities that engage with normative positions within a specific society and that justify a specific social order: nationalism; motherhood; racial and ethnic division of labour; class differences. In this sense, paid domestic work produces subjects for life in a specific society as well as reproducing the familiar space as the place of happy intimacy.

I further suggest that relationships between upper-class women and domestic workers are constructed by this ideological relation between the public and intimacy, and through boundary work (Lamont, 1992) – that is, a process of differentiation and closeness. Thus, domestic work operates as an activity that is based on political distinctions produced in an ‘intimate’ rhetoric and relations between workers and employers.

Domestic work, in its daily practices of cleaning, cooking and caring, has a performative power of production of social values and political definitions regarding the home, the family and the nation, as well as the power to influence public debates about women’s labour and the role of families within the nation. In addition, through everyday and intimate performances within households, domestic work also produces and distinctions of class, ‘race’ and ethnicity, defining and showing certain bodies as ‘in service’ and others as ‘worthy of service’, echoing and producing social hierarchies.

For example, in the 20th century, with the figure of the Chilean family bourgeoisie, the Chilean State defined the role of women as fundamentally reproductive, calling women to participate in this regulatory role and contribute to society through their labour in the private sphere. Therefore, the relationship between the political interest of social and economic order was intertwined with the ‘private’ and performed in intimacy.

However, ‘ambiguity’ is part of the construction of intimacy (Berlant, 1998), hence, in everyday life, we never managed to faithfully reproduce political subjectivities. Anxiety, anger, and boredom are some of the emotions that arise in intimate moments that stress our allegiances. In turn, we are left with the need to make invisible these ambivalences, since the private sphere is related to fantasies, unspoken rules and the obligations of being a problem-free space. I wish to question what types of ambiguities are felt within domestic spaces. How do these ambiguities relate to political normative definitions of women’s roles in society? What is the role of domestic workers in reproducing or questioning these roles? How are these aspects performed in everyday life?

I argue that the domestic, private and familiar life is a political scenario; it is where body and politics are performed in a non-static way, requiring constant reproduction. According to Stoler (2002), in the context of colonial rule, gender, racial, ethnic and class distinctions between servants and employers were made through everyday interactions in private spaces. Servants learned the ‘ways’ of being or becoming servants, while employers also ‘learned’ how to be employers. Sentiments, feelings and affections are a way of understanding processes of constructing intimate and micro-spaces. I argue that this process of ‘emotional’ learning is part of an ongoing performance where cultural values and meanings are articulated and produced. Thus, paid domestic work is performative as it cites normative class, racial and gendered publicly available discourses and subjectivities and it is performed in intimate relationships between employers and workers.

CHAPTER 3: METHODS

Researching intimacy within homes employing domestic work. A qualitative interview-based approach.

During my fieldwork in Santiago between September 2014 and January 2015 I was able to observe the different, and, at times, contradictory situations for paid domestic work. On the one hand, I saw domestic workers: campaigning for new legislation and, at the same time, confronting difficulties in getting immigrants into the union; identifying as workers with rights while others privileged their traditional roles as *servants*; getting together to talk about their poor work conditions, the humiliations they must face in the workplace and how difficult it is to change things. On the other hand, I saw employers: describing their loving relationships with their workers, while asking them to serve them without much affection; complaining about their workers but crying when thinking of their lives without them; desiring workers to feel love for their children but feeling jealous when such love seemed to threaten their relationship. It was clear that there was no one experience or one form of being a domestic worker or an employer, as there was no one definition of domestic work itself.

This sensation of heterogeneity went beyond the common sociological sense that, as other social forms, domestic work was part of broader social structures and therefore part of changing power relations regarding labour, class and gender dynamics. This heterogeneity claimed that domestic work was not only a social product, or that it produced specific subjects (domestic workers/employers), but also that it was constantly being constructed and challenged through everyday practices and discourses. Practices of cooking, cleaning and caring involved diverse actors (employers, workers, children, elderly, guests, extended family members, NGOs, councils, etc.), different notions of racial and class difference, diverse uses of space and different types of relationships between actors and available public discourses.

This fieldwork challenged my views and perceptions about what domestic work was and how it was lived in everyday life and narrated by employers and workers. I felt the necessity to think about domestic work in a more complex way, one that included fluctuating cultural values and, at the same time, their relationship with socio-historical arrangements; leading me to understand domestic work as a performative site where intimate and political matters take shape. However, even though I listened and saw different aspects of domestic work, specific topics remained relatively silenced and only appeared in moments of intimacy between myself, employers and workers. These topics were related to different forms of racism and discrimination based on nationality and class that women

experience. These experiences, for workers, were not only related to their social position in their workplace, but also reflected the social position or status of their employers. According to these women, employers thought of themselves as ‘different’ from, or even ‘better’ than, them. One domestic worker told me that, for her, the activity that she most disliked was cleaning the Jacuzzis of each of the four bathrooms of the house where she worked, not only because of the physical load (which took her at least two hours) and because of the class difference evident in her employer’s living conditions, but also because she knew that they would never do this work as, for employers, this job is considered ‘denigrating’. I became interested in what this activity implied. What was really being performed in the cleaning of the Jacuzzis? And why was intimacy important for the uncovering of this worker’s belief?

These initial reflections became more acute after an event experienced by myself in SINTRACAP (the domestic workers’ union). I was a volunteer at the union during the entire time I was conducting fieldwork in Chile (six months), taking part in many diverse activities: proofreading, communications, elaborating research documents with materials they had archived and also participating in social gatherings. One evening, a dinner was held and, together with the president of the union, I was in charge of washing the dishes for all fifty guests. While we were washing, I started feeling back pain but said nothing. Another worker asked us to bring her a glass of water. As I was tired and in pain, I looked at Ruth Olate – the president of the union – and said ‘can’t she come and get the glass herself? We are working hard’. Ruth looked at me with tender eyes and said, ‘you are tired because your body is not made, is not trained, to be a domestic worker’.

Ruth’s interpolation provoked several ethical questions regarding the relationship between the act of serving and of researching, and also regarding intimacy in research. It questioned my own privileges and class and racial position in relation to workers’ historical training in serving others. Generations of working-class, rural and racialised women trained – through experiences of exploitation and pain – to become servants of upper-class employers and of the nation, in contrast to upper-class women’s domestic labour and their traditional roles as housewives. Domestic work was not the same for each woman and that was felt in workers’ bodies and subjectivities.

This event heightened the research questions I was proposing to study, and along with the other accounts I was to hear, informed the series of research questions at stake in this thesis: What is being produced and reproduced within domestic work and intimate relationships between workers and employers? How are racial, ethnic and class differences managed within intimate spaces? Is

domestic work an intimate and political site of class, racial, and ethnic conflict? What does it mean to serve, to have a body at service, in intimate relations? How can intimate relations between workers and employers transform my own interpretations of paid domestic work in Santiago?

As argued in chapter two, Chilean studies have not given a satisfactory response to these questions. In order to address the racial, ethnic and class differences produced within domestic work, and the history of bodies trained to become servants, I decided to focus on how these aspects were experienced and narrated by both employers and workers, understanding that domestic work is a micro-site of production of social and cultural differences and discourses. Following the works of many researchers of domestic labour (Gutiérrez, 2010; Anderson, 2000; Cox, 2006), I focus on the intimate relationships between workers and employers; on the everyday performance of domestic work and its relation to racial and class differences and on the production of other forms of difference and narratives of the Chilean nation. The main **research question** that guides this thesis is: What gender, racial and class differences are performed within intimate relationships between workers and employers and what national narratives and forms of difference do they produce and challenge?

The **general objective** is to understand the performance of difference within relationships between employers and workers, focusing on how racial, gender and class conflicts are negotiated within the performance of domestic work, a place of constant tension due to being both a political and an intimate site.

The **specific objectives** are:

1. To study how racial, class and gender productions of difference are negotiated, reproduced and challenged in everyday practices within domestic work.
2. To understand how tensions between the political and the intimate are managed within domestic work in the relationships between employers and workers.
3. To comprehend how historical legacies of gender, racial and class conflicts are reproduced and challenged within domestic work.
4. To understand how domestic work is affected by current public discourse on gender roles and the Chilean family.

Qualitative and feminist methods: researching intimacies

I engage with these objectives from a qualitative feminist perspective, in order to address ethical issues regarding intimacy in researching and researching intimacy. Qualitative methods are flexible, inductive, based on ‘natural settings’ and take into account verbal, material and emotional expressions of society (Hammersley, 2013). This research is based in narratives that emerge from in-depth interviews with workers and employers, as it intends to research the perceptions, forms of intimate negotiation and discursive accounts of what is being performed within paid domestic work. This approach enables us to grasp the complexity and ‘messiness’ of everyday life, avoiding the tendency to ‘order’ social phenomena (Law, 2006) by gathering rich data through intimate conversations about social and political constructions produced in intimate relations. I argue that in order to research the performative power of paid domestic work, a qualitative perspective is necessary in order to produce intimacy (through in-depth interviews) in order to enter intimacy. It is through the intimacy of interviews that I was able to know and listen to intimate matters.

Domestic work is an intimate labour where global and local discourses on gender, class and race meet in a ‘private’ and intimate place or micro site. As Stoler (2002) argues, the intimate is a marker of the familiar, the essential, and grounded in sex, but most importantly it is the place where body and politics are produced together. Domestic and household affairs are part of power relations and a broader order of things: childcare, gender roles, production of difference, among others. Thus, researching domestic work becomes a question of how the social and the political are made within intimacy. Not only is the domestic space a complex site where the political is intimately made, but it also presents a complex scenario regarding the creation of intimate relations between researcher and research participants. Thus, intimate relations require reflection about the management of power relations, ethical positions and production of knowledge (Fraser and Puwar, 2008).

‘The smells, the sounds, the spatial confines, the tensions and the emotional demands are not readily laid out on the academic table. Yet these are the affective properties of research labour.’ (Fraser and Puwar, 2008; 4).

As affective properties of researching intimacy are intertwined with power relations, I am concerned with how my work respectfully manages the narratives and experiences shared by the women interviewed ‘without editing out the substance and texture of the conditions under and through which research is made’(Fraser and Puwar, 2008; 2), and by acknowledging the importance

of their narratives in the guiding of both research questions and findings. In this sense, this thesis is deeply influenced by both workers and employers in the lines of interpretation and understandings of what is being performed within paid domestic work. An example of this is the situation I experienced with Ruth, which guided me to question servitude in a neoliberal Chile within intimate relations between workers and employers and the importance of intimacy in researching the production of difference and silence. Because of the crucial role of intimacy in researching, I propose a research based on feminist principles that take ethical questions seriously into account. Feminist research aims to provide a critical and reflexive understanding of social and cultural dynamics, with emancipatory claims, by focusing on the lives of women.

'In critiquing classical sociological approaches feminist work challenged the distinctions between researcher and researched, incorporated narrative and literary genres, championed qualitative work, and promoted reflexive standpoint research.' (Smart, 2009; 296).

A significant aspect of feminist research is the idea of 'situated knowledges' (Haraway, 1988), which is grounded in the conviction that how and what we 'see' and research is situated in specific socio-historical conditions and in embodied forms of experience. Therefore, situated knowledge is a 'vision' that emanates from the body and not from above, that recognises the complexity of knowledge production and opens up the possibility of contestation of what is being studied (Haraway, 1988). Moreover, it is not a fixed or finished 'vision'. In this sense, my research arises from situations in which performances 'situate' roles. My performance as a researcher situates my social locations as a white *mestiza*, middle-class, bisexual and feminist woman, that has 'common ground' with both workers and employers, and that, through intimate relations, reflects upon the relationship between domestic work and the production of difference. The focus of this thesis is not on domestic workers or employers themselves, but on the practices and performance of social and cultural nodes within intimate relations, which are articulated between employers and workers and 'read' from my own 'vision' and with the conviction of unravelling broader power relations.

'Feminist embodiment, then, is not about fixed location in a reified body, female or otherwise, but about nodes in fields, inflections in orientations, and responsibility for difference in material-semiotic fields of meaning.' (Haraway, 1988; 588).

Having a specific 'vision' requires reflection and an accounting of my responsibility in the process of knowledge production. This creates the need to interrogate my biases and my 'position' in

relation to both workers and employers. It also implies questions related to my political leanings and the acknowledgement of these views. In this sense, it requires a reflection on the relation of knowledge production, methods and ethics. This is not only related to gender or sexism, but also to other forms of difference: race, ethnicity and racism.

Thus, studying racial and class nodes within domestic work in Chile needs a space for reflexivity that takes into account historical constructions of difference and current social positions related to race and class and other power relations. Yasmin Gunaratnam (2003), following a Foucauldian approach, argues:

'... how we produce knowledge about difference, and how what we know (or what we claim to know) is caught up with specific histories and relations of power.' (Gunaratnam, 2003; 3).

Important questions for my fieldwork are: What is the social-historical context of domestic work? What do race and class mean in Chile? What cultural and material elements are used to define them? What is my racial and class position and how does that affect the research process and my interviews? In addition, in order to avoid falling into 'essentialised' racial notions, I understand race as an analytical tool that in 'real life' is co-constructed, embodied and temporarily, constantly being defined (Gunaratnam, 2003).

'Experiences, social practices, social values and the ways in which perception and knowledge production are socially organized have been seen as mediating and facilitating the transition and transformation of situatedness into knowledge.' (Stoetzler and Yuval-Davis, 2002; 316).

Together with avoiding essentialised versions of race, class and gender, intimacy becomes another tool for the interpretation of the social. The management of proximity and distance between myself and the research participants is a complex one. It does not only involve power relations between 'me' and 'them', but also power relations of the domestic sphere itself. In this sense, racial and class difference between me (white *mestiza*) and them (employers and workers of different backgrounds) is 'mixed' with racial difference between workers and employers. As I have noted in the literature review, racial conflicts between workers and employers was not only a focus of attention of my research, but also a focus in the interpretation and writing of this thesis.

'Over time, our own relationship with the data, as well with the people who produced it with us, changes. We move data around, we put it in the kitchen, we carry it in our bags (or buckets), we return to it with a different set of academic reading in our minds.' (Fraser and Puwar, 2008; 13–14).

Performances and emotions

An important contribution that feminist methodologies make to qualitative social research is to provide 'alternative visions' by focusing on everyday practices performed by women (for example, housework) and on emotions since they are part of the production of social meanings (Smart, 2009). Centring on domestic work as a performative site, and not as a given stable category, requires us to give attention not only to the products or subjects, but also to emotions, affects and feelings; ideas that I will develop in chapters four, five and six, interrogating the relationship between values and affects in domestic work. What is the role of repetition of domestic tasks in the emotional reproduction of 'Chilean values'? Moreover, what gender or national values are related to emotions of disgust while doing domestic tasks? What racial differences are reproduced when a worker feels rejection or love for the children she is taking care of? These questions motivate us to examine the relations between emotions, affects and social differences in everyday practices within domestic work. In addition, they invite us to think about how 'appropriate' emotions and actions are reproduced, and how these are challenged or resisted by workers and employers.

Furthermore, the study of emotions makes it possible to begin an epistemological critique of the production of knowledge. The assumption of 'rational' knowledge has been criticised by feminist scholars who argue that all knowledge production is based on ideologies and social values. The inclusion of emotions and affects provides an acceptance of our prejudices.

'Therefore, rather than repressing emotion in epistemology it is necessary to rethink the relation between knowledge and emotion and construct a conceptual model that demonstrates the mutually constitutive rather the oppositional relation between reason and emotion.' (Jaggar, 1989; 163).

With the study of narratives and feelings we are able to include different ways in which cooking, cleaning and caring produce and challenge gender roles and racial and class difference. In this sense, positive and negative emotions like disgust, discomfort and love can help us understand how to 'read' racial tensions between workers and employers.

Interviewing and intimacy

Acknowledging the importance of intimacy in research calls for a method that also provides the conditions for employers and workers to confide their own intimate thoughts and negotiations of intimacy. Because of this, the methods of this thesis employ in-depth interviews with employers and domestic workers. A total of 48 interviews were performed with both employers (28) and workers (20) in Santiago, Chile. At first I privileged interviews with workers, as I realised during my fieldwork that few studies had focused on them, and looked instead at workers' labour conditions and their perceptions. As I was doing these interviews, I became more intrigued about the role of upper-class women in the reproduction of their own class and racial status, an aspect rarely studied in the Chilean context, and decided to give equal focus to their voices in parallel to the workers.

Workers were contacted through personal networks and through the workers' union. The basic criteria was workers who had worked as live-in paid domestic workers; that is, they had lived with their employers while working for them. This was crucial as I wanted to focus on those intimate relations that happened not only during a day of work, but also beyond the hours of labour, exploring the various emotions and relations workers established with employers in their intimacy. These interviews focused on their experiences as domestic workers, their relationships with employers, their understanding of their labour, the expectations they and employers had in relation to their role, the processes of learning and challenging how to be a domestic worker, the emotions and affects related to their labour, how their difference is managed within intimate relations with workers, and forms of resistance.

I performed 10 interviews with Chilean domestic workers – as they still represent the majority of domestic workers in Chile – and 10 interviews with migrant workers from Peru and Bolivia. Their ages ranged between 31 and 66 years old and each interview last between 1 and 2 hours. These were performed in their homes, in the union and in public cafes.

Workers interviewed

Pseudonym	Age	Nationality	Length of time as domestic worker (years)
Isabel	53	Chilean	42
Monica	56	Chilean	38
Pilar	34	Chilean	17
Silvia	57	Chilean	48
Diana	34	Chilean	14
Alicia	66	Chilean	57
Dolores	41	Chilean	25
Nadia	51	Chilean	31
Sofia	47	Chilean	31
Camila	33	Chilean	12
Katherine	31	Chilean	10
Alejandra	66	Chilean	52
Victoria	42	Peruvian	7
Manuela	33	Peruvian	3
Paula	56	Peruvian	5
Marisol	53	Peruvian	4
Julia	42	Peruvian	4
Ana	43	Peruvian	2
Maria	41	Bolivian	2
Anita	38	Bolivian	1

Domestic workers interviewed had some knowledge of who I was, either because we had met at the union or because a mutual acquaintance had introduced us. Working at the union was crucial to gain contacts with domestic workers. During my experience at the union I also learnt about workers' lives and specific topics relevant for them that later became themes of the interviews. These topics

were, among others: their emotional bonds with employers, experiences of exploitation, forms of negotiating working conditions. These informal conversations and observations were relevant for the problematisation of my research question and for the formulation of interview questions. However, I decided not to use the field notes of these informal encounters directly, as consent was not always clear. Even though workers at the union knew I was doing a PhD thesis, this fact was sometimes forgotten and workers would talk about their personal lives as if I was just a someone helping out. Because of these everyday confusions, confusions that were a product of intimate relationships created between us, I decided to only use the interview material. Interviewees had signed consent forms, so it was clear that they were conscious that it would be used for my PhD. In addition, this thesis is not about political organisation, thus my experiences in the union became a space for sharing my interpretations and checking my ideas about domestic work.

At first, during the interviews, workers were not clear about by intentions and did not really understand why I wanted to interview them, not knowing why I was interested in their stories as domestic workers. In order to explain what the interview was for, and to obtain their informed consent, I started each interview by presenting myself, my own immigration history, my own experience with domestic work, and how this had led to me becoming interested in this topic. I wanted them to understand my intentions and my perplexed curiosity for how domestic labour was organised in Chile. I described to them how there were no domestic workers in my house when I was growing up and that my first approach to Chilean domestic work was when I came back to Chile in 1997 after many migrations because of my mother's political exile and my father's work as a diplomat. I confessed that it was a great surprise to see that workers lived where they worked and that they were asked to do labours that – in my opinion – went beyond their duties. This initial conversation was a powerful entrance to create an intimacy between us. This intimacy, I think, was possible because they saw me as a foreigner, and therefore felt the need to explain to me how the Chilean system works, and because they realised that for me it was not 'natural' or normal how domestic work was organised in homes in Santiago. Intimacy, in these interviews, was possible because of a political complicity. This intimacy was achieved both with Chilean and with migrant domestic workers, a product of my own belonging and not belonging to Chilean culture. I chose to interview Chilean and migrant workers in order to understand the different modes these groups are racialised, an aspect developed in chapter five.

The employers interviewed were also contacted through personal networks, specially through friends from university. They lived in upper-class neighbourhoods (Las Condes, Lo Barnechea,

Vitacura, and Providencia) and the main criteria were that they were female, that they self-identified as upper class and had hired a domestic worker under live-in conditions. Although I also conducted interviews with men, I decided not to include them in this thesis as it became clear that their relationship with workers was always through their wives, and I became more concerned with the tensions and negotiations that happen between women in the domestic space. As I am not interested in a fixed notion of being upper-class, based on economic, racial or origin status, but rather on how the upper classes define themselves and reproduce their status through everyday practices, the self-definition became a crucial aspect of enquiry in understanding the power and fragility of this social position in Santiago.

I have already analysed the relation between the formation of upper classes and the elite with discourses regarding the Chilean nation, women's roles and racial difference. In this section, I define the specific upper-class group I interviewed for this thesis. Chile has a highly stratified class division, being among the 20 countries with the worst income distribution, a situation that has worsened in the last 20 years (INE, 2017). There is a very small upper class and elite group that holds most of the country's wealth. According to a study done by the Chilean Central Bank, 20% of the richest population holds 72% of the country's wealth (Martínez and Uribe, 2017). While upper classes are part of the privileged and are recognised by hegemonic discourses as representatives of whiteness and of the Chilean family, they are not a homogenous group and rather are composed of different sub-groups which are formed through diverse economic and cultural histories (Stabili, 2003).

The specific group I am interested in is part of the richest 20% of the population but does not necessarily belong to the political and economic elite. The group of employers interviewed are related and dialogue with the traditional elite, but are not historically part of this group. As I have stated, the traditional elite is not particularly old, as it was only with European migration in the 19th century and the nitrate industry that a proper elite lifestyle emerged (Vicuña, 2001). Before, the poor economic conditions of the colony and the new Republic did not allow for the emergence of an elite that was too different from other social classes. Thus, the formation of the traditional elite and that of the new upper classes were processes that occurred during similar periods.

Although my interviewees do not belong to the traditional elite, they are part of another genealogy that emerged in the 19th century and which also negotiates its whiteness (aspects analysed in the next chapters). This genealogy involves the emergence of middle classes (which later become upper

classes), a group defined as different from poor sectors. This group emerged with the expansion of the nitrate mines, the development of the commercial sector and the rural–urban migration, with greater access to education, and their professionalisation in the new urban cities and in the State (Barozet and Espinoza, 2008). They are creoles and mestizo. Because of their origin, but mainly because of their need for differentiation from the poor sectors, they are perceived by society as culturally ‘blanqueados’ (whitened) through games of simulation and appearances that intend to hide their spurious origin (Montecino, 2007). This group is made up of merchants and later of professionals of the bureaucratic apparatus of the new Chilean State. By the mid 20th century, this middle class became part of the national project of progress and development (Pinto, 1971). Their new status – economic, educational and as figures of the modern Chilean nation – created the conditions for many members of this group to enter and dialogue with the more traditional upper classes. This possibility was accentuated in the 1970s with the neoliberal reforms during Pinochet’s dictatorship.

According to Espinoza and Barozet (2008), although this group obtains greater economic status, its income does not constitute a defining element. I argue that what is important for their social constitution and status production is their ‘closeness’ with traditional upper classes and their desire to ‘belong’ to this group through acts of differentiation with the racialised others of society. This group perform race (Tate, 2005) to become white and upper class by reproducing an upper-class lifestyle and by employing domestic workers. My interviewees may not belong to the traditional elite but are part of upper classes when they interact with them in their children’s schools or in public social events. Their desire to belong to the traditional upper classes is expressed through their *siutquiería* (mentioned in the introduction) and an arriviste attitude. Contrary to what others have studied in relation to upper classes’ insecure positioning regarding their class (Araujo and Martuccelli, 2011) or an identification with a lower status than they have (Castillo, Miranda and Madero, 2013), my interviewees were constantly reassuring and reproducing their upper-class status.

This was expressed in my interviews in different ways. My interviewees sometimes said that although they do not have a traditional surname associated with the elite, they are friends and holiday in the same place as them. Not being originally *part of* but arguing their *belonging* to the elite through practices (such as having their children in the same school) was reinforced in their differentiation with domestic workers (as we will see in chapter five). In my employers’ narratives, they expressed a desire to be part of the elite and to perform a modern version of the housewife (as

we will see through the salvation discourse) by both reinforcing their close relationship with traditional upper classes and their distant relationship with domestic workers as representative of racialised lower classes. The distinction between being *originally* part of or *belonging* to the elite is key to understand their strategies to reproduce their class lifestyles, their racial status and their gender roles. Furthermore, the insecurity that emerges from not being *originally* elite is evident in their desire to define themselves as upper class. This *wound* – not being part of the *original* elite – is, I argue, part of the ‘original wound’ discussed in chapter four, a wound which questions upper classes’ racial origin, suggesting that there is no such thing as an *original* elite.

Interviews with employers focused on their lifestyles and expectations, their roles as housewives and mothers, their family experiences with domestic work, the perception and management of differences between themselves and workers, justifications of their lifestyles, and emotions and affects related to living and dealing with domestic workers. Twenty-eight interviews were performed with Chilean employers, who were between 35 and 68 years old, and each interview lasted between 1 and 2 hours.

Because fewer studies have focused on employers than on domestic workers, I decided to include more interviews with employers and to spend two chapters analysing their narratives. I also realised that many employers wanted to speak to me, wanted to tell me their stories, which made it very easy to interview them. This accessibility, I believe, has something important to say about domestic work and intimacy. Intimacy with employers was achieved, but not in the same way as with workers. In the case of employers, intimacy was produced through class and racial closeness. Employers identified me as ‘part of their group’, either because they knew I was friends with a relative or because they asked me where I had studied or where I lived: all markers of a class and racial status that ‘bonded’ us. They trusted me to understand them, to understand their needs and their discomfort with domestic workers. I was not always sure how to manage such ‘closeness’ as I did want to understand their stories but at the same time I tried to make clear my own personal views. I also started each interview presenting myself, telling my story and obtaining informed consent. However, their interpretation of my story was different from those of workers. Rather than being seen as a foreigner, I was perceived as being the daughter of a diplomat; this was assumed to mean that I understood the ways of an upper-class lifestyle. This identification was crucial for employers’ trust, an aspect which is evident in their narratives, in their direct and bold description of workers, in their racist comments and in their stories about their fears and pains.

Employers interviewed

Pseudonym	Age	Nº of Children	Length of time as employer (years)
Rosa	39	3	12
Josefina	37	5	17
Ana	57	3	32
Isabel	61	3	40
Juana	46	2	20
María	35	1	7
Sara	43	3	13
Rosalba	36	2	12
Carmen	84	4	63
Alejandra	43	3	22
Carola	38	3	14
Gloria	56	3	30
Consuelo	34	1	8
Constanza	45	2	21
Claudia	57	2	31
Carolina	32	1	6
Roberta	42	2	19
Teresa	56	3	26
Monica	39	2	12
Julia	56	3	34
Javiera	43	2	21
Marta	45	2	18
Gina	49	2	23
Macarena	41	3	21
Antonia	44	2	19
Cecilia	48	3	23
Carla	42	2	17
Francisca	45	2	15

As my aim was to understand the production of differences within domestic work, power relations are also an important aspect to consider during the performance of interviews. Interviews are themselves social relations (Bourdieu, 1996). Not only can class and racial differences between research participants and myself produce a violent reaction, but also my position as ‘expert’ can produce and reproduce power relations.

'... one cannot trust simply to one's own good faith, because various kinds of distortion are embedded in the very structure of the relationship. It is a question of understanding and mastering these distortions.' (Bourdieu, 1996; 18).

As my research topic is on gender, class and racial dimensions, differences between research participants and myself were managed through two strategies. First, before, during and after interviews, I engaged in a process of constant reflexivity regarding the effects of social power relations, including an active attitude of listening (Bourdieu, 1996; Back, 2007) and putting myself in their 'social space'. I attempted to keep myself open at all times to reflexive questions such as: What are the social structures that ground this interview? What are the inevitable affects these have on the interviews? How can we think about reducing their symbolic violence? Which topics are silenced? Second, as I am not socially 'close' to either domestic workers or employers, but I had produced intimacy with both groups, I dealt directly with our differences. Rather than viewing these differences as an obstacle, I used them to understand their production. In this sense, our own differences and similarities became a topic of our conversations. Thus, instead of avoiding these differences I addressed them with the research participants, giving them space and time to feel comfortable in talking about our differences and how these affect our daily life.

Furthermore, interviews were performed under the guideline of four ethical principles: avoidance of harm, autonomy, privacy and reciprocity (Murphy and Dingwall, 2001). Data was gathered in a mutually defined place, including both private and public spaces. Formal interviews were recorded. Consent was obtained through a consent form. Interviews were stopped at any moment that participants felt in danger or did not wish to continue. In the case of those interviews carried out in private settings, I made sure that more people were present to allow for any dangerous situations. In addition, research participants were assured that all personal information would not be included in the thesis, in order to maintain anonymity. To assure this, participants signed a consent form with myself that included: information about the project, contact details and my commitment to keeping their personal information anonymous. Their names are kept secret by using pseudonym, and all details that could make the participant 'identifiable' have also been changed (including address, names of schools or workplaces, etc.). In addition, all research material is stored on my password-protected personal computer and on my external hard drive, avoiding third parties having access to such information. The consent form is based on the model given by CONICYT (National Commission for Scientific and Technological Research of Chile), the organisation that provides my

scholarship. Both the consent letter and the ethics form were approved by the Ethics Committee at Goldsmiths. In cases where research participants felt distressed during or after the interview I provided them with time to calm down or to talk about their feelings and did anything in my power to give them comfort. This sometimes meant meeting a few times after the interview to respond to any questions that they had and to assure them that they were entitled to end their participation in the project at any point.

I started doing interviews with workers and after the first five I started with employers. While I was performing interviews I was, at the same time, analysing them. After each interview I would write a summary of the main ideas and lines of interpretation, relating the narratives with topics of the literature review and noting similarities and differences between the interviews of both employers and workers. I would use the material of the interviews for later interviews, as examples, or to see if others had similar or different points of view. After the first 10 interviews were performed I started transcribing them and putting interpretation notes within the transcriptions. In order to analyse the material, I printed all the transcriptions and read each one of them at least three times. This reading was accompanied by writing personal and interpretative notes and highlighting aspects that represented key finding, themes and lines of analysis. This process lead to the emergence of the main hypothesis and thesis of this research. Thus, the main arguments of this thesis emerged inductively from the interviews. Ideas regarding the original wound, the *Chilean happy family* and anger as a political affect, among others, are all products of what employers and workers narrated and my interpretations of such narratives. Each chapter was later written following these topics and using interview extracts to reflect such interpretations.

CHAPTER 4: GOOD NANAS: HAVING A LIFE AND THE PERFORMATIVE POWER OF DOMESTIC WORK

Talking to employers about the importance of having a domestic worker.

This thesis draws upon theoretical and methodological reflections of domestic work as affective (Gutiérrez, 2010) and performative labour – that is, how political and cultural legacies are transmitted, contested, and (re)produced within intimate spaces and relationships. It focuses on the intertwining of the political and of intimacy in upper-class homes and in relationships between employers and domestic workers in Santiago. While both employers and workers do emotional labour, I focus in this chapter on the performativity of employers' emotional labour with workers. I argue that this emotional labour aims to reproduce employers' expectations regarding 'having a life' by transmitting gendered, class and racial values towards workers, and, hence, normalising employers' right to service.

Lauren Berlant (1998, 2009) problematises intimacy and politics in terms of affective intimate attachments, forms in which available cultural discourses and ideologies navigate through different means and institutions, and are embedded within or repelled by individuals who struggle to be both part of the collective and live their personal desires. For Berlant (1998), intimacy is a form of communication, of transmission grounded in the aspiration of having a shared story between oneself and others, usually in the zone of familiarity and comfort. Ways of doing intimacy may relate to ideological, normative and institutional discourses that impact on the 'categorization of experience and subjectivity' (Berlant, 1998; 282). Thus, 'the inwardness of the intimate is met by a corresponding publicness' (Berlant, 1998; 281), and therefore, as I argue in this thesis, the intimate becomes a political scene.

As Berlant (2009) argues, individuals trust their 'lives' on institutions of intimacy (such as the family) or ideas (such as romantic love) to have beautiful, long-lasting and cross-generational relations. The link between intimacy and politics is embodied in people's subjectivities and desires of 'having a life'. However, certain forms of 'having a life' can become more normal, deviant or desired in a specific moment and place (Ahmed, 2010). Specific projects of 'life' are normalised and others are condemned. Furthermore, Berlant (1998) suggests that 'having a life' is in constant vulnerability, and that the relation between intimacy and 'having a life' intends to repress all the hard labour needed into 'having a life', as well as the difficulties and disruptions that occur in such a process.

'... intimacy builds worlds; it creates spaces and usurps places meant for other kinds of relations. Its potential to failure to stabilize closeness always hunts its persistent activity, making the very attachments deemed to buttress "a life" seem in a state of constant if latent vulnerability.' (Berlant, 1998; 282).

The constant threat of the vulnerability of intimacy is increased in everyday practices, as we do not necessarily know how to do intimacy, or things do not turn out as we expected. Although we may have certain expectations of 'intimate happiness', it is actually, I suggest, in everyday practices that intimacy and happiness projects are performed. Thus, in order to problematise Berlant's (1998, 2009) notion of intimate attachments, I suggest we consider the performative power of both affective attachments and domestic work done by employers and workers in reproducing and unsettling employers' expectations of 'having a life'. In this chapter, I interrogate what it means to 'have a life' for upper class women in Santiago, and how their expectations orientate the performance of domestic work within their homes and in their relationships with domestic workers.

I explore the ways in which employers define their lifestyles, reproduce their class status and try to make compatible both their 'traditional' and 'modern' gendered subjectivities not only through the employment of domestic workers – who provide the actual reproduction of homes – but also through the emotional labour and boundary work employers perform in their relations with workers. I argue that employers benefit from boundaries to reproduce their own status and by using 'differences' as a gendered justification of their 'right' to a 'good life'. Emotional and boundary labours become key strategies to manage differences within homes and reproduce traditional gendered order in both homes and society.

In addition, I suggest that employers' intentions to have an ideal home and of 'having a life' are affected and challenged because of the employers' complex relations with workers. These complex relations are based on employers' simultaneous desire for and rejection of domestic workers. Workers are desired as they enable the reproduction of employers' life, and their notions of home, and are rejected as they present a threat as racial, ethnic and class 'outsiders within'. It is precisely the 'differences' between workers and employers, perceived as differences by the latter, which are managed by employers through emotional labour, demonstrating the affective character of domestic work (Gutiérrez, 2014) and through boundary work (Lamont, 1992), enabling employers to create and pursue the project of 'having a life'. Through emotional and boundary work, employers differentiate themselves from workers and justify their life projects. While workers perform

different roles, such as workers, *servants* and *nanas*, employers also perform specific practices to produce their ideal notions of ‘having a life’. Furthermore, I suggest in this chapter, that the affective management of ‘differences’ between employers and workers demonstrates the performative power of domestic work in reproducing the ‘life of upper-class women’ (inspired by nostalgic notions of the bourgeois lifestyle), which are not exempt from conflicts.

Inspired by Butler’s (1999) notion of performativity and following Gutiérrez’s (2010) conception of the performative power of domestic work as affective labour, I propose that domestic work is a performative practice that reproduces and challenges normative and moral definitions of Chilean upper-class families and housewives. Rather than reproducing pre-existing versions of these notions – which do not exist – domestic labour works towards naturalising and normalising these as ‘authentic’, concealing their historical and cultural formations. I will show how employers do emotional labour in order to conceal all the work that goes into reproducing their lifestyles and their status – their ‘happy homes and families’. I will describe how emotional labour, in this sense, becomes a strategy to deal with the difficulties that ‘having a life’ comprises, concluding that paid domestic work becomes a strategic practice to study the performance of ‘having a life’ in upper-class families in Santiago, as it is both its condition of possibility and the trace of the fragility of such a project, reproducing normative, gendered, and racialised national projects such as the *Chilean happy family*.

‘Having a Life’: having a happy family and being a modern woman

As it was argued in the introduction, in the case of neoliberal Chile one can interrogate the subjectivities and affective attachments available for women from the 1980s onwards, when neoliberal policies were introduced. Pinochet’s dictatorship (1973–1989) created a civic–military alliance between bourgeois sectors and the *military family*. While in the beginning, the modernisation project did not have a clear direction regarding economic policies, in the late 1970s young Chilean students (who studied economics in the School of Chicago with Milton Friedman) became part of the military government and introduced neoliberal reforms within the State, which meant the reduction of the State’s role in the economy and a clear perspective on allowing the market free access to different areas, such as health and care services, and relying on families to manage care needs. Universal welfare policies were replaced with policies focusing on the poorest

population, and many basic rights such as health and education were privatised (Ruiz and Boccardo, 2014).

The end of dictatorship in 1990 was perceived as a process that would significantly change the conditions inherited by the dictatorship. However, the new governments were committed to maintaining the social and economic policies of the regime; which was partly possible because of the negotiated character of the transition, and partly because of the new governments' pledge to neoliberal ideas of the free market and the small state. Furthermore, while the new democratic governments deepened most of the reforms introduced during the dictatorship, they also introduced more 'gender friendly' progressive policies regarding women's rights and gender perspective, generating a contradictory scenario. This is evident in the economic policies that focused on gender equality such as the Equal Opportunities Programme (created in 2000), which included an improvement in women's access to the labour market as one of its objectives, while at the same time continuing to rely mainly on family-based strategies and the naturalisation of care work as women's work for the care of children and the elderly. Thus, on the one hand, women were encouraged to work outside their homes, and on the other, care was still defined as 'women's labour'. These contradictions were reproduced in Bachelet's first (2006–2010) and second (2014–2018) periods as, while enhancing gender equality as a structural scheme of her political programme, she introduced conflictive legislations regarding domestic work (such as the New Domestic Labour Law and *Chile Cuida* care programme [Chile Cares]), reproducing an unequal access to care services. Lower-class women – not qualified as *poor enough* – are encouraged to work and become small entrepreneurs, not having access to state-based care facilities such as nurseries, whilst middle- and upper-class families use private strategies such as paid domestic work or paid nurseries. In all cases, women are encouraged to work outside their homes; meanwhile the sexual, class and racial division of domestic work is not questioned and rather maintained through the employment of paid domestic workers.

In this sense, the relationship between intimacy and politics (Berlant, 1998) acquires a particular character in post-dictatorship, neoliberal and 'multicultural' Chile¹¹, one that is based on the multiplicity and contradictory interrelation between diverse discourses. These discourses refer to the production of subjectivities and projects of happiness (Berlant, 2009; Ahmed, 2010) designed both

¹¹ In addition, ethnicity has become a key node for discourses on 'modern Chile', as they 'celebrate' ethnic diversity without really resolving 'ethnic' problems such as indigenous people's rights to land, while 'racial' issues have been ignored by hegemonic discourses 'because there are no black people in Chile' (Vera, Aguilera and Fernández, 2018). I will discuss gendered, racial and ethnic dynamics further in chapter five.

from the logic of consumption, the commodification of bodies, an expansion of the logic of the market (Ruiz and Boccardo, 2014), as well as from the search for shelter, care, and protection from such logics within the family. Thus, individuals desire to consume the world, but shelter in their homes and families to protect themselves from the threats of being consumed (PNUD, 2012). As De La Fabian and Stecher (2013) suggest, Chilean governments after 2000 echoed neoliberal policies that focus their governing on the individual's self-production of happiness:

'The inaugural turn of these discourses about happiness implies a modification in the rhetorical/discursive strategies of legitimization of public policies. What really matters, that is, what gives meaning and value to public policies, are no longer the objective variables of measuring development and economic growth, but the degree to which they measure and promote the subjective happiness of people.' (De La Fabian and Stecher, 2013; 34) (author's translation).

The call for producing one's own happiness is intertwined with the neoliberal articulation of power relations produce forms of subjectification based on self – control, management of oneself, the household and the soul. As Foucault (1990) argues, the modern state and the modern autonomous individual co-determine each other through economic rationale. Individuals are no longer controlled directly by the state but are called upon to manage their existence as entrepreneurs.

'The neo-liberal forms of government feature not only direct intervention by means of empowered and specialized state apparatuses, but also characteristically develop indirect techniques for leading and controlling individuals without at the same time being responsible for them. The strategy of rendering individual subjects "responsible" (and also collectives, such as families associations, etc.) entails shifting the responsibility for social risks such as illness, unemployment, poverty, etc. and for life in society into the domain for which the individual is responsible and transforming it into a problem of "self-care". The key feature of the neo-liberal rationality is the congruence it endeavors to achieve between a responsible and moral individual and an economic-rational individual. It aspires to construct responsible subjects whose moral quality is based on the fact that they rationally assess the costs and benefits of a certain act as opposed to other alternative acts.' (Lemke, 2001; 12).

I describe below that the employers I interviewed feel called upon to obtain their personal and subjective happiness, as well as wanting to fulfil the call of becoming professional or working women, and so create different strategies to fulfil the neoliberal demand of self-care. Yet, as the

PNUD (2012) report suggests, women are not only encouraged to find happiness in their work, but also and mostly, in their families and homes. A very specific aesthetic of the family is defined as normal: upper-class and white families. Thus, upper-class families – heterosexual, white, and bi-parental – become the norm for the promised happiness, especially for middle- and upper-class families.

In this sense, ‘gender friendly’ governments have opened the path for multiple ways in which traditional gender roles and the mandate of the housewife and of motherhood have been questioned, re-articulated, and appropriated. By no means does this mean the overcoming of ‘gender troubles’, but rather the circulation of ‘modern gendered discourses’ available for women and men (Vera, 2009) based on the promise of individual happiness still articulated around the family and the home. Neoliberal discourses have both promoted and endangered feminist demands of women’s autonomy, by articulating this demand in terms of economic rationale and market-based logics (Fraser, 2015; Castillo, 2016). In addition, ‘gender issues’ did not just go away, as these neoliberal subjectivities draw upon socio-historical positions regarding class, ‘race’ and ethnicity, and are used by subjects to navigate forms of survival. The hegemonic aesthetics of whiteness and of privileged background has become the desired by employers, while other bodies are asked to ‘serve’. From colonial times onwards, it has been mainly indigenous, rural, poor and black women ‘serving’ the upper classes, and today this is re-actualised with the incorporation of Peruvian, Dominican, Bolivian, and Filipino women, among others, as domestic workers in affluent homes.

However, domestic work being a ‘family matter’ has a longer history; one intertwined with colonial legacies of feminisation and racialisation. Thus, the commodification of domestic work is gendered and racialised, as both the state and families continue to articulate these activities as *women’s duties*, and *racialised women’s labour*, allowing for the continuation of colonial legacies that naturalised it as devalued non-labour (Gutiérrez, 2010). The devaluation of this labour allows society to avoid addressing the patriarchal and racial organisation of care and domestic labour (Cox, 2011).

Even, what has been termed as a *care crisis* (Arriagada and Todaro, 2012) – a product of more middle- and upper-class women accessing the labour market¹², an ageing population, and the lack of state care services – reveals a crisis of traditional gender relations within homes, as domestic work

¹² The activity rate of women over 15 years old in the richest quintile reaches 38.9% in 1990 and rises to 68.6% in 2015 (CASEN, 1990, 2015).

is still seen as a responsibility of women, reproducing a patriarchal organisation of the nation. Specifically in relation to the fact that more middle- and upper-class women are accessing the labour market – without necessarily questioning the sexual division of labour within their homes – paid domestic work becomes a key strategy for middle- and upper-class Chilean families, making their access indissolubly interlinked with the incorporation of indigenous, rural and migrant girls and women to their homes as domestic workers (Goldsmith, 1990), allowing women employers to reproduce their class ideologies related to mothering and childcare (Cox, 2011), as well as men's privileges.

The unequal distribution of care activities and the poor state intervention regarding citizens' care needs are intertwined with that fact that many upper-class families in Chile prefer to employ a domestic worker as they privilege their homes as the best space for the care of their loved ones (Fernández, 2017) – following the neoliberal tendency of doing what is 'best for the children', an effect of neoliberal ideologies on intimate households (Cox, 2011). The desire to contain care and domestic work within the home depends upon finding a way of managing this space with the help of paid domestic workers. However, as Romero (1999) has shown for the case of the United States, Cox (2006) for the British, and Staab and Maher (2005) for the Chilean case, the *servant problem* or the *nanny problem* emerges: a problem related to upper-class employers' perceptions regarding the difficulties of finding authentic *good workers*, those who know their subordinated place and perform their duties with grace. According to employers interviewed in these studies, domestic workers today *are not like they used to be*, as they tend to know their rights *too much* and are not willing to do everything that is expected from them (work long hours for less salary and perform activities that today are seen as beyond their responsibilities, such as cleaning windows). Thus, the *servant problem* makes evident that employers' desires for homes and the provision of care require not only paid domestic work, but a specific domestic worker, one based on a colonial nostalgic desire for the figure of the *servant* (Camus and de la O Martínez, 2014). Cox (2006) notices that – for the British case – the *servant* problem has a longer history regarding middle- and upper-class difficulties in finding *good* domestic workers.

'The 'servant problem' was the traditional bugbear of the British middle and upper classes, who were supposed to have discussed endlessly over dinner the difficulties of finding and retaining reliable servants. Generation after generation of employers complained that modern servants did not know their place, didn't know when they were on to a good thing, were insubordinate and lazy.'

Each generation thought the problem was unique to them and due to the particular liberality of the age.' (Cox, 2006; 8).

Although the *servant* problem is not new, the figure of the *servant* is reinvented today in 'modern' terms, as employers not only prefer subordinated workers but also efficient, proactive, and culinary experts (Fernández, 2017). Thus, even though 'modern' gender discourses may circulate, they co-exist with historic class, ethnic and racial forms of distinctions. The circulation of these subjectivities, and the distinction between bodies that 'serve' and bodies being 'served', in intimate spaces such as homes, demonstrates a central argument of this chapter: subjectivities and neoliberal ideologies not only circulate in and through the media and public and private institutions, but also in spaces 'recognized' as 'intimate' (Gutiérrez, 2010) – households and families, among others. Not only are these 'intimate' spheres affected by neoliberal 'public' proposals, as Gutiérrez (2014) suggests, but they also produce discourses on subjectivities and 'the collective'. For example, 'having a life' may imply, at the same time, having a 'happy family', being a 'modern housewife' and having the right of being 'served'.

Looking at this more closely, as I argued in the first chapter, according to the PNUD report (2012), neoliberal subjectivities and images circulate in the media and in advertising and are echoed by state representatives. One of these images is the figure of the 'happy family': a 'well-constituted family' has become a must. Moreover, today 'having a life' not only means having a 'happy family' as a moral mandate, but also as a desire and a guarantor of happiness (PNUD, 2012). It is interesting to understand the implications of this in the organisation of families and homes, 'traditional institutions', and everyday practices of domestic work through the desires and struggles that 'happiness' involves for employers.

In the narratives of the employers interviewed in this thesis, there is an explicit desire for 'having a life', which entails 'having a happy family' and, at the same time, making their own 'modern woman' project, that is, to be professional and autonomous. In addition, the lifestyle and aesthetics of the upper classes has become the ideal of what I define as the *Chilean happy family*. This form of 'having a life', as was shown in the first chapter, is based on a bourgeois aesthetic, represented by subjects of white complexion, Europeanised, and with all the social and economic capital needed to 'have good life'. In this sense, employers not only engage with the project of having a 'traditional family' (monogamic, bi-parental, heterosexual, nuclear), but with the conviction of the 'right' to have bourgeois privileges. Employers interviewed expressed a strong desire to be happy through

their ‘realisation’ (echoing the neoliberal demand of self-produced individuals) of having a family, a husband, happy and educated children with Christian values, and a successful professional life: all aspects that configure the notion of the *Chilean happy family*. Along with having a *Chilean happy family*, employers valued having their own time, which could be dedicated to household activities, professional work, getting together with friends, or having time for themselves to go to the salon, among other activities. In turn, happiness was also based on the social recognition that the immediate environment and friendships gave them, in part in their roles as workers, but especially in relation to their maternal role within the home.

‘For me it is super important to develop professionally, not so much to be the superwoman in the office but I like to play a good role there, I like to study and I like to be perceived as a responsible woman or someone who achieves the goals she sets. Inside the house it is the same, I like success. I love when visitors tell me that my children are the most loving, I feel I am accomplishing something. I love that the children see me, and I have conversations with them and can be frank. I feel that I’m being a good mom. I attempt to do the best role within what I can do. I know it is not always possible and I fail in a lot of things many times but when someone tells me “good, it’s good what you did”, it makes me feel more developed.’ (Rosa, 39 years, employer).

The women I interviewed desire a successful and socially recognised family and motherhood. For them, to fulfil the traditional role of the ‘good mother’ provides them the opportunity to move forward with the project of having a *Chilean happy family* and ‘good children’, both being conceived as the product of their own labour. In turn, their desire for ‘realisation’ directly coincides with the results of the PNUD report (2012), establishing the link between family, motherhood and happiness. Thus, these women express both the ‘modern’ desire for ‘personal development’ as well as for the traditional mandate to have a ‘well-constituted family’. The need for social recognition demonstrates how the mandate of the *Chilean happy family* becomes a personal form of attachment with social definitions of motherhood, and which – in turn – provides social and class status.

However, the PNUD report also points out that the moral imperative of happiness requires an individual sacrifice for the family unity: women’s autonomy. It is the autonomy of women which is called to be sacrificed, exploiting the image of the mother and the mother–child bond as guarantors of such unity. The desired family unity is achieved, then, thanks to the traditional maternal role of housewives. Now, upper-class women interviewed for this thesis struggle with the housewife mandate in their everyday lives. They feel anxious about the different and conflicting demands put

upon them: being autonomous, working outside their homes, having personal time, being good mothers, organising their homes, among many others. As many do not necessarily wish to sacrifice ‘their lives’, they opt to employ domestic workers for them to cook, clean and care for their homes and children. Paid domestic work becomes a way to manage employers’ conflicting and, many times, oppositional social demands, revealing that it is not only that they desire to re-enact their traditional roles as mothers, but that they have to deal with the complexities of being ‘modern’ women in a neoliberal Santiago. In this sense, paid domestic work enables employers to be ‘successful’ in the managing of their historic roles as mothers of the nation together with modern demands. The complexities and contradictions of having a *Chilean happy family* and being modern women are managed through domestic work, demonstrating its performative power in concealing and normalising this and other contradictions. I suggest that this is only possible due to the citation of a *culture of servitude*.

In their book ‘Cultures of Servitude: modernity, domesticity and class in India’, Ray and Qayum (2009) work on the idea of culture of servitude, a notion that later, in the book ‘Working Women in the Shadow. Dimensions of Latin American domestic service’ (2014), Camus and de la O Martínez use in their chapter ‘The charm of the tapatía coloniality: notes on the culture of servitude’, to apply it to the Mexican case. The culture of servitude refers to an institution where the relations of domination/subordination, dependence and inequality are normal, permeating both the domestic and public spheres, informing and reproducing subjectivities and practices in both the workers and the employers. These publications define the culture of servitude as a colonial institution useful to understand the formation of the well-off class’ identity and of the contemporary society that tries to define itself as ‘modern’. Ray and Qayum point out:

‘Through evolving techniques of servant and home management, employers produce themselves as the class destined to lead India to modernity, and servants as a distinct class, premodern and dependant on the middle and upper classes for their well-being.’ (Ray and Qayum, 2009; 2).

The authors argue that it is in the management of servants in the home where class, race, caste and gender differences are reproduced. These authors use the concept of culture of servitude to account for the coexistence of the logics of servitude in ‘modern times’, and the importance of servitude for the reproduction of the class and racial status of the wealthy classes. This argument echoes in the Chilean context where ‘having’ servants was a status symbol desired by the employers in the

colonial period, in the hacienda, and then in the cities. Servants as a symbol of social status even circulate in the media, in novels and in TV series (Hutchison, 2011).

Camus and de la O Martínez (2014) use the notion of the culture of servitude to suggest the continuity of domination/subordination relationships between employers and domestic workers, a racial and ethnic colonial legacy that is re-enacted today in everyday practices and that cohabits with more modern labour relations and notions regarding motherhood and labour rights. Such culture is based on a nostalgic ideal of colonial relations of subordination, informing the devalued condition of paid domestic work. The continuity of this colonial legacy does not mean colonial relations exist today as they did in the past, or even that in the colonial period subordination was fully accomplished. Workers before and now challenge these relations and resist them within private households. As Canevaro (2014) has shown for the case of Buenos Aires, Blanco (2014) for the case of Chiapas and Stefoni and Fernández (2011) for the Chilean case, workers negotiate working conditions, manage to obtain visa permits, and question power relations through everyday practices and within employer/worker relationships, revealing the complexity of employers' emotional and practical dependency on domestic workers. However, here I focus on the reproductive power of the culture of servitude with the intention of maintaining hegemonic power relations, which in practice is never fully achieved.

Drawing upon Quijano's (2000) work on coloniality, these authors further suggest that the racial division of labour organised in Latin America with the Spanish and Portuguese conquests defined indigenous and black bodies as naturally suited for service labours; domestic service becoming an activity performed mainly by racialised and indigenous women. Thus, gendered and racialised division of work in the modern/colonial system is materialised in private households with relations of subordination.

'It [culture of servitude] is a living system of meanings and values – constitutive and constituent – which is experienced and which is formed reciprocally. Thus, the domination, dependency and inequality is not only tolerated, but also accepted by each part of this hegemonic order and reproduced in everyday practices. Therefore, a structure of feelings is created that involves both employers' and servants' subjectivity.' (Camus and de la O, 2014; 149) (author's translation).

The legacies of colonial order are felt in everyday encounters within households and even hierachal subjectivities are constructed in this space. Aura Cumex (2014) further develops this argument,

suggesting that the home and the family support social structures such as coloniality. Thus, the home is not a private space but rather a socially constructed one that reproduces imaginaries and mandates, and in those countries affected by coloniality, the home becomes a space of production of servitude. Cumes (2014) argues that with the Spanish conquest, the patriarchal home became a civilisatory project where indigenous and black population were defined as commodities that needed to be civilised for them to be of public utility, which meant that they needed to be trained as servants. Even, with the new republics in the beginning of the 19th century, rather than becoming citizens in equal conditions as the rest of the population, indigenous, rural and black populations were constructed and compelled to become good workers; that is, good servants.

'Thus, to be civilised, for indigenous population, meant learning how to be a good butler or servant, abiding colonial hierarchies which made servitude their fate, their social place. This characteristic, although the many historical forms of indigenous protests and resistance, was imposed through mechanisms of violence and legal codes until becoming institutionalized.' (Cumes, 2014; 372) (author's translation).

In this context, indigenous, rural and black women became defined as servants of those in charge of the civilising project; that is, the upper classes. In Chile, while in the 19th century upper-class women were called upon in their roles as mothers to become the bearers of the new nation, in the first half of the 20th century the medicalisation of motherhood became a crucial node for a new biopolitics and control of a growing urban population, which provided upper-class women a special status; becoming the norm to be followed by working class women in terms of the correct way of making a home (Illanes, 2006). Later in the second half of the 20th century, upper-class women again were called to help order a society in crisis with the emergence of socialism and later within Pinochet's dictatorship (1973–1989). The upper-class family figure became a key image-ideology (Oyarzún, 2000) for the needed social cohesion and lower-class women were again called to serve these families and the nation. The relation between women, family and nation was not interrupted by the following democratic governments (1990–today) but rather intensified with new *modern* demands of women's autonomy and social rights, and even today, care and domestic work is still portrayed as *women's duties*, duties that are transferred from middle- and upper-class women to working class, migrant and racialised women, who are seen as natural servants of privileged homes.

Thus, while upper-class women and families have been the bearers of the nation, *other women* were their servants. In Chile, as in other parts of the region (Gálvez and Todaro, 1987; Durin, de la O

Martinez and Bastos, 2014), domestic workers have historically come from poor, indigenous and rural communities as domestic labour has been for many of them the port of entrance to the urban labour market (Stefoni and Fernández, 2011). While in the 1940s domestic workers were mainly internal migrants from rural and/or indigenous background, from the 1990s regional migrants also became a new labour force, especially in the case of Peruvian women. Today, domestic work is the third most important economic activity for Chilean women (12.2% work as domestic workers, CASEN, 2015), and the most important activity for Peruvian women (more than 70% work as domestic workers, Arriagada and Todaro, 2012). Domestic work is mostly concentrated in the Metropolitan Region, and it is mainly performed by women between 30 and 60 years old, 93.2% of them are Chilean while 6.2% are women with another nationality (CASEN, 2013). However, many migrant and Chilean women work in this sector informally, making it difficult to know the real percentage of women of different nationalities that work as domestic workers. According to a study done by Nous Group (2013), 47.9% of Chilean workers have a contract, while 81.8% of migrant workers have contracts, which reflects migrants' dependency on having a contract in order to apply for residency.

The fact that domestic workers have been either internal or regional migrants, hints towards the predominance of a colonial legacy, which reproduced social hierarchies, based on gender, race, ethnicity and class, and enabled the lifestyles and the construction of the racial status of the elite. This legacy cites the culture of servitude and its translated into modern forms of domestic work and institutionalised in legal frameworks. As Gutiérrez (2010) and Anderson (2014) have shown, structural forms of oppression are reinforced by legislation. In the case of Chile, it was only in the year 2015 that the new domestic labour law (N°20.786, 2014) fully entered into force. This law was part of a long struggle of domestic workers' unions, which had been campaigning for several years, becoming an achievement of their political negotiations in parliament. One of their main objectives was that the law defined them as *trabajadoras de casa particular* (private household workers) in order to challenge the common use of the name *nanas*, a pejorative term to refer to domestic workers and that – according to the unions – invisibilised their condition as workers. Furthermore, *nana* symbolises a modern way of referring to the figure of the servant, a woman who is completely available for the needs of families, a name that gives continuity to the culture of servitude.

Among other aspects, the highlights of this new law are related to salary, contract and working hours. Domestic workers' salary was finally equated with the minimum wage of the rest of the labour force, as before they were entitled to only 75% of it, and payment in kind is now forbidden.

There is now an obligation to sign a contract, which must specify what activities the domestic worker is hired to do, and where. Working hours were also reduced from 72 to 45, as the rest of the labour force. Thus, until very recently, domestic workers were legally available for employers' needs 72 hours per week and only entitled to 75% of the minimum wage. Although this is an advance in workers' rights, the new law scarcely defines forms of accounting for such rights to be reinforced. In the case of workers who live where they work, the new law specified they should have 12 hours of rest per day. However, the number of working hours per day was not regulated, leaving the possibility for women to be asked to work for the resting 12 hours. This specific element shows the limitations and resistance within Chilean society and members of parliament – who are mainly employers – to delineate the number of hours live-in workers should do, preserving the idea that workers are eternally available for employers' needs (Anderson, 2014). This condition of constant availability is an enclave of the culture of servitude, a way of maintaining domination/subordination relationships between employers and workers, and for middle- and upper-class families to perform their lifestyle without questioning the patriarchal organisation of society (Cox, 2006). In this sense, through this deficient law the state cites the culture of servitude by promoting the exploitation of working-class women, naturalising the constant availability of workers, and enabling patriarchal family models in a *modern democracy*.

The culture of servitude, in the Chilean case, gives an account of the importance of managing domestic workers for the formation of the gender, class and racial identity of the employing families and women of well-off classes. It is they who, in their relationship with servitude, acquire a status as civilising agents of the poor, indigenous and black population. Employers interviewed seem to feel the neoliberal demand for achieving happiness as a complex task given the burden placed on them, so hiring of a domestic worker seems not only to be a fundamental aid, but also a requirement and a 'right', without which it would be impossible to develop their desired lifestyles. This cites a culture of servitude. The culture of servitude is used to manage the difficulties of employers' lifestyles, expectations and subjectivities, and as a way of resolving the contradictions of the neoliberal promise of happiness.

Josefina is in her late 30s. She has five children, lives in a rich neighbourhood of Santiago, works part-time as a designer, employs two domestic workers who live with her (one Peruvian and one Colombian), and defines herself as very religious. She also defines herself as a person with great energy and who likes to get involved in her children's lives. However, she believes that families today have more work than when she was a child. She argues that schools depend a great deal on

families – and mothers – to help children with their academic duties, making it ‘impossible’ to achieve this demand without the help of paid domestic work. Thus, domestic workers become a need, and in the case of Josefina’s house are commissioned every activity non-related to the upbringing of children, becoming a resource for the family to reproduce not only the children’s life, but also their own expectations of ‘happy lives’ in modern codes.

‘Today families have more work and have no time to enjoy, swim in the pool, without the help that I have I could not do this. I would have to be more physically tired, it is rare that I go to bed exhausted, melted, as I imagine [workers] go to bed ... Moms have to do too much. I am not complaining of my job, I chose to work, you could go to the gym, but you have to be prepared for anything, if tomorrow my husband is without a job or we split up, how do I maintain my kids? And also because I like it. I appreciate it, I love what I do. I participate a lot in the school, I have many fronts, I have to work on saying no, moms are very in demand today ... [Workers] are a contribution to the entire house: washing, ironing, cleaning the toilet, cooking, answering the phone. When the children arrive, they take their backpacks, their notebooks, they are like secretaries. When I arrive, I have little time to spend with each of them, then I delegate much to [workers]; I let them be, they make a supermarket list, they receive the visitors, I trust them very much.’ (Josefina, 37 years, employer).

For Josefina, domestic workers allow her to ‘have a life’, a very specific life, one which involves time to bond with her children and to have space for pleasure. She, and her family, *feel* these demands of ‘having a life’, and desire to meet them in order to be happy. Participating in children’s school activities, swimming with them in the pool, having a drink with their husbands, working outside their homes, are all activities that account for a particular neoliberal lifestyle. On the one hand, it is idyllic – for it implies a material and emotional enjoyment without renunciations – and on the other hand, it is representative of a bourgeois lifestyle.

‘The importance of the nana is for your relationship with your husband, it’s for you, it makes the daily routine more bearable for you. You are not angry because the child is crying, and your husband arrives ... She prepares the appetizer and takes the children. Or at night, at 3am she takes the little girl crying.’ (Ana, 57 years, employer).

As is the case of Ana, and shown for the Mexican case (Camus and de la O Martínez, 2014), upper-class women cite and give continuity to a culture of servitude in order to be able to perform their

traditional roles as housewives without having to sacrifice their lives to maternity, without having to sacrifice their sleep, without questioning the sexual division of labour within households, and without questioning their class privileges – reproducing their class status. In this sense, domestic workers make possible both the maintenance and appearance of the *Chilean happy family* and the autonomy of women employers. All the interviews convey an apparent ‘right’ to paid domestic work. This contrasts with the perspective of Ruth Olate, president of SINTRACAP (Chilean Domestic Workers’ Union). In an interview given for Change 21, Olate says:

Q: Will there be a day that you would need to hire a domestic worker for domestic chores?

A: I think that day will never come. To hire a worker and pay her? No. It cost me a lot to be domestic worker and housewife. It is very hard and not easy. As a woman, you cannot give [this experience] to anyone.

Q: Even if you needed the help?

A: No, I would never take a worker. In my house, my sisters tell me the same. We are all grown-ups and we know that having someone in the house is not right.’ (Olate, 2016)¹³.

For Olate, a household could reproduce itself without the need for paid help. Although many households do need paid help, due to the lack of state support for childcare and health needs (Acosta, 2012), one can question what the real need is when a domestic worker is hired to carry out nonessential tasks such as to serve appetizers. Contrasting employers’ and Olate’s words, I suggest that employers’ demands and needs suggest their class status and the type of lifestyle they want to have, one that not only requires the extraction of domestic workers’ labour and time, but one that also asks (as if it were a natural demand) for the performance of exceptional activities.

Thus, ‘having’ a domestic worker becomes crucial to ‘having a life’ for employers, that is to say, ‘having a bourgeois life’, in the sense of having time to perform their lifestyles and live their expectations of happiness. Such ‘provision’ is based on the delegation of many ‘exceptional’ tasks on domestic workers, which is experienced by employers as a requirement for daily survival and a way to free themselves from their own burden as mothers. Then, paid domestic work with the culture of servitude become the condition of possibility – in the current Chilean context – for the maintenance of the traditional mother figure (dedicated and present mothers), for the reproduction of the traditional sexual division of labour within households, and for the neoliberal demand towards women to perform the ‘modern dream’, which promises greater freedom and autonomy

¹³ <http://www.cambio21.cl/cambio21/site/artic/20160330/pags/20160330181752.html> viewed the 14th of November 2016.

regarding their historical burden. These are effects of the performative capacity of paid domestic work.

Furthermore, employers' gendered privileges are reproduced by also reproducing employers' class privileges, status and lifestyles. From employers' stories, I argue that they do not simply delegate tasks to domestic workers, but that they expect workers to perform tasks that go beyond the traditional role of housewives. Serving snacks, for example, or cleaning hot tubs, are exceptional activities that are naturalised by employers as part of the daily tasks of workers, reproducing their class status and bourgeois lifestyle. I suggest that employers' demands and needs make evident the type of lifestyle they want to live, the type of 'life' they wish to 'have', one that not only requires the exploitation of workers' labour and time, but also the expectation of performance of exceptional activities of servitude, which are orientated to the reproduction of employers' status. Thus, while employers give continuity with their gender status as housewives and autonomous women, they not only conceal the neoliberal contradiction but also obtain class status. In this sense, the employers' *Chilean happy family* project is only possible through the reproduction of upper-class privilege and exemption, whilst – at the same time – perceiving these exceptional activities to be natural and rightfully theirs. Employers' feelings of entitlement are evident in their narratives as they usually refer to workers as 'their *nanas*': an object that rightfully belongs to them.

Crianza and cuidado: differences between employers' and domestic workers' status

While employers recognise the importance of paid domestic work to gain free time and desire 'having' domestic workers, they do not necessarily openly recognise the importance of this labour for the reproduction of their class status and even try to distinguish their role as mothers as different to the role of workers, as a way of undervaluing workers' labour and their position in the house. Employers distinguish their mothering role from the 'help' they receive from family members and the domestic worker, who – according to employers – only takes care of the children. The distinction between bringing up (*crianza*) and looking after or taking care of (*cuidado*) not only attributes different roles to each woman, but also the social value of each task with the children, and reveals employers' struggles with giving too much importance to workers' roles.

In this sense, bringing up implies, according to employers, a stronger role, that does not only convey looking after children, but also making them human beings, giving them socialising values,

creating capacities and projections. Workers, meanwhile, have a ‘supplementary’ and less valuable role related to the reproduction of everyday life. Thus, employers preserve their maternal (*madreesposa*) mandate, and, at the same time, transmit the boring, unpleasant and undervalued parts of it. This is similar to the situation explained by Gutiérrez (2014) where workers receive negative affects related to doing domestic work, contributing to the devaluation of workers’ labour. The devaluation of workers’ roles with children has different effects: it provides social status and distinction to housewives, it reproduces gendered hierarchies within homes, and it cites nostalgic views related to the figure of the *servant*, a figure recognised by employers as the ideal worker – in past times – where each individual knew their place in society. As we will see later, the nostalgic narratives are key aspects in the classification of the ideal worker. Thus, housewives use the historical devaluation of feminised labour (Gutiérrez, 2010) to reproduce their class and gender status within their homes and in relation to workers.

Thus, upper-class women wish to ‘have a life’, one that enacts both the ‘traditional’ definitions of family life and attains the ‘modern’ subjectivities of autonomous beings. This is obtained through the hiring of domestic workers, who free employers from the ‘unpleasant’ aspects of domesticity and perform exceptional tasks that reproduce the employers’ upper-class lifestyle. This transmission of tasks and feelings can be understood drawing upon the effects of affective labour. Gutiérrez (2014), while looking at the emotional labour performed by workers, suggests that domestic work is a form of affective labour, one that transports ‘feminine’ values and colonial legacies, producing its devaluation as work and the inferiorisation of domestic workers.

‘Domestic work signals this terrain of deregulated work, which is abject and devalued in society. The subjects providing this work are culturally predicated by signifiers of “inferiority,” produced through processes of feminization, and, as we will see below, also by racialization.

In conversations with female employers and domestic workers alike, the sentiment of “inferiorization” is expressed in their reflection on their positioning as “mothers” and “housewives”. Employing another woman to perform domestic work releases them from this positioning and enables them to experience positive feelings.’ (Gutiérrez, 2014; 47–8).

As Gutiérrez (2010) argues, positive affects are transmitted for employers such as freedom and relief from domestic work, which, in turn, transmits negative affects towards workers such as boredom, exploitation, and disgust, reproducing their inferior status. Employers ‘delegate’ their inferior position as housewives towards domestic workers, enabling the ‘modern woman dream’

through the transmission of the devalued aspects and affects towards domestic workers. Thus, employers make boundary work between their superior status as *criadoras* (those who bring up children) in opposition to the ‘inferior’ status of workers who are only *cuidadoras* (care-takers), reproducing superior/inferior positions – proper to a culture of servitude. Furthermore, when the distinction between *criadoras* and *cuidadoras* is made, it is mainly in relation to the current worker employed, but when employers remember the role that their own domestic workers had when they were growing up, they acknowledge a more active role in teaching them life lasting values and experiences. In this sense, they recognise the *crianza* role of their childhood domestic workers, but not that of the current employee.

‘Nana Rosa, was for me, in a minute, super important, but super! My nana was like ... I would tell you like my second mom ... Over the time I lost that, today ... it’s different.’ (Isabel, 61 years, employer).

‘When people say ‘she [worker] raised my children’ I say no, she takes care of them, but I am who raises them.’ (Juana, 46 years, employer).

The sensation of today being different may be because employers feel that contemporary workers are not the same as before, recreating a postcolonial nostalgic view (hooks, 1992) of ‘how it used to be’ in affluent homes in rural and urban areas during the 19th and 20th centuries, where workers had a more important role. Alternatively, it could be because they feel their positions as mothers cannot be questioned in a time where middle- and upper-class women tend to privilege not only their homes but also their professional life and are questioned by society. Thus, the tension between being a mother and being a ‘modern woman’ is reflected in the distinction of the importance of workers in relation to the upbringing of children. In either case, by diminishing the value of the care role of workers, employers do not fully recognise the worth of reproductive labour as they do not see ‘taking care of’ as an essential part of reproductive labour.

As well as identifying as mothers in charge of upbringing of children, the employers I interviewed also tended to define themselves as in charge of supervising the proper functioning of the home, assuming a ‘directive’ position within the house. This directional role, as Anderson (2000) has shown for the European case, becomes essential for defending their superiority in relation to workers’ inferiority. While this role binds them to the house, which can become a burden, it can also – by delegating all the domestic labour to workers – give them free time and the power to decide over that free time (when to take it, what to do with it). This flexibility is possible because

employers do not have to do all the work that the domestic workers do. In order for employers to feel free, workers work around the employer's flexible and free time, becoming constantly available for employers' demands (Anderson, 2000). The worker has to organise her work and her own personal life around the employer's needs and activities in order for the employer to actually use this time however she decides to. Therefore, freedom is accomplished by controlled labour: employers' freedom and development of their lifestyle is achieved by managing the labour of workers and outsourcing housewives own 'slavery', reproducing a bond of exploitation (Romero, 1992). This is especially evident when employers confess to not wanting to hire a worker with young children, as they can become an obstacle for the employers' needs.

'My current nana was recommended by my [parental] family's nana. She has a really young girl. She was very highly recommended but I was a little nervous because I prefer older nanas that don't have the problem of their own children. I hate it because they arrive late to work, or miss days of work.' (Maria, 35 years, employer).

As Maria narrates, the worker's maternity makes her nervous, becoming a problem for her own maternity. Domestic workers are expected to produce the impossible: the harmony of the family, and the possibility of the multi-tasking woman, both without troubles, disruptions or complications. It is impossible because the *Chilean happy family* and the 'modern woman', both being ideological promises, are never fully accomplished. Rather, they function as objects of desire that guide practices and intentions, but that never manage to be completely successful. The labour of workers is a constant fulfilling of these promises, an everyday activity that sustains ceremonies and rituals such as family dinners, birthdays, daily routines from getting up in the morning to going to bed at night and in between preparing snacks, lunch, doing the household cleaning, washing and ironing shirts and uniforms, among others. Thus, domestic work, in its everyday practices, acquires a performative power in the constant recreation of the *Chilean family happy* and the 'modern woman'.

'Having a life' and 'having the perfect *nana*': doing boundary work

Domestic workers are seen as a natural need for the functioning of employers' homes. However, employers experience feelings of anxiety and strain when they think about their lives without the assistance of domestic workers, or with too much presence of 'unwanted' workers, which makes

boundaries between them unclear. Thus, alongside being a condition of possibility for the reproduction of gendered and class status, and therefore desired by employers, workers are desired only in specific ways. The desire of *good workers* becomes a form of boundary work to bear with workers' closeness. Some workers (*good workers*) become more desired, while others (*bad workers*) are criticised and rejected on the base of their adaptability to the family. In order to be *good workers*, their labour has to first be invisibilised (Anderson, 2000; Ray and Qayum, 2009), concealing their importance in the reproduction of upper-class homes. Invisibilisation becomes a strategy of employers' boundary work (Lamont, 1992) which reproduces their moral distinctions and their 'right to be served'. Second, not all domestic workers are 'suitable' for employers' needs. Domestic workers are both desired and rejected, depending on how much they 'assimilate' to employers' needs. Distinctions between *good*, *perfect* and *bad nanas*, demonstrate the complex ways in which the performative power of domestic labour works in reproducing both the *Chilean happy family* and the 'modern woman' projects. We will see in chapter six, such assimilation remains a mere aspiration, as in everyday practices it is never really accomplished. However, it is important to understand the ways in which domestic workers are required by employers to be *good nanas*, and employers' strategies towards obtaining such *nanas*.

Domestic workers are both desired and rejected – as a strategy of boundary work – based on descriptions, classifications and forms of regulation, based on the expectations and the criteria that employers distinguish as relevant for the achievement of organised and functional homes, and with minimal instances of conflict. Employers distinguish between *good* and *bad* workers, using adjectives such as professional, submissive, ideal, slow, uncultured and of violent origins, demonstrating that the performance of the *Chilean happy family* does not only require the labour of workers, but also a certain type of worker, one which is racialised. International studies have shown how different members of society such as employers, employment agencies, state departments and immigration laws have promoted a stigmatised and racialised vision of women, leading their entry into domestic work. These representations are based on distinctions of otherness related to gender, race, ethnicity and nationality (Momsen, 1999). For example, in Malaysia immigrants from Indonesia (Chin, 1997) are preferred and in Canada Filipino women are preferred (Pratt, 1999; Stiell and England, 1999). These selections are justified through the racialisation of specific immigrant women as submissive, docile and naturally suited for domestic work. For the Chilean case, a study by the Centre of Women's Studies explained that, historically, those who have been incorporated into domestic work have been Southern girls that stood out for their 'ingenuity', 'effort' and 'total availability' (CEM, 1987). Later studies by Stefoni (2002) and Staab and Maher

(2005) show that Chilean employers say they prefer Peruvian domestic workers because of their ‘servile nature’.

I will explore in chapter five how workers are defined according to racialised and ethnic-based criteria such as: attitudes, ways of being, and ways of relating to the family. I will suggest that the relations between employers and workers are in constant tension because, while domestic work allows the reproduction of the elite, it also reveals employers’ anxieties regarding workers’ ‘different origins’. Studies have shown that women of Peruvian nationality are preferred by employers due to their supposed ‘submissive and docile’ attitude, however Mapuche women are criticised for being too demanding and Chilean women in urban areas are considered to pose a threat as they are ‘marked’ by poor and violent ‘origins’. I will discuss the insecurities that employers feel about the ethnic, class and national ‘origin’ of domestic employees. However, in this chapter, I will analyse what it means to ‘have’ a *good nana* for the employers’ lifestyle, to later analyse the emotional labour and boundary work performed by employers as a way of managing difference for the reproduction of their own class status.

‘Having’ a *good nana* means many things. First, employers define two main dispositions *good* workers should have, which, as I will describe, become key axes by which to understand the ‘exceptional’ tasks required for the reproduction of more than just a house. A first disposition identified by employers – and directly related to the eventualities that endanger ‘happy homes’ – is that of ‘being there’, which does not necessarily require a specific action or role, just a presence. This presence is not just something desired when employers’ need a specific task but rather, employers desire workers’ constant availability. For Anderson (2000), the ambiguous definition of domestic work as both work and, at the same time, care, connecting pre- and post-capitalism logics of labour, creates the conditions for not only the selling of the body as ‘property of work’ but also for the selling of women’s personhood which, in the case of live-in format, involves a total and permanent availability not defined by how many hours the person works but, rather, by the expectations of how a house must function. The lack of this presence becomes a direct threat to employers’ autonomy and reproduction of their lifestyles, as in the case of Sara.

‘The most urgent situation happened when Lucia went to the south for three days ... We had to work out a lot of logistics, I had to ask permission in the office as my husband couldn’t take care of the children.’ (Sara, 43 years, employer).

Apparently, the disappearance of domestic workers reveals the many benefits that ‘having’ someone all the time creates. Chaos and the need for a new set of logistics characterise the ‘not having’ a domestic worker. Thus, more than just performing specific tasks such as cleaning, cooking and caring, workers must be constantly available for employers and their daily lives. Another disposition the workers are asked to perform is that of entertainment, which means the bodily transmission of happy, joyful and nice affects, through the workers’ smiles and activities considered important for employers, but who do not have time to do them, for example going to the park with the children. This task requires a specific ‘motivation’ from the domestic worker, a supposedly ‘authentic motivation’ (according to employers), which enables the reproduction of the home, and maintenance of its harmony, and shows how domestic work is also a form of affective labour that transmits positive emotions towards families and employers (Gutiérrez, 2010, 2014). As Rosalba explains:

‘The nana tells me that Sofia hits Andres very hard, I talked to Sofia and she tells me it’s because Andres is bored and starts bothering her. They arrive home from school and the nana promises Andres that they will go down to the park, but then she starts to do other things and never goes down with him, he is left looking at the ceiling, doing nothing. I understand, the nana doesn’t want to go play ball; I understand that it is not entertaining, but ... she has to do it. Sofia wants Ruth to return, her childhood nana, Ruth was really motivated, she would invent things to do, they would play after school.’ (Rosalba, 36 years, employer).

Thus, domestic workers must perform *nanas*, they have to be ‘motivated’, transmit positive affects, and do this with ‘authentic desire’. Both ‘being there’ and ‘being motivated’ are dispositions that, I suggest, have less to do with cooking and cleaning – although these are essential for the reproduction of happy homes – or with more practical aspects of domestic work. They are more related to the care role domestic workers are asked to provide, one that is at the same time both acknowledged and concealed by employers. It is also a role that is constantly being reproduced and tensioned within homes, based on gender and class status. Thus, ‘being good mothers’ is, for employers, a gendered and a class mandate that also – when socially recognised – provides pleasure and status.

These dispositions, more related to the traditional ‘mother role’, demonstrate the affective dimension of domestic work, as well as the performative power of domestic work in the reproduction of *Chilean happy families*, expected to be by employers, loving, caring and secure.

Thus, because of their importance in reproducing both class lifestyles and gendered definitions of families, not just anyone ‘classifies’ as a ‘good domestic worker’, that is, one capable of such requirements. The reproduction of both class and gender status involves dispositions that required specific *nanas*, those who are trustworthy, and who ‘genuinely’ perform their tasks with ‘authentic’ care for the house and children. In addition, definitions of *good nanas* have more to do with employers’ expectations towards the relations between upper classes and ‘service’, and with self-definitions of their own values and superior position in the Chilean society, than with descriptions of ‘real’ workers. Thus, *good nanas* are those ‘servants’ who assimilate and truly care for the family, without losing their inferior position.

Good nanas

Employers define *good nanas* as those that provoke some sort of trust. Within the category *good nana*, we can distinguish four models in employers’ narratives: the *servant*, which would be present from colonial period until the 1960s, the *nana de la vida* (nana of life) from the 1970s to the 1990s, the *ideal submissive nana* also from the 1970s until today, and the *professional nana* of current times. Even though these ideal types are structured in periods of time, they coexist today in employers’ imaginaries, memories and narratives, and are intertwined with the culture of servitude that recreates distinctions based on superior/inferior. The first two models are part of a more nostalgic narrative about *good nanas* either because they were dedicated to their work (docile, knew their place in the house and in society) – echoing Staab and Maher’s (2005) research results – or because they had a more active role in the upbringing of children (second mother, nicer, more intimate experience), and are desired but viewed as exceptions in today’s society.

1. Good nanas – the figure of the servant

The *servant* is a figure of a domestic worker narrated through a nostalgic discourse, one that highlights how social hierarchies ‘used to’ function, how upper-class homes and families ‘used to’ organise themselves in better or happier times, reactivating a social memory of class differences before modern times where labour rights became recognised. The *servant* distinguishes from other *good nanas* in terms of racial, ethnic and nationality origin stereotypes, an aspect that I will further discuss in chapter five. The *servant* is most likely represented by an internal immigrant from rural

parts of Chile (central and south), with ‘rural characters’: docile, naïve, obedient, with some non-formal education, knows her place in society, and in some cases are Mapuche. These narratives appear in a familial and caring rhetoric which describes those workers who knew their inferior place in society and within the home, were hired under the employers’ conditions, and who were not necessarily aware or did not demand their rights.

‘We were four siblings, my parents, and my grandmother. We had several nanas. One of them, we called her the kitchen nana, and the other was the niña de mano. We lived in Santiago. The kitchen nana served the table, cleaned the rooms, always things indoors. Something curious is that they had to bring [from the south] their own beds ... We lived in a very large house, it had a dining room, another hall-dining area where we ate when we were alone, when there were visits, we usually ate in the large dining room. That was the work of the cook and the niña de mano did the rest of housecleaning, we did not wash at home. At that time, there were washers outside the home. These women came from the nearby fields with large bags where to put the clothes. They would take note of everything they put in the bags. The poor woman went with that bag to wash in a trough and 4–7 days later she returned with all ironed, organised, and they checked if everything was there. ... Before mothers did not work and they were concerned with the children ... Ahhh but I forgot, we also had nanas who cared for the young children, I think they also lived with us, because the houses were so big, ours had 9 bedrooms, had living room, hall, room for staying, they were all huge. When we went to school, some nanas disappeared. The ones who remained lasted a lot. They would go out every other Sunday and every Wednesday. They were like prisoners, nothing like today. The nanas lasted a long time, when they were missing, you would order one with your friends who lived in the south, and southern people came to work to Santiago and lasted a lot of time.’ (Carmen, 84 years, employer).

Carmen explains how her childhood house used to function with multiple *servants*, each in charge of a specific part of the house and of the children, and who were constantly available and remained for many years with them. Multiple and long-lasting *nanas* were a normal disposition in wealthy homes until the mid 20th century, which is felt by employers and the local elites (Stabili, 2003). According to Carmen, as other employers narrate, enormous homes were maintained with a set of *servants* that performed hard work, without much questioning, and maintained durable presence. They were ‘like prisoners’, ‘like slaves’ not only because of all the labour they performed, but also because they did not have much to say about it, or at least this is what Carmen thinks. Contrary to what workers narrate (see chapter six), employers portray the figure of the *servant* as poor prisoners, disposable

southern people, part of a mass of *good* and submissive *nanas*. What these stories do not necessarily acknowledge is how much conflict, boundary work and tensions were part of everyday life between workers and their employers. Thus, as the employers interviewed in Stoler's (2009) research on Dutch colonies who narrate romantic and nostalgic memories of their loving relations with their servants – which later workers contrast with more distant relationships – employers interviewed for this thesis portray a romantic version of the submissive *servant* that contributed to the organic and harmonic functioning of their childhood homes. However, although employers portray this past time as a 'good time', they acknowledge that it is not possible to fully describe this situation as ideal because workers were like prisoners, entering into conflictive narrations and desires regarding the figure of the *servant*. While they assume a romantic notion of the *servant*, they understand that today that figure is not possible. This is how the *culture of servitude* is negotiated in modern terms; it is ideal but not always achievable.

Thus, employers today still show a desire – not to go back to a time 'of prisoners', but to return to certain aspects of the figure of the *servant* which would be useful today. By 'today', employers refer to the recognition of, on the one hand, workers' labour rights and therefore workers being less willing to perform 'extra' activities – essential, as described above, for the reproduction of employers' class status and lifestyle – and on the other hand, understanding workers' capacities to resist, repel or refuse to perform the work with the attitude asked by employers, that is, with genuine 'motivation'. What employers are referring to is a change of guidelines regarding the relationship between employers and workers: one no longer based on the 'natural' submission of *servants*, but as one that threatens to make employers and workers more equal, and therefore, becoming 'lighter'. As Rosalba narrates, the problem of workers' rights is that the relationship of superiority/inferiority is put in danger, as is the culture of servitude.

'It has changed a lot, what was once a nana to what it is now. Formerly they were like almost servants, my grandmother would ring a little bell to call them, not today, today it's lighter. More than being lighter today there are more rights. Formerly they were not granted any rights. You would hire them under the conditions that you would consider prudent. Even, they had to use a headband on their head to keep any hair off the food, another level.' (Rosalba, 36 years, employer).

Thus, workers' labour rights threaten the *servant* figure. In addition, younger employers also 'incorporate' this 'modern' discourse in relation to their own position in their homes, and with workers, provoking a series of contradictions and uncomfortable feelings in employers. Even, older

generations criticise younger ones who in their opinion do not have ‘order’ in the house, that is, control over domestic workers. These aspects – workers having too many rights and refusing to perform their duties with ‘motivation’ – and younger employers not knowing how to manage their ‘class needs’ with the ‘modern rights discourse’ are felt by older and younger employers as a threat to their lifestyles. As Alejandra explains, this threat is felt in terms of having too much emotional closeness with workers.

‘Independently if workers live in the house or not, there is a theme of coexistence that is screwed up, it is difficult to draw the line. On the other hand, it is a job but which does everything, does much more. And there’s an emotional aspect that is complicated and has trapped me.’ (Alejandra, 43 years, employer).

Alejandra feels trapped between her critical views towards ‘past’ relations of her own mother’s relationship with workers, wanting to be both understanding with workers and desiring more limits, limits to the worker’s needs and demands that put in danger the reproduction of her upper-class lifestyle. While she understands the worker’s needs, she perceives her needs as a problem. It seems that older generations do not necessarily feel these aspects as tensions, as for them putting limits was a more obvious process than for someone like Alejandra.

‘It’s an extremely complicated emotional relationship because she is a caring woman, for me it was very important that part, because I have young children. ... But the cost is that it is a woman who lives far away, arrives late, has little children that get sick, which is understandable but ... All my family hates her because I have to be always asking for help.’ (Alejandra, 43 years, employer).

What employers like Alejandra articulate is a desire to understand workers’ needs and at the same time have a more distant relation, where they can ask for things without feeling guilty and where workers have fewer work rights and therefore could be more available to the needs of employers’ families. In this sense, although the *servant* figure is criticised today, especially by younger generations, it still persists in certain characteristics that seem appealing, especially in relation to the naturalisation of ‘having’ someone at your service without any questioning. I suggest that the figure of the *servant* is useful to think about for a genealogy of the desired or the ideal relationship – for employers – between upper-class families and those who serve them, and especially the importance of such relation in the naturalisation of their class and racial/ethnic status.

Within colonial studies, the figure of the *servant* has been key in the understanding of the reproduction of the bourgeois family. Stoler (1995), in a re-reading of Foucault's (1990) History of Sexuality, argues that the colonial experience – racial relations – shaped the bourgeois order. For her, the discourses of sexuality of the 18th century are part of the formation of the racial order and the nations. Thus, discourses regarding the education of the bourgeois child function to control racial transgressions and forge national identities. Racial difference and national identity is constructed from the racialised other – not a distant other but an intimate one: the *servant*. The borders and differences between *servants* and the imperial family arise to control the possible cultural contamination between the seductive *servant* and the bourgeois child, configuring the identification of the latter with the national and racial identity of the empire. It becomes essential to generate rituals of separation between the *servant* and the bourgeois family.

McClintock (1995), in her reading of the Oedipus complex and the formation of the bourgeois child in Freud, looks at the relationship between the *servant* and the bourgeois family in the 18th and 19th centuries. She argues that Freud elaborates his thesis on the basis of his relationship with his *servant*, which he later replaces with the figure of the mother, hiding the relevance of the *servant* and her racialisation for the formation of the identity of the bourgeois child. It is the racialisation of the *servant*, according to McClintock (1995), that also constitutes the Oedipus complex – that is, not only the fear of castration but also the fear of racial mixing and the loss of whiteness. The separation between the family and the servant is also a significant element for this author, making closeness a threat to the reproduction of upper-class families. The practice of separation has been largely studied by Abril Saldaña (2013) in the Mexican case and with a focus on the differentiated food consumption between workers and employers within homes, and the racialisation process that this implies, she concludes that today workers are still racialised.

'... the proximity that domestic work implies, seems to detonate the constant rituals of separation that manifest themselves in racist practices that affect the experience of millions of workers.' (Saldaña, 2013; 74).

In Chile, throughout history, the figure of the *servant* has appeared under different labels and reappears today through the distinction of the *good nana*, as I will show below (and especially with the case of Peruvian workers who are perceived as more docile and servile). Different substitutes of the *servant* appear in current social scenarios that either reactivate or transform the traditional notion of the *servant*. One of these substitutes is the *girl from the south* (of Chile), mainly from

rural areas, who is defined as good, naïve, coming from a good family (passed from one family to another), and, when young, even considered as a daughter and part of the family. Another substitute is the *Peruvian nana*. The case of the Peruvian worker is complex because they have been arriving in Chile from the 1990s, so the time of their arrival affects how they relate to domestic work. However, in general terms there exists a perception within employers that they constitute *good nanas* because they are uninformed about their rights and they rely on their employers for their visa, and are therefore, more willing to perform hard work. I do not suggest that the same *servant* figure reappears throughout history, but that a specific power relation – based on the culture of servitude – is cited in homes and has the disposition of reproducing the impossible: harmonic happy homes. Rural and migrant women were and are racialised in different moments in time in order to fit the normative notion of the *good nana*, demonstrating that domestic workers are to be racialised in order for domestic work to have a performative power in reproducing racial and class status for employers.

Employers today may want to ‘have’ a *servant*, but don’t necessarily want or know how to deal with workers who know their rights. Employers are obliged to create different strategies to recreate the figure of the modern *servant* (to racialise domestic workers), and these strategies differ according to employers’ necessities and expectations regarding their family and home imaginaries, changing from older to younger generations. I will further develop the emotional strategies in the next section, but for now I will describe the ‘giving up’ strategy in order to show the contradictions of the *servant* in ‘modern times’. New generations may ‘give up’ certain features of the *servant* – such as being a ‘prisoner’ – in order to privilege the well-running and harmonic organisation of the house, that is, having the constant ‘presence’ of workers.

‘Once I had a fight with my husband’s grandmother who adored me but was imprudent in addressing my nana. My nana starting crying, so I had to tell the grandmother ‘I love you a lot but I will never accept for you to talk to the nana like that, if you have an issue come to me. Imagine the nana leaves me?’ For me it was really important to have someone I trusted and was going to be there.’ (Rosalba, 36 years, employer).

Having a crying *servant* was not an option for Rosalba as she knew she could lose her. Another justification to ‘give up’ the *servant* figure is when employers wish to liberate themselves of this figure because they desire more intimate family times and no longer need the *servant* because the children are older; as Carola describes:

'The nana I have now will be the last nana, nana as a concept. When my children grow up I won't need the presence of nana, I will only need someone to come a couple of times a week to help me with things that I don't like to do like washing and ironing. I think we will never have a nana like my nana again because it is not possible, the legal situation has changed, and today nanas are super picky.' (Carola, 38 years, employer).

With Rosalba and Carola's narratives, we can observe a yearning for the *servant* who does not exist today because domestic workers 'have too many rights', but at the same time housewives want to define themselves as more modern. They do not necessarily desire to liberate themselves of 'having someone' to perform the boring activities in the house, but to liberate themselves of having someone inside the house all day, a person that today has more rights and is, therefore, closer to employers. Thus, employers desire workers' availability (and even critique workers putting limits on their availability) but also do not wish to deal with the new situation of more rights and fewer boundaries, reflecting the neoliberal contradictions of the happiness promise of being mothers and 'modern' women, and desiring to reproduce their lifestyles without difficulties.

2. Good nanas – *nana de la vida*

Another figure of the *good nana* is the *nana de la vida* (a Republican version of the *servant*), who is described by employers (who are in their 40s and 50s) as their childhood nana, and racialised as a woman who generally came from rural areas of Chile and was loving and tough at the same time. She is perceived as trustworthy, a little bit naïve and ignorant, but with character. Many employers activate a nostalgic discourse about how it is now too difficult to find these kinds of *good nanas* as *nanas* today only work for money and not because they really care, describing a sense of resentment towards contemporary workers.

'I used to sleep with my nana, I would stay at her home in Santa Rosa, it was amazing because she prepared food for her husband, I slept between her and the husband, and she would take me to the market. But today it's too difficult for this to happen, I wouldn't trust a nana.' (Gloria, 56 years, employer).

'There was always a nana when I was young, all my life, but it was another type of nana, much more eternal, one that lasted much more time in the house, she would raise you a bit, she was like

part of the family and super important. Now it's the opposite, nanas are almost disposable, there was a time that they did not last more than six months.' (Consuelo, 34 years, employer).

'I'm at the limit of what you pay for a nana. Today a nana outwardly asks for 350.000 pesos, plus another 30.000 for the bus, but this is an amount of money I am far from being able to pay, I'm always offering less. I tell them I live in a small flat, that I have two children who are at school practically all day ... but they want more money as everyone who works for money.' (Consuelo, 34 years, employer).

Nanas de la vida, according to employers, reactivate a more recent racialised figure of the *servant*, who had a more active role in employers' own upbringing, endured over time (not disposable like current workers) and who were part of the family. They were able to be part of the family because they genuinely loved their work, showed motivation and were, therefore, trustworthy. This figure is a sort of transition between the *servant* and current *nanas*, one that was still willing to be available for caring activities, and to perform those extra activities needed, according to employers, for the maintenance of homes. These women are 'hard to find' because employers doubt workers' 'origins', an aspect that I will describe in chapter five.

3. Good nanas – humoured submissive nana

Another racialised figure of the *good nana*, present in current times, is the *humoured submissive nana*. This *nana* is submissive, docile and willing to learn the organisation and lifestyle of the family they work for. She comes from rural areas of Chile or Peru, and therefore, has 'rural cultural values': that is, she is from a 'good family' and knows her subordinated position in society. These workers, as Constanza describes below, are not only docile, but are also people with good humour, patience and physical features that cheer up a home and enable the reproduction of the 'harmony of the house'. This figure illustrates a racialisation of women from rural and migrant origin that highlights their 'positive' racial characters.

'Q: What is important for the organisation of your home? What are the essential characteristics of the worker, for you?

A: To be docile, in the sense that you would say something and you will receive a good answer. I cannot stand nanas with a bad face, I get a bad temper and all the good vibes end. Also, she has to be patient because my husband is like a child, so she has to be patient and not be offended. I think

it's a question of character. Of respect. Also, that she feels comfortable, it has to be harmonious.' (Constanza, 45 years, employer).

Having a *good-humoured nana* is a feature highly valued by employers for many reasons. For workers to smile and hide their own personal feelings of anger or disgust helps to neutralise the uncomfortableness of 'having' a domestic worker full time in 'modern times'. As Hochschild (1983) explains in her book '*The Managed Heart*', the performing of happy and entertaining emotions are crucial for the service sector, mainly done by women. As well, Gutiérrez (2010) suggests that workers are desired by employers to the extent that they transmit positive affects towards the employers' families. Employers interviewed for this thesis echo this with their demands in their own households – for example when Constanza argues that her husband is like a child, asking the domestic worker to transmit positive feelings towards him, showing the performative power of domestic work in the creation of happy homes. This performance enables the reproduction of a 'harmonic home', a key figure of *Chilean happy families*. This *nana* also performs her labour without being noticed, achieving success through her invisibility. As Anderson (2000) suggests, this is a specific form of invisibility: she makes clean and happy homes visible (providing employers with status) by making the dirty work and herself invisible to the family and visitors.

4. Good nanas – Peruvian nana

The *Peruvian nana* stands out in employers' narratives. Accepting that Chilean workers put more limits, employers highlight the characteristics of Peruvian workers as allegedly being more submissive, docile and willing to learn the organisation and the lifestyle of the family for which they work for. The employers say that these workers come, usually, from rural areas of Peru, and therefore have 'rural cultural values', articulating an interesting form of racialisation that includes both their national and rural origin. They also possess some sort of education in terms of values, they come from 'good families', and they are acquainted with their subordinate status. Unlike the *nanas de la vida* (who were described as women from Chilean rural areas and who had more character) Peruvian workers are perceived as people with 'good humour' and patience, essential characteristics, according to employers, for the maintenance of the 'harmonious home'. Apparently, Chilean workers began to know their rights, and started making too many demands, having less 'will' to perform their job, unlike the Peruvians –especially the new arrivals – who were more willing to work long hours with a 'smile' (Stefoni and Fernández, 2011). Thus, Peruvians are racialised because of their origin and their emotional work.

In the case of Peruvian domestic workers, some employers have doubts about their capacities to perform the job as they do not know ‘our culture’, and ‘their culture’ is too different, aspects that I will further explore in chapter five. However, other employers see Peruvians as a plus in terms of cultural cuisine transmission. This ‘surplus value’ is important because the family is exposed to a global cuisine, but also cooking itself becomes an activity where the Peruvian worker ‘learns’ ‘Chilean values’, and the product of cooking (food) enables – as Claudia narrates below – the reproduction of the family, creating a space of reunion and enjoyment for the family.

‘The Peruvian nanas I had knew how to cook, the Peruvian cuisine is exquisite and tasty. [On the other hand] some things I was teaching them so they would learn from our culture.’ (Claudia, 57 years, employer).

There is a certain anxiety in Claudia’s narrative (either because she desires or rejects Peruvian culture), associating ‘Peruvian culture’ with specific values in contraposition with Chilean values which remain, many times, a mystery to employers. However, this mystery is put aside because of Peruvians’ willingness to be constantly available and assume a subordinate position, while at the same time contributing with their culinary expertise.

5. Good nanas – professional nanas

The more ‘modern’ version of the figure of the *nana* is the *professional nana*. Her main feature is that she is efficient and organised with the household chores. She is able to perform many duties: clean, cook, and care without being noticed by employers, with good manners and in a well-spoken manner. Peruvian workers are mostly identified with this group.

‘I have had Peruvian nanas who have been far the best, I’ve had too good experience, the best, very nice at all, in the treatment, super professionals with their job, they take super-seriously, they professionalise their work, they cook amazingly, they are loving, great with children, make to their job contented and happy, and the treatment, the treatment is something else, from how they speak to everything.’ (Carolina, 32 years, employer).

However, Filipino *nanas* – a very recent development – are slowly emerging in employers’ narratives, and especially in employment agencies that promote them as the perfect nanas. They

satisfy the demands of ‘being for’ or ‘at service of’ the upper classes’ needs, within a modern rhetoric. In this sense, employers expect and desire that workers perform their duties with ‘spark’, enthusiasm and with a ‘happy face’, otherwise, employers start feeling uncomfortable and question the worker’s ability to be the family’s *nana*. This characterisation reflects many aspects about what employers describe as the *nana problem* today. Workers today are seen as not doing their work with ‘real care’ because they only want money. This belief raises the issue of the importance of the performative and affective aspects of domestic work: smiling and showing ‘authentic’ care become key musts. Workers’ lack of ‘care’ is interpreted differently by employers. While some consider that workers are today too lazy, others suggest that this is the fault of employers themselves who no longer take time to do emotional labour with workers.

The performativity of emotional labour: managing differences

Domestic work as affective labour (Gutiérrez, 2010) is not only seen when employers transmit feelings of inferiority towards workers, and therefore devalue their work – the aspect already described above – but is also as a form of creating an emotional bond and working with boundaries with workers, becoming a form of managing difference, of closeness and of distance. Gutiérrez et al. (2014) also follow a similar line of work, proposing that domestic work is a site of negotiation of social boundaries.

‘This requires an analysis of the negotiation of intimacy in private households as reflecting the nation’s structural dynamics of inclusion and exclusion based on ‘race’, ethnicity and migration ... as well as an understanding of the affective and emotional interactions between employers and domestic workers.’ (Gutiérrez et al., 2014; 2).

From a decolonial and feminist perspective, Gutiérrez (2014) suggests that domestic work as affective labour enables us to understand ‘the impact of feelings and emotions on social relationships and spaces’ (45). Gutiérrez (2014) justifies the importance of the affective character of feelings as they circulate within encounters in households.

‘Private households are saturated with people’s feelings and emotions. While these feelings and emotions are individually experienced as sensations, their affective character goes beyond personal experience. The relational and spatial character of affect transcends the sphere of the personal as

affect defines the impact of feelings on bodies, objects and spaces (Ahmed, 2004; Brennan, 2004; Massumi, 2002; Tate, 2009). As such, affect addresses the impact of feelings circulating in a dispersed manner, which are expressed in fleeting encounters, and have an impact on people's bodies and psyches. The orientation towards a specific addressee is not always rationally conceived in the expression, impression, and circulation of feelings; and, because they evolve within a social context, they become tangible and intelligible because they bear social meaning.' (Gutiérrez, 2014; 47).

Thus, feelings transport within the relationships between employers and workers in a specific moment of time, and within a specific history. That which is being transmitted can be power relations based on historical class, ethnic and racial distinctions, anxieties about the dependency and the threat of 'otherness' within intimate spaces and relations, and contemporary desires of 'having a life' in the context of neoliberal Chile, one that reproduces upper-class lifestyle. While both workers and employers perform emotional labour, I focus on the emotional labour performed by employers, specifically that which intends to create both a 'bond of loyalty' and boundaries between employers and workers.

I analyse the strategies deployed by employers –through emotional labour and boundary work – that aim at three main purposes. First, to transmit their own gendered inferior condition toward workers in order to enjoy the benefits of being both mothers and 'autonomous women', and thus, maintaining their class status – an aspect already explained in earlier sections. Second, to manage workers' 'difference', through boundary work. I suggest that this management is central for employers' exercising of their autonomy, without losing their status as mothers, and reproducing their class status by naturalising their 'right' to paid domestic work. I will analyse how domestic workers must go through a process of assimilation, transformation or invisibilisation in order to become the *good nanas*, essential for the project of the *Chilean happy family* and the figure of the 'modern woman'. Third, to create an emotional bond in order to recreate the figure of the *servant* in 'modern times' (a time where workers' rights are more legitimised) and with the aim of 'assimilating' *nanas* to employers' culture.

Affective labour is also seen as a way of dealing with 'modern times', that is: on the one hand, to manage employers' feelings of both guilt and desire for the *servant* figure, and, on the other hand, to deal with the new conditions of more rights – having to create emotional bonds in order to obtain workers' 'loyalty'. Although these are seen as strategies of 'modern times', they have been used by

employers throughout time (as we can see in the interviews with older generations), showing the need for constant repetition and recreation of employer-worker relationships, and the fragility of the reproduction of upper-class lifestyles.

Emotional labour as a strategy

Domestic workers are not just employed by upper-class families, they are constantly expected to be *good nanas*, they are compelled to become and perform specific definitions of *nanas* based on the expectations of employers, grounded in romantic, nostalgic and racialised notions on how *servants* should be and act. It is, indeed, a practice of boundary work that employers perform with workers, to first test them and later engage them with the household labour, the home and the family. Boundary work, performed by employers, starts with the initial contact of employing workers. However, hiring a worker can be both a moment of assimilation and of struggle. Through the practice of hiring, distinctions are negotiated, showing the performative power of class, ethnic and racial difference within the relation between workers and employers.

According to employers, it all starts with the initial contact. Preferably through personal contacts (the social network of the family), as this way is more ‘secure’ – *nanas* come with recommendations and information that employers share with each other. According to employers interviewed, workers hired through employment agencies ‘don’t work’, and agencies do not provide any security or guarantees of who these women are, where they come from, or their social and economic backgrounds. The importance of personal contacts is that the family can ‘know’ where the worker is coming from, her ethnic and economic background, but also someone (the person who gave the contact) can give references regarding the woman’s ‘character’, personality features and her family’s character. Even though personal networks have such importance for finding a worker with these special features, employers argue that ‘finding a good, lasting nana is a thing of good luck’. Roberta describes how she found her current domestic worker, who has been with her for more than 10 years:

‘I was super lucky, my mother in-law went to Los Angeles (south of Chile), and there was a girl that she knew that had contact with women who wanted to be nanas, it was a lady that knew girls from rural areas.’ (Roberta, 42 years, employer).

For Roberta, knowing the origin of her domestic worker is crucial, knowledge that allows her to manage the threat of hiring someone she does not know. Domestic workers are, from the start, seen as a threat, and the initial contact is far from a simple situation – employers do everything to ensure their ‘safety’ by interviewing only recommended and trustworthy women. Even though one could argue that finding a worker has nothing to do with luck as it involves personal networks and social capital, it does have to do with a ‘rare’ opportunity: the interaction between upper-class families and lower-class and rural families, groups that do not regularly meet due to spatial segregation and the class system in Chile. It is only through personal contacts and specific agents (older women that know who is available to work in the town) that upper-class families connect with *good nanas*.

Within this initial contact, if workers pass the initial hurdles, an interview is organised. The interview is a micro-social site of interaction where employers identify if the woman is adequate or not for the job. According to employers, what is being evaluated is the existence of ‘chemistry’ with the worker. The criteria used to evaluate this ‘chemistry’ are very opaque and employers find it very difficult to define or specify them. But it is possible to reveal that the main aspects valued regard the worker’s attitude and body: someone that does not ask in too much detail about the specificities of her role (willing to do anything), does not ask for special demands (free days or not wanting to use a uniform), and with visual good hygiene (employers look at their teeth, hands, fingernails). It is difficult for them to define these criteria because what they are looking for is an abstract idea that you may only learn in time. Employers say they try to look in this interview if the worker is a good person, or if they have a ‘good heart’. Having a good heart means: being a caring and noble person, honest and trustworthy, responsible and professional, genuinely wanting to do her job, maybe with poor education but wanting to learn. Thus, a good chemistry is when employers are able to see in a worker’s body their *goodness*, embodying employers’ expectations of subordination.

‘When I am interviewing them I look at their hands, their teeth, how they are dressed, they need to be decent, I won’t bring an ugly women to my house, I know my kids and husband, they won’t like it. I look at them.’ (Teresa, 56 years, employer).

‘You see faces, but you need to see their hearts, I test them on a daily basis. You can even see it in the interview, if they look like a good person, with good disposition, some people you know have a good heart. You need to see if she is a good person from within, trustworthy, loyal, responsible.’ (Teresa, 56 years, employer).

Once the worker is employed, a period of ‘settlement’ and ‘training’ begins, which occurs mainly within the first six months. Employers train workers on how to use electrical appliances, the organisation of the house (timetables), distribution of duties, how the employers like their food to be prepared or their laundry to be done, and much more. According to employers, workers must be willing to learn, and they have to ‘want’, ‘like’, ‘care’ for their work. As Monica narrates, employers desire workers’ emotional attachment to their jobs and with the family:

‘I teach them how I like things to be done, first the kitchen, then the bedrooms, then the toilets and then the rest of the house, I tell them the day of laundry, and the menu for the week. I even teach them how to cook because my children can be picky. But some of them don’t want to learn, they are not interested, they do it with anger, obligation, only because they need to work, not because they care.’ (Monica, 39 years, employer).

But employers also teach workers the ‘family’s values’, as a way of accommodating their personality to the households, bringing them closer to the family. For example, they will tell workers that it is good for children to play outside, that way they are healthier, or the importance of having family dinners. Both activities – described by employers as ‘family values’ – require a specific organisation of the house and different (invisible) tasks to be carried out in order for them to be reproduced, and workers need to learn these tasks in order to engage with the family. If the above moments are ‘successful’, employers expect workers to *hallarse* (to find their place in the family): both employers and workers accustom themselves (feel comfortable) in their positions and functions within the household. Alejandra narrates her experience of *hallarse* with Alicia:

‘There is a period of adaptation, when Alicia arrived we had to bond. Poor thing, she wanted to leave, it was the first time she was working as a nana, she arrived and the next week we went on holidays to the north, she went with us. My youngest daughter cried all the time so I put her cradle in Alicia’s room, so Alicia also cried for that week, she wanted to leave, but she never told us anything, she later told us, but she let that pass and then she started to get emotionally involved, caring. She adapted to our family. She got accustomed: you need to have feeling with a person, chemistry, to feel comfortable.’ (Alejandra, 43 years, employer).

Emotional bonding between workers and employers becomes essential, as Alejandra explains, to obtain workers’ loyalty and care. The ‘chemistry’ between them is made solid when, according to employers, everyone feels comfortable, the house is working according to the employers’ rules, and

the worker is now trusted. However, being comfortable does not necessarily mean that workers' needs are met – rather, that workers adapt, care and create a bond of loyalty with the employer's family.

After being initially seen as threat, a kind of complicity between them is created, and 'chemistry' is only achieved when workers perform their duties with 'authentic motivation', with a smile and 'good disposition'. A way of maintaining this chemistry is for the worker to perform her duties with a 'good face', which makes the employer feel less uncomfortable about having a 'stranger' in the house. The worker has to perform authenticity in her *buena cara* (good face). In addition, the worker must, with time, become a proactive actor within the home. She must take initiative and define what the needs are that must be attended to (if there are too many dirty clothes, it is time to wash them), without leaving her subordinated position. However, in everyday practices, workers' initiatives have to be done under specific conditions. Workers are asked to be appropriate, citing and reproducing a culture of service in modern terms. For example, workers cannot attribute roles that go beyond their status, like inviting friends over, or having too much power over the children. These rules are not necessarily expressed explicitly, and workers get to know them through an interactive game of gestures and faces that show the employers' disapproval or discomfort. According to employers interviewed, both employers and workers have to 'read' each other each morning to see what mood the other is in, and how to interact with them according to their mood. Employers are especially careful with the workers' moods when they have lived a longer time with them and they feel dependant on them. Therefore, with time, workers can transform the dynamic of the family when employers become more dependent on them for everyday activities. This dependency is similar to situations described by Gutiérrez (2010) and Anderson (2000), and it is made stronger when families have young children.

Once the bond is created, a new problem emerges: managing differences between workers, something which is done in different ways. I am interested in looking at how emotional labour is performed by employers to 'attach' workers to their homes, showing the affective character of domestic work. A key strategy to create both closeness and distance with workers is affective labour performed by employers. Older generations criticise younger ones for not doing this affective labour. This affective labour is seen in several ways: from 'treating them well', creating a 'bond of trust', to bringing out workers' 'goodness'. For Carmen (84 years old), doing the work of treating them well influenced workers to stay for long periods, creating a bond of loyalty, a strategy used by older generations as Ray and Qayum (2009) also observe in their study. For her, before (at the

beginning of the 20th century), workers were treated as slaves, but now they are treated much better. This ‘good treatment’ includes training, correcting their ‘rural habits’ and promoting workers using shoes, and combing their hair. This good treatment includes ‘intimate moments’ between workers and employers, and demonstrations of affections, which would make workers feel more comfortable in the house. Thus, although the distinction between workers and employers was more generally evident for Carmen, closeness could also bring many benefits, as workers are also guardians of family secrets.

‘For them to stay ... I think it was the good treatment, we did not treat them as slaves, before people treated the workers very badly, [but] I always ate lunch with them in the dining area if my husband was not around, and still do today. And you treat them well, give them affection, make them feel like they are with their family. You’re living with them and they know everything, everything, the housekeeping, the family’s intimate secrets, they are guardians, and they ended up being friends.’ (Carmen, 84 years, employer).

In the case of Julia (56 years old), having a close relationship with domestic workers is important for many reasons, reflecting continuities and changes in time in relation to older generations. First, it is important because she needs someone that not only cleans and looks after her children and the house, but also because she needs someone upon whom she can rely so that she is able to do her everyday life, to work, have time to spend alone with her husband. The worker’s availability (to stay more hours or to perform other urgent duties) and her loyalty (someone she can trust, that will not steal or treat her children badly) provides employers with the tranquillity of ‘having a life’. Julia comments on the emotional labour she does with domestic workers, a labour defined by both strong control and boundary building, and also the creation of a ‘special bond’ between them based on care and concern for workers’ problems and needs. This emotional work is both invisibilised, defined as a matter of ‘good luck’, and then visibilised as a task that employers need to do in order to have control of the home.¹⁴

Thus, Julia defines herself as a *good patrona*, a good boss, because she becomes fond of her workers without losing limits, unlike younger generations, according to her. She criticises younger

¹⁴ The emotional work employers perform is also contrasted or coordinated with the emotional work workers perform. The creation of a bond of loyalty can also benefit workers and give them power to negotiate permissions and benefits from their work relations, and micro-struggles between workers and employers can emerge (asking the worker to stay longer and workers asking to arrive later the next day). I will further develop this in chapter six.

women who give affection in an incorrect way. For Julia, giving affection and having control over the home is what makes her a good employer and creates a bond of loyalty.

'I'm a good patrona ... What happens is that I am very fond [of them]. Everything is based in the caring, nothing more, helping them when they need support is super important, in every sense of the word, listening to them, helping them economically, not everything has to be just for yourself ... [for others] today there is a much colder relationship, it's like an office.' (Julia, 56 years, employer).

The transformation from a more traditional domestic work to a more ‘office’ and ‘modern’ type of relationship is seen as a problem for the needs and demands of homes. Julia argues that workers do not want to work in live-in conditions and young employers are not doing the work of caring and creating the bond of loyalty. There is a loss of intimacy with workers, expanding the possibilities of ‘anyone’ coming into their homes: drug-addicts, people without any education or decency. Young generations of employers are no longer, according to older employers, doing positive emotional labour – they do not have enough time between the home and their workplaces, therefore they do not create a care relation with workers. By contrast, Julia opines that younger generations give ‘bad love’: love without clear limits on ‘who is the boss’, leading workers to become disloyal, take advantage, and not commit to the family and the children. A second motive for Julia to pursue positive emotional labour as ‘charity labour’ is to try to bring out the ‘goodness’ of workers, their ‘rural characteristics’, reproducing their racialisation. In this sense, workers’ racialisation is performed through employers’ emotional labour.

'I've been lucky. For example, Ana is from the south, good, simple people, with customs of the countryside ... she is from a good family of rural areas; she has something else, not like the girls from urban areas. I have never been robbed. I have friends who have been robbed of everything. But things are given, the opportunity makes the thief, my friend is untidy in that regard. I don't lose my limits, that's why it has never happened to me. I'm always controlling. There was a girl from a poor neighbourhood of Santiago, I tried to help her, I tried to look for the good part. It is charity. They know, they realise because they know they can rely on you, I have never failed. I work a lot for them, they know that. Very few times I have not paid them. When they see you are with them, they open that part, every human being has a good side. I stimulate the good part.' (Julia, 56 years, employer).

The lack of loyalty is caused by employers who do not do the emotional labour of caring for their employers, which also brings out the ‘goodness’ of workers. For Julia, employers have a moral and noble duty of controlling and creating the *good nana*, echoing the 20th century State based call to civilise poor and lost women. This emotional labour is done through everyday surveillance and constant control – an aspect that I further discuss in chapter five – but also through a series of intimate moments between employers and workers, which show how things should be done.

‘Q: And how do you do it?’

A: I don’t know, talk a lot with them. They get to know you, what interests you, what you like. They get to know you and they give in. We talk all the time, I will give them a lot of advice. They’re not your friends, but I advise them about their problems.’ (Julia, 56 years, employer).

Employers describe the workers’ ‘inner goodness’ as a basic aspect for creating loyal and honest relationships, crucial for the reproduction of harmonic, *Chilean happy homes*. Such ‘goodness’ appears thanks to the positive emotional labour that employers themselves perform through conversations, dialogues and moments of listening to workers’ problems. It is through these conversations that the employers also ‘guide’ and ‘teach’ their workers. Thus, if for Carmen doing emotional labour means treating them well, for Julia it means caring and assuring limits.

Similar to Julia, Carolina describes workers’ inner goodness in terms of loyalty, hard work and honesty. For her, this goodness appears, or is put into work within their homes, thanks to the emotional labour employers do in very intimate situations and conversations and also by training them, both in the sense of correcting their faults (for example, the use of rural language) and teaching them things that are new for them (such as cooking new recipes).

‘When I had a nana from the south, she would speak very badly, she used bad language, so I had to tell her how to speak, and she learnt, she became a better person.’ (Carolina, 57 years, employer).

‘When the nana arrived, we told her she had to save money for her house and she did. We did the same with another nana but she lent the money to her son who lost it all. You try to transmit these kinds of values, they see how you work, how you do it, but some don’t learn.’ (Carolina, 57 years, employer).

If older generations thought they could draw out the ‘goodness’ of workers through ‘good treatment’, younger women (between 30 and 50 years old) tend to reformulate the ‘salvation’

discourse in the rhetoric of ‘comprehension’. Due to the important activities that domestic workers perform in Javiera’s home, she articulates a rhetoric of ‘comprehension’ of her workers. By ‘putting herself in their shoes’, Javiera suggests she ‘understands’ how difficult and important their work is. This understanding is materialised in economic ‘gifts’ in order to ‘keep them happy’. These gifts are justified on her own criteria of fairness, and how the happiness of workers influences workers’ performance and continuity in the home. I suggest there is a definition of ‘good work conditions equal workers’ loyalty’ (neoliberal mechanism of labour control), but justified in a religious semantic that self-defines Javiera as a just and fair person, giving continuity to the culture of servitude and to the salvation discourse of the mid 20th century in contemporary households. Thus, workers are not only racialised through employers’ emotional labour, but also through employers’ self-definition as saviours.

‘My husband always reminds me to put myself in their shoes, who would want to live the life of another every day? They are super cared for in this house, that’s why they stay. I make mistakes like every human being, and I ask for their forgiveness. They always have to leave before the time and I understand them but I ask them not to leave, I am fair, I try to make them feel comfortable. This year I bought them tickets to see their family, I try to keep them happy. One of them wants to bring her daughter, I think it’s going to be difficult because she is going to be asking for more permissions, and I don’t think I can say no, but this doesn’t work for me so I will dismiss her. I understand her, I am a mom, but with the new law it’s going to be difficult.’ (Javiera, 43 years, employer).

Although Javiera wants to be fair and ‘take care’ of her workers (not by doing emotional labour as older generations did, but by giving good work and economic conditions), she is also keen on marking limits and boundaries between her and the workers. These boundaries can be related to the ways she wants workers to behave within the home’s rules, and regarding cultural and social differences between the family and workers. In relation to everyday living and home rules, Javiera struggles to maintain certain order, finding explicit and implicit ways of letting workers know what is proper and what is not allowed in her home.

‘I learned how to put boundaries, the first time I made a timetable, a list of things to do with the children, and rules like any food that is closed cannot be eaten, because food would disappear, and I had this for family events. If there is a cake they can eat, but only if it’s open already, these are my codes. These limits weren’t that explicit.’ (Javiera, 43 years, employer).

While implicit and explicit rules (such as being able to eat certain foods) boundaries and forms of surveillance are built upon employers' expectations of the proper behaviours of workers, certain cultural features are 'allowed' as long as they remain 'neutral' and, therefore, do not present a threat to the home and the employer's values. Javiera does not mind domestic workers being 'different' or having their own religion if they keep it to themselves.

'She is a religious woman, we haven't talked about it but we have similar values, like respect. My family believes in the harmonic family life. It's not that talked about. We try to be understanding. She can have other customs but I haven't perceived too many differences. Those who have been different have left.' (Javiera, 43 years, employer).

These strategies, performed by an employer who wishes to 'understand' and maintain a domestic worker over time, are bound in a specific problem, a fear of losing her status and lifestyle, and thus, becoming trapped. Therefore, she transfers her own 'slavery' to the workers.

Another way of performing positive emotional labour with domestic workers is through imitation, which is an aspect positively valued by older generations (Carmen, Julia and Carolina) but very highly criticised by younger generations (Marta), becoming a key aspect in understanding the shifts in domestic relations in a more 'modern' Chile, where class distinctions are blurred and closeness becomes a point of danger. Thus, the closeness produced by workers' imitation of employers' attitudes (ways of speaking, among others) produces tension for the younger generations, those who seemingly do not know how or do not like to create affective relations without losing the boundaries.

For younger generations imitation is not necessarily seen as a form of training, but as a form of 'becoming' or coming closer to the employer. This closeness is an uncomfortable situation for employers, a situation described by Saldaña (2013) as related to the ambiguity of domestic workers. In Marta's narrative, there is a language of objects towards workers, for example when she says, 'we brought her from the south' or 'I don't remember how she came to me'. This perspective also includes a 'taking care of', especially in the case of a young girl that arrived at her home sent by her mother from the south, a girl who wanted to study but who discovered the 'urban night life'. Marta performed a 'carer' role with her but did not feel comfortable having to assume this role. This is a turning point in distinction from older generations who would have willingly received this young

woman to train her, or return her if things were not working; in either case the emotional labour of employers was performed, while Marta has a certain level of resistance to doing this labour.

'We brought a girl who came to us, she came from the south, she was very young and she studied at night to finish high school. She was 18 years old. I do not remember how she arrived, a friend or someone. Her intention was to work but to have permission to study. I only needed her during the day and she could study at night. It was the first year, she was doing not so well in school. I trusted her a lot, I was young too. One day I woke up to see that she wasn't in her bed. She should be home at 11.30pm; she arrived at 2.30am drunk. She arrived in Santiago and went crazy ... because she lived in my house, we felt a little responsible for her, I worried if she didn't come at night, I had to start controlling. When I found out I called her to attention, the next day she had to get up and be in charge of my daughter, I was not interested in my daughter seeing her like that.' (Marta, 45 years, employer).

Her account of having to dismiss this worker is justified by the worker's nonconformity, drinking, and lack of study habits. Marta felt uncomfortable not only of assuming a motherly role, but also that her daughter was in contact with the young worker, leading to the young girl's dismissal. Marta told me she did not spend too much time training workers, and we could argue that this meant that after her experience with this young girl she did not want to get too involved, preferring more efficient and older women who rapidly understood what and how she desired her home. Through a combination of surveillance and distant conversation, Marta performed something different than the emotional labour done by older generations, which could represent a shift in upper-class women's subjectivities regarding their relations with the house. Because she worked in an office in the centre of Santiago, she did not want to spend too much time on issues concerned with the home. I suggest a shift from the more 'home orientated' subjectivity of older generations who, even though they worked outside their homes, still felt it was their responsibility to reproduce the family and their marriage, all possible by employing a good domestic worker, to a younger generation's tendency to privilege their autonomy without losing the sexual and class division of labour in their households.

'Other nanas learned quickly, I would explain to them how I wanted things done. Simple meals and I will tell her the menu. I would explain how I liked the cleaning, the toilets, but I also let them be, I am not too picky. I get bored when they ask too many questions, I let them be. I give them some instructions, and I call them if I need anything. I know that when you are in the house they do their job better, but ...' (Marta, 45 years, employer).

For Marta, distance is a key strategy in managing her relationship with domestic workers. For example, she does not like to get too involved in their lives and does not mind if workers are ‘different’ if they keep it to themselves and maintain silence.

‘In my old house we had two nanas, one of them was an evangelist, she had long hair, but she was discreet, very good. She would bring her religious readings but she didn’t talk too much, she was very submissive, we had no problems with her.’ (Marta, 45 years, employer).

Distance is also a strategy to confront workers’ imitation. Marta tells us the story of Ana, a Mapuche woman who came to work for her and who started to change her desires and practices, and to admire – according to Marta – her employer’s ways and life.

‘She came from the south, she was ugly, she had a problem in her nose, and she didn’t see anything, she wore huge glasses. I took her to the doctor, she wanted to get contact lenses, she would tell me what she wanted and she would pay me in little amounts. She would leave herself very little money and the rest she would send to her home. She got contact lenses, she started to change, and then started her need to have everything I had. This is typical, it always happens with nanas. She would go away for the weekend and come back with a t-shirt the same as mine. She was smart because she would negotiate her salary, and she was good at it. She had an account in the pharmacy, a special card. She would buy, and she really liked body creams. At one point she started taking pills to lose weight, she would spend half her money in the pharmacy. She felt fat, she would take medicine, go jogging, she asked me for authorisation to use the gym of the building, she would go at nights, and she dyed her hair brunette, she had very dark black hair. She would spend too much money, which always caught my attention. I always had the feeling she wanted to be like me, everyone would tell me. She admired me, she was grateful but ... nanas want to be the patrona, it’s an extreme admiration, it’s pathetic, odd, she wanted to change. I thought she wanted to live a life that was not for her.’ (Marta, 45 years, employer).

If for Carmen, Julia and other employers from older generations, imitation was a way of training workers, for younger generations imitation is a threat, the threat of employers and workers becoming equals. The worker was changing her social position within the home. Marta’s distancing from the worker is maintained by arguing how ridiculous the worker was acting, and by assuming a superior position. Marta would advise the worker, worrying about her changes and how

she started to be less preoccupied with her poor mother in the south. Marta's discomfort with the worker's imitations and changing process can be interpreted as her difficulties in dealing with closeness and the change of status that it supposed, which could become a threat to their class distinctions. Thus, imitation can be positive or negative, or an effect of emotional labour. Employers may both desire and reject workers' assimilation to the 'home's culture', both want and not want them to distance themselves from their employers' status and lifestyle. I argue that imitation can work as an advantage or disadvantage for the reproduction of the elite's lifestyle, and for the creation of power relations. either way, it presents an issue that needs to be negotiated. Imitation is accepted when domestic work acts as a performative site of the culture of servitude and rejected when boundaries and hierarchies between workers and employers are questioned.

Conclusions

Through the stories of the employers we have seen how the figure of the *Chilean happy family* is experienced by them as a moral imperative and a personal desire. I argue that employers manage this desire, along with the 'modern' promise of greater autonomy, by hiring a domestic worker who not only assumes housewives' labour, but also all activities necessary for the reproduction of bourgeois lifestyle. Workers' labour, thus, not only reproduces the status of upper classes but also the figure of the *Chilean happy family* through the continuity of a culture of servitude in modern times within households, demonstrating the performative and affective power of domestic work in the production of national and class imaginaries. I suggest that in order for this process to be possible, employers perform positive emotional labour with workers, labour which allows for boundaries between them to be clear, for workers to care and devote themselves to the employers' families and for employers to be more autonomous without losing their domestic role within society.

Paid domestic work becomes, thus, an exceptional case in the study of the *Chilean happy family* as an ideological device of neoliberal Chile, which guides the desire of subjects with the promise of the modern dream: women's autonomy. However, as shown in employers' narratives, this promise is complex and full of contradictions, which are managed within the relationships with domestic workers. While domestic workers are the condition of possibility for the modern dream, relationships with them become uneasy in everyday interactions. This complexity is based in a

specific expectation – having *good nanas* in order to have a good life – that is not always met or easy to accomplish. Having *good nanas*, that is, a modern notion of *servants* with motivation and authentic care, who know their subordinated place, is a difficult labour that requires strategies based on emotional and boundary work, and which echo the salvation discourses of the 20th century in modern terms. In addition, this labour also carries the feminised and racialised legacies of domestic work by normalising the inferior position of workers and the emotional labour both employers and workers are compelled to perform. Achieving ‘chemistry’ is, in part, possible due to employers and workers’ willingness to adapt to families’ rules and organisation, and a key strategy that employers’ use is emotional labour with workers, one which may include caring, listening, but also teaching them how to assimilate or imitate families’ culture. In the next chapter I look into more conflictive relationships between workers and employers, especially where workers are defined as *bad nanas* due to their origin and sexual practices.

CHAPTER 5: BAD NANAS: DIFFERENCE AND THE PROBLEMS OF ORIGIN AND SEXUALITY

Talking to employers about domestic workers.

As argued in the previous chapter, paid domestic work is described by employers as a necessity for the reproduction of their lifestyles, a condition which I interpreted as a marker of their class status. Domestic work has the performative power of concealing the contradictions of the neoliberal Chilean promises: having a *Chilean happy family* and, at the same time, of the figure of the ‘modern women’ without fully questioning the sexual and racial division of labour within homes and society. In this chapter, I propose to analyse the performative power of domestic work in concealing other social contradictions regarding employers’ ‘origins’, which becomes evident in the tensions provoked in employers by racial, ethnic and sexual difference between employers and workers. These contradictions refer to, on the one hand, employers’ self-definition as racially different from workers, and on the other, employers’ anxiety when they see, feel or are perceived as ‘too similar’ and ‘not that different’ from racialised workers.

As stated in the introduction of this thesis, domestic workers are not ‘as different’ from employers as they could have been up to the mid 20th century. Today workers do not necessarily come from rural backgrounds, but from urban settings, and with good education levels, especially in the case of Peruvian immigrants (Stefoni, 2002). With processes of modernisation, migration, and neoliberal discourses, the idea that anybody can become upper class, if they ‘work enough’, has become ‘common sense’, enabling a blurring of social and economic differences between employers and workers. This apparent closeness – as social differences based on economic income is still very strong in Chile – between employers and workers is the context within which new ways of differentiation between upper and lower classes are rearticulated today. New strategies within contemporary upper and middle classes are created to sustain their supposedly unmarked bodies. However, together with analysing these new strategies, which are the product of a more ‘equal society’, I propose to question this apparent ‘new’ closeness in contemporary Chile by arguing that employers’ and workers’ racial and ethnic difference has always been more a social marker than a factual reality. It is a social marker based on the performativity of moral notions of whiteness, a normative definition that has never been clear-cut and requires its constant reproduction in everyday life for it to become a cruel promise.

Saldaña (2013) suggests, in the case of Mexico, that domestic workers, regardless of their ethnic and racial ascriptions, are discriminated against on the basis of colonial imaginaries regarding the

racialisation of domestic service, one defined as indigenous and black women's labour. In this chapter, I suggest that workers in Chile are also racialised, besides their ethnic and racial identifications. This is not only due to the racialisation of this labour (Gutiérrez, 2010), but also to the need for people of the upper-class to differentiate themselves from workers. As Stoler (1995) argues, the production of the European self was the product of intimate and everyday relations and boundary work between colonisers and their internal others – servants. Similarly, in the case of Chile, I suggest, employers interviewed racialise domestic workers in order to perform their own whiteness.

While upper and lower classes have different economic and social conditions – based on structural forms of inequality – and therefore have different access to goods and privileges, they are not 'that different or distant' regarding racial and ethnic background (as employers suggest they are). At the very least, employers have complex relations with their 'origin'. Mestizaje was a process initiated between colonisers and the indigenous population from the beginning of the conquest of Chile. Children born with indigenous mothers and European fathers, and later from European mothers and indigenous fathers, became a widespread reality from early on (Peña, 1944). While the very small elite tended to close up its kinship relations (Vicuña, 2001), the rest of the emerging upper and middle classes were the product of the mestizaje process but tried to be part of the supposedly homogeneous racial whiteness, whose representative was the small elite.

Differently from the Mexican case, the Chilean elite did not celebrate the mestizaje process, and rather a European version of their racial identity was appropriated (Subercaseaux, 2002). A homogenous racial identity was promoted, especially in the 19th and 20th centuries, where the elite and upper classes assumed whiteness as their natural condition. This Europeanised desire, I argue, exists still today in a more complex and diverse upper-class, who still desire to be identified as white – reproducing a normative definition of their racial superiority. I suggest, upper classes today, as in the past, require the constant performative act of differentiating with the rest of society and with their internal others (domestic workers) in order to reproduce their racial and social distinction. Through a culture of servitude, employers shelter such distinction. It is the 'closeness' between upper and lower classes that has provoked, and still does, anxiety within upper-class families, the employment of an *other* racialised domestic worker – and the constant need for differentiation with her – being a key strategy of concealment of such mestizo origin.

Closeness with domestic workers, therefore, was – and still is – both the condition of possibility and the constant threat to employers’ racial and class status. In fact, I suggest that employers’ constant need to perform their distance from workers makes evident the power and fragility of such ‘difference’ between employers and workers, in terms of racial and ethnic ‘origin’. The fear of similarity or closeness is grounded in historical ‘wounds’ relating to the upper classes’ ‘origins’ – that is, poor and mestizo – and transformations in time, which is rearticulated today in everyday practices based on a culture of servitude that intends to conceal such origins.

I suggest that when difference and distance are questioned by workers or by others in specific situations, employers reinforce their status by performing a series of actions and articulating narratives of differentiation with workers, with the aim of showing their ‘authentic’ employer condition: that is, their racial and ethnic superiority. Authenticity, as I argued in chapter four, is related to a normative and moral definition of the *good nana* – one that ‘genuinely’ desires and loves her inferior position within the employer’s home – and intertwined with a romantic notion of the other and the past, rather than with a real or ‘original’ (Butler, 1999) *servant*, demonstrating the performative power of this labour. In addition, employers defined the authentic *servant* in moral terms as the *good nana* and, as I will develop in chapter six, workers’ performance of this label can be both a form of reproduction and tension of normative notions of domestic work.

In this chapter, I analyse the anxieties that arise from closeness with workers and the effect of employers’ need to perform the *authentic employer*, a notion based on a normative definition of the elite grounded on its ‘natural’ condition of wealth and whiteness. In addition, I explore how closeness becomes a threat with those who do not ‘fit’ this norm or are not ‘as different’ as employers desire them to be – defined in moral terms as *bad nanas*, and racialised as different because of cultural ‘origins’ and sexual practices.

Feeling trapped, disgusted and uncomfortable

In interviews with employers one could perceive that, while paid domestic work was considered a necessity for the reproduction of their lifestyles, and therefore needed to be constantly available, there was always a complex and tense sensation regarding the daily presence of workers in employers’ homes. Employers expressed this tension in relation to their dependency on workers, their work, and their emotional support. This dependency made them feel uncomfortable with the

very presence of workers and with the power relations articulated in everyday practices. As Romero (1992) and Ray and Qayum (2009) describe, closeness and distance become key aspects of constant negotiations between employers and workers. Needs, dependency, and forms of differentiation are often articulated within employer-worker relationships. As is the case of Francisca, many employers interviewed feel trapped by having to manage limits with workers because of the affective dimension.

'... regardless of whether she is living in your house or not, there is a topic of coexistence that is fucked up, it is difficult to set the limit. On the other hand, [domestic work] is a job but they do everything, they do much more. And there is an affective issue that is complicated and it has me trapped.' (Francisca, 45 years, employer).

Gutiérrez (2014) and Saldaña (2013) have also shown the complex ways in which the management of closeness is produced within intimate spaces, and how affects such as disgust and anger are transmitted between workers and employers, reproducing the subordinated condition of workers. Together with understanding these affects as crucial evidence of the complex social relations within homes, I suggest we also observe these as echoing employers' conflictive relations with their own status as employers. The danger of closeness, or employers' emotional attachments to workers, was widely present in employers' narratives, who tended to define this as a trapping situation. However, employers did not only feel trapped, uncomfortable and wished to put limits on the affective aspect of their relationship with workers, they also felt in danger: in danger of being imitated too much by workers, of workers becoming too close or too similar to employers. Marta (as quoted in the previous chapter) explains her experience with her 'pathetic' worker:

'She came from the south, she was ugly, she had a problem in her nose, and she didn't see anything, she wore huge glasses. I took her to the doctor, she wanted to get contact lenses, she would tell me what she wanted and she would pay me in little amounts. She would leave herself very little money and the rest she would send to her home. She got contact lenses, she started to change, and then started her need to have everything I had, this is typical, it always happens with nanas, she would go away for the weekend and come back with a t-shirt the same as mine. She was smart because she would negotiate her salary, and she was good at it. She had an account in the pharmacy, a special card. I would just look at her, she would buy, and she really liked body creams. At one point she started taking pills to lose weight, she would spend half her money in the pharmacy. She felt fat, she would take medicine, go jogging, she asked me for authorisation to use the gym of the building, she

would go at nights, and she dyed her hair brunette, she had very dark black hair. She would spend too much money, which always caught my attention. I always had the feeling she wanted to be like me, everyone would tell me. She admired me, she was grateful but ... nanas want to be the patrona, it's an extreme admiration, it's pathetic, odd, she wanted to change. I thought she wanted to live a life that was not for her.' (Marta, 45 years, employer).

Workers wanting to ‘be like employers’ are seen as *pathetic, weird, deviant servants*, pretending the ‘impossible’: the complete erasure of their class, ethnic and racial difference and origin. Employers trapped and disgusted by workers’ *extreme admiration*, develop a narrative in which they desire for workers to wear a uniform, eat in different places than the rest of the family, or even eat different foods, all actions indicative of employers’ desire for workers to be visibly different, distant from the rest of the family and racially *others*. As described in chapter four, workers are encouraged to ‘neutralise their difference’ and perform the authentic *servant*. However, the complete disappearance of such difference is not the aim, and neither is the complete imitation. Workers could imitate employers’ rituals and habits – the ways of setting the table and greeting visitors, enabling the reproduction of their everyday lives – but they could not imitate them, they could not try to be them. This complex dichotomy of desiring some forms of imitation while not endangering their difference is what makes employers like Francisca feel trapped, and employers like Marta disgusted.

Employers’ emotional and affective reactions towards these deviant *servants* led me to try and understand what is really in danger when limits are lost, and why ‘difference’ is so important for the reproduction of both domestic work relationships and the status of upper-class families. In my search for the ‘exceptionality’ of domestic work and the relationships between employers and workers in the Chilean case, I found fewer answers than questions, provoking me to propose new lines of interpretation on how to understand class, racial and ethnic difference in a country where little attention has been given to the study of both the elite and of racism (Feliu, 2014). Through my readings of historical and sociological studies of the reproduction of the elite and upper classes in Chile (Vicuña, 2001; Peña, 1944; Pinto, 2003; Góngora, 1970; Thumala, 2007; Joignant and Güell, 2011)¹⁵, I became more curious about the limited number of studies focused on upper classes, and became convinced of the relevance of proposing critical analysis of their reproduction in everyday lives in relation with their internal others to understand the conditions and the fragility of their

¹⁵ For a complete and expanded revision of the literature see María Rosaria Stabili (2003) *El Sentimiento Aristocrático. Elites chilenas frente al espejo (1860–1960)*. Santiago: Centro de Investigaciones Diego Barros Arana.

social position. Although this topic has held little interest for the Chilean academia, I propose to interrogate these forms of managing difference in the self-definition of upper classes and their historical wounds. It is in narratives like Macarena's that we can start to observe the importance of racial and class difference for employers' self-definition as superior.

'I have never taken a vulgar or a Mapuche nana. I know my house, my family, we are educated, more European. I'm not going to hire the first one that appears on the street. I have friends who make recommendations to me, but if she is missing a tooth I will not take her because she will not fit in my house.¹⁶ When I select I try to choose the best there is and that's why I pay them better. I'm never going to have a stupid person that does not know anything. I have experience. I will not take nanas that don't know how to speak.' (Macarena, 41 years, employer).

Inspired by employers' narratives about the different class, ethnic and racial background, practices and values between them and workers, defining the latter as uneducated, 'from the street', vulgar, indigenous, and other 'negative classifications', I understood the importance of employers' self-definition as racially and morally superior. While most studies have focused on the reproduction of upper classes within their internal social network, and their impact in the economic and political spheres, I propose to think about their reproduction in their relationship with their internal others within intimate spaces, a reading inspired by understanding of their formation as both conflictive and vulnerable. As recent studies of domestic work suggest (Gutiérrez, 2010; Saldaña, 2013, 2014; Cox, 2006), boundary work and the management of 'difference' is crucial for the understanding of this labour as a microsite of intimate negotiations and reproduction of racial, class and ethnic complex positionings, which emerge as part of historical and contemporary tensions of broader social classifications. One form of negotiating and managing workers' 'difference' is by looking at employers' definition of *bad nanas*.

Bad nanas: differentiating the internal others

Employers suggest that *bad nanas* are untrustworthy and uneducated; features mainly explained by their 'origin': they come from 'problematic' backgrounds – rural, urban, foreign, indigenous, poor – which provides them with 'problematic' behaviours, becoming a danger to the reproduction of the

¹⁶ Missing a tooth is a code that relates to worker's poor and uneducated origin.

family, a danger to children's safety, and to the harmony of the home. If in the definition of *good nanas* 'origin' was a marker of authentic *servants*, in *bad nanas* 'origins' is used towards their racialisation. *Bad nanas*' place of birth or upbringing (rural, urban, or foreign) becomes a subject of tension for employers, and indicative – according to most interviewees – of their alleged violent behaviour, marked by their social class, especially those who come from cities both in Chile and other Latin American countries. Violence is perceived, by employers, as a quasi-natural condition of lower-class families – an 'origin' that workers cannot completely transform, attaching to their bodies a racial and class stigma.

J: I tell my daughters that they should get married young so they can take advantage of the fact that I am also young, energised, able to help them with their children, because I do not know if I would leave them with nanas that come from homes with problems, who have been raped, who have drama, who have been beaten, who are used to things like that, to burn children if they behave badly, terrible.

Q: Could they change?

J: I don't think so, because it's their upbringing, and I believe that after twenty years nobody changes. They can learn from you, but at the moment they get angry they act as how they saw their parents act, and we know how poor and indigenous people act.' (Julia, 56 years, employer).

As is explicit in Julia's narrative, workers' class origins are not only associated with an 'origin of violence', but also with workers' early socialisation with bad practices (such as being accustomed to treating children with violence) driving employers to believe in the inevitability of workers reproducing this original violence. In Julia, racialisation of workers implies the inferiorisation of their origin and their moral behaviour because of their 'violent' origin. Another example where this fear is seen is in the anxiety of having their possessions stolen, which is also understood by employers as a possible effect of workers' 'origin'. Stealing, an action associated with lower-class groups, is explained as an effect of the worker's 'family drama', associating workers' childhoods and private lives with problems of alcoholism or experiences of physical, emotional and sexual abuse within their homes. Thus, their 'origin' is associated with 'criminal behaviour' and, therefore, evil. Workers' supposed upbringing practices and 'family dramas' are seen as a threat to the performance of their duties. By defining workers' origins as violent, criminal and, even evil, employers self-define as free from 'drama', reassuring their moral superiority – a product of their class status. Thus, employers racial superiority is performed through workers' racialisation.

Antonia, for example, faced with the impossibility of dealing with her workers' origins, decided to dismiss both of them and end the drama in her house.

'I started losing things because the nana's daughter [who also worked as a nana in my house] started dating the guard of a building and she started bringing this man to my house, and then I lost a ring ... The girl was smart ... could have had another future, but she did what poor girls do, being with bad men. This man had children in Peru, it was a drama. I felt sorry for the girl because she could have become more in life. And her mother was economically supporting her husband who was an alcoholic who did not work. She became bitter and one day, as a result of a lot of fights, I told both of them to leave. It was a bad farewell because I told her to go to hell. I am not like this, my family is not like this, we are different.' (Antonia, 44 years, employer).

Employers are also concerned with workers' hygiene practices (such as showering every day or using too much oil in meals), especially in those who come from poor peripheral sectors of Santiago or *bad* neighbourhoods in Lima, Peru. Employers admit that during the work interview they evaluate workers' hands, nails and teeth to check if they pass employers' hygiene requirements, defining themselves as clean and with good hygiene.

'The Peruvian nana asked me if the children showered every day! Obviously they do! It's disgusting if you don't. After that, I supposed she understood that she also had to bathe every day. I never experienced a bad smell, I would say something to her if I did. I notice their nails, hands, dirt when I interviewed them. I look at them a lot in the interviews, even if they are recommended, but if they have a bad face I'm sorry, my husband and my children are like me too.¹⁷ If a fat nana arrives, the children will be disgusted.' (Macarena, 41 years, employer).

Feelings of disgust with workers' hygiene practices, or even with workers' weight, appears in many narratives; though not always as bluntly as in the case of Macarena. Furthermore, not only class but also national and racial origins are elements that generate anxiety in employers. According to Julia, foreign women are different and, apparently, do not have the same *good* habits as rural Chilean girls (clean, hardworking, honest and noble) described in chapter four.

¹⁷ Having a bad face refers to workers' poor and mestizo origin.

'My mom had a very affectionate Ecuadorian girl, but as time went on we went into the kitchen and it was all full of grease, dirty, I opened the refrigerator, it was disgusting. My parents were old but they were not dirty. Even the cheese was rotten.' (Julia, 56 years, employer).

'People who lived far from the cities in rural areas did not have opportunities to go to school, and their customs ... they contrast a lot with us, they were a little dirty.' (Carmen, 84 years, employer).

For Julia, black and Ecuadorian women have bad hygiene practices in relation to the employer's expectations, while for Carmen rurality can be considered a marker of workers' dirtiness, but also of employers' cleanliness, good customs and superior hygiene habits. I suggest, that these *bad nanas* represent, for employers, a group of racialised women without much knowledge of hygiene and cleanliness, becoming a problem for the management of the *Chilean happy family* and bringing a danger of contamination (Douglas, 2002). But rather than being a real marker of a problem, origin is used in positive (as in the figure of the *good nana*) or negative ways regarding other anxieties: workers' closeness. As Saldaña (2014) suggests, the problem is not only that 'they' have 'bad practices', but that they could contaminate the 'purity' of employers' homes and, as I argue, they can put in danger the performance of the *Chilean happy family* and of racial differences. I will later discuss how the fear of contamination is more evident regarding the sexualisation of these *bad nanas*, but for now it is important to state that the problem of contamination is also related to racial contamination (Stoler, 1995), provoking employers to reassert their class and racial status, and their difference from workers. The definition of these women as *bad nanas* because of their origin and hygiene is a way for employers to self-define as racially superior.

As Stoler analyses in the case of servants in North America (Stoler, 1995) or in the case of servants in Dutch colonies (Stoler, 2009), the fear of contamination from servants' practices, lifestyles, cultural beliefs, and values within employers' homes was also a way in which these homes, colonisers and the society in the metropolis in general defined themselves as racially superior. I argue that the interviews with employers, and their narratives about *bad nanas*, show them defining themselves as superior both in race and class.

Diverse types of differentiation and inferiorisation of domestic workers may take diverse forms. In this production of difference, dirt and pollution become key themes to justify and naturalise difference. Scholars have argued that domestic labour produces social distinctions organised around dirt, bodies and intimacies (Ally, 2011, 2013; Boris and Parrenas, 2010; Cox, 2007; Saldaña, 2013). Inspired by the works of Mary Douglas (2002 [1966]) and her thesis about how purity/impurity is a

distinction that generates boundaries and rituals of separation, these scholars have shown how dirt, impurity and pollution are part of the classification, racialisation and inferiorisation processes lived by domestic workers. Dirt, in the case of paid domestic work and in relation to the performativity of race (Tate, 2005), is an element used to produce difference and for employers to perform their whiteness by defining workers as dirty and from bad origins. Campkin and Cox (2007) argue that dirt reflects collective desires and anxieties, becoming a moral problem that constructs racial otherness. Together with defining workers as racially other, employers also gain social status.

As I have described above, narratives about workers' difference – marked by origin (indigenous, rural, ethnic, racial or foreign) – become a source for the definition of workers in negative ways. These normative narratives not only define workers as other, but also reflect employers' self-definition as racially superior. Difference and otherness can be expressed in moral and binary terms (good or bad), and in the case of domestic work, these moral definitions are both invisible (workers are asked to assimilate to the family's everyday life) and visible (workers cannot be 'similar' to employers), reproducing the worker's difference and the employers' unmarkedness and racial superiority. I suggest that the performative power of domestic work not only relies on employing racialised women, who are other, but also by managing their 'difference' in moral terms in order for employers to define themselves as the racial national norm. Thus, as I showed in chapter four, *good nanas* are those who 'assimilate' to the employers' homes and are perceived as *servants*, *bad nanas* become those workers considered and defined by employers as untrustworthy, dirty, not authentic *servants* and a threat to the family, to the continuity of a culture of servitude in modern times, and to their social position of privilege.

Bad nanas are defined by ethnic, racial and class distinctions between employers and workers, and within workers. Moral definitions of *bad nanas*, defined by their 'origins': indigenous, rural, poor and migrant, reflect a self-definition of employers as 'better', 'whiter', 'clean', and more 'civilised', a condition of the culture of servitude where employers are seen as those capable of civilising domestic workers. These distinctions become crucial for the reproduction of power relations within homes and within employer–workers relations, becoming 'natural' justifications of their different social status. These distinctions are described in a 'moral' rhetoric, which enables employers to justify their 'exceptionality' and perform boundary work for the protection of the 'good nationals' (the upper classes). This 'exceptionality' is a strategy of appropriating racial and class superiority and, at the same time, concealing their historical wounds.

Whiteness as the norm and upper-class wounds

As mentioned in the introduction, I suggest a reading of the distant/close relationships between employers and workers – and of the definition of *bad nanas* in opposition to employers' *good origin* – that focuses on how these relations are affected, in part, by the upper classes' self-definition as whiter than the rest of society. I argue that this self-definition is motivated by employers' historical wounds, wounds related to the disavowal of their mestizo origin; an origin that suggests the possibility of similarity between them and workers. It is this disavowal that is reflected in employers' relations with workers.

These wounds, as I will discuss further below, are grounded in the poor and mestizo origin of the Chilean upper classes, an emerging group that only found economic wealth during the 18th and 19th centuries (long after the settlement of Santiago in 1540), and which has gradually transformed into a more ethnically mixed group. Before describing these wounds, I will explain the context within which they were generated, and the construction of whiteness and wealth as the norm of 'superiority' in the Latin American context.

Whiteness (as the norm) and the wounds of mestizo and poor origin in Chilean upper classes are created in a 'scene'. Taylor (2003), suggests the existence of an 'original scene' in Latin America, based on western narratives related to the 'discovery' and colonisation of the territory, which created a specific scenario defined by gender and racial distinctions: whiteness and wealth became the norm and symbols of superiority, while poorness and mestizaje became symbols of inferiority. This original scene, articulated in specific ways in each part of the territory, is marked by a coloniality of power (Quijano, 2000), by a 'modern-colonial gender system' (Lugones, 2008), and the processes of mestizaje (Montecino, 2007; Segato, 2010). The marginalisation of these elements from studies of domestic work and of upper classes in the Chilean case reflects how race and ethnicity are 'complex' and 'silenced' aspects of social analysis (Feliu, 2014). However, I argue, they constitute essential historical genealogies that enable us to analyse the performative power of domestic work in the construction of class, racial and ethnic difference.

According to the Peruvian sociologist Anibal Quijano (2000), 'coloniality of power' offers an understanding of the racial, class and labour organisation of Latin America articulated with the Spanish conquest.

'America was constituted as the first space/time of a new model of power of global vocation, and both, in this way and by it, it became the first identity of modernity. Two historical processes associated in the production of that space/time converged and established the two fundamental axes of the new model of power. One was the codification of the differences between conquerors and conquered in the idea of 'race', a supposedly different biological structure that placed some in a natural situation of inferiority to the others ... On this basis, the population of America, and later the world, was classified within the new model of power. The other process was the constitution of a new structure of control of labor and its resources and products.' (Quijano, 2000; 533–4).

This new world order not only created new subjectivities and forms of differentiation based on racial distinctions, defining whiteness as a symbol of superiority, but also a racial division of labour that enabled the economic and political control of the population. Through the relation salary–labour, a new form of domination emerged. Paid labour became a privilege of whites, while non-paid or underpaid work and slavery was associated with ‘inferior races’. Indigenous and local people of America were defined as racially ‘inferior’ due to their ‘distance’ from the ‘white norm’ and were integrated to work positions labelled also by this quality. In this sense, racialised bodies and labour control became part of a complex system of domination based on salary, where first colonisers and later criollos appropriated the power to exploit the ‘inferior’ labour force (Anzaldúa, 1987; Quijano, 2000).

This new labour system not only defined ‘others’ as inferior, but also the elite and upper classes (first Spanish and later local criollos) as superior and, therefore, with the natural right to possess and control low-valued labour. This scheme is rearticulated through time right up to today (Segato, 2010; Rivera, 2010); however, what Quijano’s scheme does not necessarily focus on is that these ‘differences’ between superior and inferior subjects and labours becomes more complex in a changing society marked by mestizaje – one where ‘visible’ racial distinctions become less obvious. Although upper classes in Latin America and in Chile still reproduce themselves within their tight kinship networks, their ‘lighter’ skin is not a given: new groups have entered the upper classes and there is more diversity. Therefore, more practices and strategies are needed within the new upper classes to distinguish themselves from the rest of society. In addition, with the notion of a ‘modern-colonial gender system’ (Lugones, 2008), it is possible to further question Quijano’s scheme and think about the relationship between this class and racial matrix and gendered forms of social organisation. For Lugones (2008), the racial axis does not fully explain the new social order shaped by colonisation, criticising Quijano’s ‘biologist perspective’ in relation to gender.

'I think in his work Quijano implies that gender difference is constituted in the disputes over control of the sex, its resources and products. Differences are configured through the way in which this control is organised. Quijano understands sex as a biological attribute that becomes developed as social categories.' (Lugones, 2008; 83) (author's translation).

According to Lugones (2008), both gendered and racial distinctions create the 'new' subjects (oppressor/oppressed), suggesting that this 'original scene' is both racialised and sexualised. Categories such as 'European', '*indio*' and 'black' were built upon racial ideologies that were, as well, gendered. Black servants, indigenous female *lavanderas*, and male rural *peones* are all racialised and sexualised categories that appear in the conquest and colonial scene, that normalise the inferiority of indigenous women and men while defining racial superiority to others in particular ways. Thus, black, indigenous and European women and men had different social positions in relation to gendered racial distinctions, and racially marked women become seen as appropriate for 'dirty work' (Anderson, 2000). This 'class' system – which is installed in Latin America through the ethnic, racial and sexual division of labour – ensures the incorporation of slaves – rural, immigrant and poor women – into service work (including domestic work) as a natural condition for the reproduction of colonisers' lifestyles and class/racial status. As Gutiérrez (2010) argues, domestic work still carries these colonial legacies of feminisation and racialisation today.

In addition, what was constructed in the colonial period was not only the subordination of women, and especially non-white women, but also the sexual dichotomy man/woman, heterosexuality and patriarchy as social norms that are rearticulated until today. In this sense, it was through coloniality of power that traditional normative gender order was constructed, justifying the power of colonisers' families, men's power over women, and the racialisation of women by making them 'invisible' and 'inferior'. I suggest that this 'scene' is an important antecedent to the 'moral' distinction of upper-class families and of women, who are given the role of protector of the family and saviour of the poor, an idea developed in chapter four.

Until now, this scene of racialised and sexualised subjectivities and organisation of labour seems very structured and rigid. It seems to exist as a clear-cut differentiation between colonisers and colonised, between superior and inferior 'races', between us and them. In order to problematise the complex ways in which this scene functioned in everyday practices and has been transformed through time, one must consider the notion of mestizaje: both as the process of mixture between

colonisers and local population, and as the ideology of *blanqueamiento* (whitening) used by the political elite for independence purposes in 19th century Latin America (Leys Stepan, 1991). I will argue that the upper classes' wounds are deeply marked by the processes of mestizaje in both senses.

Gruzinski (2007) suggests that mestizaje – the mixture between people from different territories – appears in the context of violence produced by the violation and abandonment of indigenous women by European men. Mestizaje was a reality early on in the territory and represented the violent racial and sexual side of colonisation; later becoming a widespread practice within Latin America. Although mestizaje could problematise the visible distinction between people, the elite and emerging upper classes had the intention to define themselves as whiter than rest of society, less mixed, and, therefore, superior. Furthermore, in the context of the new colonial settings and mestizaje process, complex forms of racial classification through the *casta* system differentiated people as being closer to the white-European or, at the other end of the hierarchy, black; mestizo – a mixture of indigenous and European – being seen as a superior condition to being indigenous or of the black population (Araya, 2015). However, in an informal conversation during my fieldwork with the historian Celia Cussen, she argued – on the basis of her own research – that in the Chilean case, this *castas* system was less rigid than traditional Chilean historians have led us to believe.

Although scholars in Chile have acknowledged that the entire society was submitted to the mestizaje process, no further analysis has been completed regarding the elite and upper classes' relationship with the notion of mestizaje and origins. I suggest that, in this context, race, ethnicity and gender became social markers that illustrate the colonial imaginaries that divided between those with the right to be served (Spanish and white) and those with the duty to serve (indigenous, mestizo and black). These markers were concealed after the independence processes in Latin America: they become unspeakable, creating an abstract and general notion of the 'non-white' subject (Segato, 2010). With the processes of independence of the region, the local elite used mestizaje in order to create a new subject – one that could conceal its racial origin. By eliminating racial and ethnic differences it contributed to the later process of *blanqueamiento* that enabled the constitution of the new Chilean nation.

These aspects of the 'original scenes' just described (the racial division of labour, the process of mestizaje and sexualised inferior/superior positionings), I argue, create three elements that I wish to develop here. First, whiteness and wealth become the normative symbols of superiority status,

appropriated to begin with by colonisers and later by local elites, and further along by the upper classes. Second, racial and class distinctions are less a fixed and visible reality, and more racialised markers based on ways of ‘having a life’, the intentions of which were to define the elite and upper classes as white and the rest of society as racialised others. Third, racial and class status, being more a marker than a ‘reality’, demonstrates the performative aspect of racial difference within Latin America. Although skin colour is an important factor of differentiation within societies, social distinctions are based more on the practices of differentiation and racialisation than on colour-based differences. This performative aspect of race (Tate, 2005), of whiteness as a norm and not as a reality, creates the constant drive amongst the upper classes to reproduce such differences: a constant intention of showing their authentic whiteness. I argue this is the ‘wound’ of the Chilean upper-class: having to constantly show its ‘whiteness’.

Colonial wounds affect society in general, but they affect the upper classes in very particular forms, which have not been appropriately addressed. Walter Mignolo (2011), inspired by the notion of the ‘open wound’ of Gloria Anzaldúa (1987) and the interpretations of Franz Fanon in the Wretched of the World (1986), suggests that the colonial wound is the result of the racism constituted through the coloniality of power and becomes the feeling of inferiority in those who do not fit the dominant western definition of the ideal Euro-American. I suggest that not only did racialised *others* live an experience of inferiorisation, but the elite and upper classes also lived their own ‘feeling of racial differentiation’.

The inferiorisation of racialised *others* in the Latin American context is guided by the norm of whiteness and was possible only through the constant repetition of practices and discourses; differences were never that visually evident, and were constantly in flux. Racial difference was never fixed, but always a performative process of marking bodies as ‘different’. Now, although Mignolo (2011), Anzaldúa (1987) and Fanon (1986) are referring to those subjects that the coloniality of power transformed to ‘inferior others’ – slaves, indigenous, black and mestizo populations – we could also argue that criollos and local upper classes were affected too by this process of inferiorisation, as their superiority is a fictional condition that only acquires power in its constant reproduction. Furthermore, to argue that they were ‘free from’ a racial self-definition process only conceals their mestizo origin, reproducing their alleged superior condition. As metropolises reproduced racial status through their colonies (Stoler, 1995, 2009), local elite and upper classes also reproduced their racial status through the constant work of differentiation with the rest of society.

I am interested in this fictional superior position of criollos, and later of the upper classes (those already marked by their ‘difference’: born in Latin America with possible mixed ancestry), and the practices of appropriation of the superior condition. I argue that the new elite and upper classes were also part of the mestizaje process and, therefore, are not skin-colour white but reappropriate whiteness as their ‘natural condition’. Although they intend to present themselves as not inferior, ‘whiter’ and bearers of *blanquitud* (whiteness), in reality they are also ‘different’ from the Spanish colonisers. In this sense, I suggest that the local elites and upper classes shared a wound: being not as white (Fanon, 1986) as colonisers and not as different from the rest of the local population. In order to further develop this line of work, I now describe the specific formation of the Chilean elite and upper classes, and later discuss their specific wounds and needs of appropriation of the ‘authentic *blanquitud*’.

The formation of the Chilean elite and upper classes: ‘authentically whiter’?

It is not the intention of this thesis to trace in depth the historical causes of these racial wounds, however, I will consider certain aspects of the formation of the Chilean elite and upper classes as key elements of this formation are intriguing and have bearing on the understanding of employers’ strategies of dealing with difference and managing domestic work within their homes. As Stabili (2003) suggests, there is no one elite and upper class in Chile, rather, different groups of the population have been considered as such and have become part of the elite through different means. Furthermore, the elite has started to share its economic and political position with other or new groups that have become upper class throughout the 20th and 21st centuries. From the 18th century ‘founding fathers of the nation’, the 19th century intellectuals and the economic and cultural elites of the 20th century, different groups of people and families have exchanged origins, private properties, forms of marriage and economic interests. We can find, however, many aspects common to these groups, aspects related to the structural conditions of their position in society and power relations both throughout history and today. Thus, although many types of groups have been and are part of ‘traditional’ elites and other upper classes, there are some elements present in all those groups related to their privileged position and their association with racial and class norms of superiority.

The employers interviewed for this thesis are heiresses of a ‘new upper class’ made up of those who have acquired social status through economic and social power from the 20th century onwards, but

they also inherited the wounds of the more traditional colonial and 19th century elites. I suggest that they are in a privileged position in terms of economic and racial status: they define themselves as better off and from better backgrounds than domestic workers, therefore reappropriating the colonial racial norm and a position of superiority. I will now describe the process of appropriation of such a position by looking at the upper classes historical wounds: the mestizaje process and the ‘original’ poverty of the Chilean colony.

In order to understand how these aspects have affected the formation of the Chilean upper classes, I propose we consider several elements that both confirm and demystify the ‘exceptionality’ and ‘original’ whiteness and wealth of the Chilean elite and upper classes. Chile was one of the last territories to be conquered by the Spanish Crown due to its extreme distance from the main settlements on the continent and its complex natural environment (the arid desert that isolates the territory from the north and the Andes Mountain that closes its borders from the east). In addition, it was not an attractive enterprise for the Spanish Crown as it did not possess as many rich natural resources as the rest of the colonies (especially gold). Chile was not a rich or attractive territory – an aspect curiously avoided in history texts.

According to Peña (1944), Pedro de Valdivia arrived – from Cuzco, Peru – in 1536 with a group of men (and Inés de Suárez) to what today is known as Santiago, a place inhabited by the indigenous population. Peña (1944) explains that the first period (during the second half of the 16th century) was a challenging one. First, the space was already inhabited by Mapuche people who resisted the conquest and posed a constant threat to the new settlement’s stability. Second, there was a shortage of mineral goods and foods due to the poor soil of the area and the settlers had to constantly ask for provisions from Peru. Those newly arrived experienced hunger and lived in very poor housing conditions. This scenario lasted through the conquest period until the end of the 16th century (1541–1598), marked by an original scene of poverty. In addition, from the arrival of Pedro de Valdivia onwards a process of mestizaje began. Spanish colonisers and indigenous women, and later Spanish women, indigenous men and black slaves, mixed, creating a highly diverse population. Thus, racial mixture and difference rapidly became a feature of the new growing Chilean society. Although the Spanish Crown promoted the keeping of sexual relations between colonisers, and not mixing with the indigenous population, mixed sexual intercourse was a widespread practice (Peña, 1944).

It was only with the beginning of the colonial period (1598–1810) that the population started to improve their lifestyles through economic growth. The production of wheat stopped hunger, the

first construction of houses began, central blocks were organised and even a church was built. In this period, the elite were still very poor and limited in number and were mainly *encomenderos* and military.¹⁸ During the 18th century Santiago became a richer settlement: exporting wheat to Peru, developing mining production in what are today known as the 3rd and 4th regions. New cities and villages were formed and a new land and commerce-based aristocracy arose. Through the management of rural land, and of the servant population in the *haciendas*, this local elite reinforced their power. Although political power was mainly managed in urban settings, it was rural power – through the *haciendas* – that the elite and upper classes reinforced their power over the rest of the population (Góngora, 1970). Possession of land and having many servants were key elements for the reproduction of their status.

Thus, it was only from the late 18th century, and especially during the 19th century – more than 100 years after the arrival of Pedro de Valdivia – that the local elite (mainly Spanish criollos) started gaining status with the purchase of noble titles and *mayorazgos*, and elite families started to organise in powerful networks. However, this elite was still very small (mainly four extended families – according to Vicuña, 2001). Before this period, the local elite mixed with the local population, lived in poor conditions and struggled to survive. It is this original wound that the later elite, and official history, will constantly deny by highlighting its ‘European character’. The Chilean colony, and later the country after independence (1810), was far below the level of wealth of other Latin American colonies, producing an ‘insecurity’, a wound in the elites’ subjectivity related to their economic and ethnic status. This insecurity, I interpret, is key in the formation of the Chilean elite, and later inherited by upper classes, affecting their relation with their internal (rural and poor) and external (migrant) others.

The *belle époque* (Vicuña, 2001) of the Chilean elite occurred in the late 19th and 20th centuries. Through tight kinship networks and the possession of land titles, the local elites reproduced their status. However, the traditional elite (Spanish descendent) started assimilating with a new upper class (primary of Basque background and other European immigrants), that emerged with the agro-industry, the development of the railway, the mine industry and the commercial industry (all still in a state of development) and later with new upper classes (enriched middle classes described in the methods chapter) (Vicuña, 2001; Pinto, 2003). Thus, while status was acquired through heritage, it also started to be attained through economic power. It is in this period that local elites and upper

¹⁸ Those in charge of *Encomiendas*, a socioeconomic institution during colonial period were poor people gave their work for food and shelter.

classes started to imitate European models (Pinto, 2003), considered representative of modernity. Even architecture and home décor started imitating European style, especially French and English.

'For the Chilean oligarchy, in fact, the French and English fashions, and in general the exclusive lifestyles of the most exalted classes of the Old World, represented the most legitimate expressions of modern civilisation.' (Vicuña, 2001; 34) (author's translation).

'Through the modes of imitation they sought to resemble their models, at the same time that they became other subjects. Put succinctly: live like others to be, in short, another.' (Vicuña, 2001; 35) (author's translation).

In this sense, during the 20th century, the local elite wanted to imitate the European model as a way of distinction, but, as Vicuña (2001) points out, to become different: not to 'really be', but to look like the French and English elite. Evidence of the inferiorisation wound is the need to imitate these European styles. While the Chilean elite and upper classes cannot be considered racialised *others* (Fanon, 1986), one can question their need to constantly reproduce their fragile racial and social distinction from those racialised *others*, and the need to conceal such fragility.

One form of concealment of this fragility, of these wounds, is the rise of the 'exceptionality' discourse: Chile was described as different from other countries in Latin America because of its economic performance and racial homogeneity (Hutchison et al., 2014), mainly due to the massacre of the indigenous population. Thus, within the Chilean territory, this 'original scene' was managed by its colonisers, and later by its upper classes, by defining themselves as exceptional (Hutchison et al., 2014). For example, the Chilean elite and intellectuals defended the idea that Chile was more ethnically homogenous than its neighbouring countries, highlighting its 'whiter' complexion, denying the importance of mestizaje within the indigenous population and emphasising the European heritage of criollos. The Europeanisation of Chile (Hutchison et al., 2014) becomes a common rhetoric still present today (reflected in the figure of the *Chilean happy family*), and functions – I suggest – as a strategy to deal with racial difference. Moral justifications also appeared, in order for the elite to distinguish themselves from the poor and indigenous population; the latter being seen as alcoholics, idle and sluggish, qualifiers that intended to justify the elite's privileged power position within society.

Today the 'exceptionality' discourse is materialised in everyday practices, where upper-class families try to distinguish themselves from the rest of the population in terms of class, race,

ethnicity, culture, and origins. Then, as now, ‘having’ a set of servants and domestic workers is a form of distinction. More specifically, this discourse is seen in upper classes’ intentions to define themselves as in ‘their own right’ to ‘have’ domestic service at their disposal. Thus, paid domestic work becomes a crucial way in which the ‘elites and upper classes’ exception’ becomes both naturalised and visible. Servitude – within elites and upper classes’ homes – becomes a form of social status: ‘having’, ‘educating’ and ‘controlling’ servants becomes a marker for the local elite. When employers interviewed for this thesis felt that the boundaries between them and their domestic workers became closer or blurrier, they argued how ‘ridiculous’ it was for domestic workers to ‘want to be like them’, due to their economic, educational and ‘origin’ differences. I argue that the need to differentiate themselves by self-defining as richer, better educated and with more ‘decent and clean origins’, says more about the wounds related to their own ethnic, racial and economic ‘origins’, than about their ‘differences’ from workers.

This ‘exceptional’ view of the upper classes – different from racialised *others*, with European values and practices – echoes the view of one of Stabili’s (2003) interviewees. In her study performed in the early 1990s, women of the ‘traditional elite’ (mainly with political legacy) reproduce this nostalgic narrative of the allegedly ‘glorious’ origin and lifestyle of the elite and its relation to servants. They romantically portray the ways in which the family related to service.

‘Belonging to the upper-class is a given by the fact of possessing an illustrious family name and habits of life that go from the manners of eating to whether parents allow you to go out or not. When I was a girl, the table always had two or three glasses and fish cutlery, in short, as I do today for important occasions. In the homes of middle-class families, on the other hand, only one dish was made, and it was the owner of the house who served, sometimes the empleadas, but without an apron. We, on the contrary, had empleadas who served with white gloves; in addition, there was a cook, a girl for cleaning and a nanny, each with her uniform.’ (Gabriela, in Stabili, 2003; 77) (author’s translation).

‘The empleadas were always treated well, but as empleadas. In other words, very well-defined roles and social differences.’ (Gabriela, in Stabili, 2003; 78) (author’s translation).

‘... a third social subject appears, personified in the workers, with whom the upper sector maintains a type of relationship that reflects their aristocratic being.’ (Stabili, 2003, 100) (author’s translation).

Stabili's interviewee demonstrates the importance of the European legacy, one that reactivates the memory of the 'rural' world – a place characterised by the subordination of servant and the harmony of the family life. Since racial difference is less a colour than a performative marker, by defining themselves as more European, whiter, upper classes cite and rearticulate a culture of servitude and use (then and today) *servants* and domestic workers to reproduce their social status. I argue that while the new elite and upper classes define themselves as 'whiter', they still have to deal with and manage their own 'difference' and origin, engaging with the constant need to perform their 'distance' from the indigenous and poor population and the supposed 'closeness' to their European ancestors.

Thus, we can understand the management of difference and the boundary work (Lamont, 1992) performed by employers with their definitions of *bad nanas*, as those racially other, non-white. I suggest that Echeverría's (2007) notion of *blanquitud* is useful to further analyse this management. According to Echeverría, possessing *blanquitud* is not a given, but rather obtained through reiterative behaviour in time, a performative effect of racial norm (Tate, 2005), which provides the subject with certain ethical values such as modesty, dissimulation and sobriety – values present in Stabili's interviews and in my employers. The gain of values through the reiterative behaviour of 'being white' demonstrates the performative aspect rather than the colour-based status of whiteness. Thus, whiteness is a moral and behavioural achievement. I suggest that employers' *blanquitud* is a performative act, not always achieved through everyday interactions between employers and domestic workers. I have previously shown that the employers interviewed also incorporate this 'moral' distinction in relation to *bad nanas*, justifying it in terms of 'origin'. 'Origin' provides employers an explanation of workers' different moral and cultural behaviour, and employers' superior position of whiteness.

Echeverría (2007) understands *blanquitud* in terms of an ethical call of behaving in a certain way, one correlating with the establishment of capitalism in Latin America. Echeverria (2007) critiques Weber's analysis on the spirit of capitalism, suggesting that his analysis is based on a racist conception of the 'ethical subject'. The 'ethical subject' striving, sacrificing and dedicated to her work, is actually a very specific 'ethnic subject'.

'In the preliminary note to his Selected Articles on the Sociology of Religion, Max Weber proposed the idea that the ability to correspond to the ethical solicitation of capitalist modernity, the aptitude to assume the ethical practice of Puritan Protestantism, may have an ethnic foundation and be

connected to certain racial characteristics of individuals. The reflections that I would like to present to you attempt to problematize this approach of Max Weber from the recognition of a “racism” constitutive of capitalist modernity, a “racism” that demands the presence of a whiteness of ethical or civilising order as a condition of modern humanity, but that in extreme cases, such as the one of the Nazi state of Germany, happens to demand the presence of a whiteness of ethnic, biological and “cultural” order.’ (Echeverría, 2007; 1–2) (author’s translation).

Echeverría (2007) further argues that modern national identities require the whitening of their non-white populations.

‘Now, as far as these reflections are concerned, it is to be observed that modern national identity, even if it is based on state companies based on non-European (or only vaguely European) societies because of their “colour” or their “culture”, it is an identity that cannot fail to include, as its essential and distinctive feature, a very special feature that we can call “blanquitud”. Modern nationality, whatever it may be, even that of non-white (or of the “tropic”) population states, requires the “blanquitud” of its members.’ (Echeverría, 2007; 3) (author’s translation).

‘The identity-civilising trait that we want to understand by “blanquitud” is consolidated, in real history, in a random or arbitrary way based on the ethnic appearance of the north-western European population, against the background of racial/cultural whiteness. Over three centuries (from the fifteenth to the eighteenth century), that chance or arbitrariness gradually becomes a necessity and turn out to be co-determinant of the modern identity of the human being as a capitalist civilising identity, in its puritanical or “realistic” variant.’ (Echeverría, 2007; 4) (author’s translation).

Thus, ‘whiteness’ is historically naturalised as the ethnicity of civilisation and modernity, but throughout history, subjects are not only evaluated on their colour, but also on their ethical behaviour, their sacrifice towards modernity. More than being white in terms of skin colour, subjects are expected to be ethically white, that is, to incorporate the modern-civilisatory subjectivity and ethos. This does not mean the dismissal of colour racism, rather the complex ways in which colour and ethics are performed and naturalised.

The sacrifice demanded within capitalism echoes the civilisatory and religious project of colonisation, with the formation of the new colonies and, later, within the new independent nations. I suggest that criollos and the new upper classes used the rhetoric of sacrifice and salvation in the

construction of the new nation and in their relationships with others (indigenous, black, mixed) as I described in employers' narratives, and as Stabili (2003) suggests in her study about the traditional elite in the second half of the 20th century. In addition, while employers echo the ethical demand of sacrificing and 'saving' workers, we can also interpret their desire to have a *Chilean happy family* (discussed in chapter four) as another ethical demand in the context of neoliberal Chile. Furthermore, I suggest we relate Berlant's (2009) analysis of neoliberal demands in the context of Chile to the demand for the upper classes to perform neoliberal 'white' subjectivities.

Both the sacrifice and the modern family demands become practical expectations regarding 'ethical behaviours' and the performance of racial difference. As I have shown, these demands are articulated through everyday practices and interactions between employers and workers, the first differentiating between *good* and *bad nanas* in order to self-define in opposition as morally and culturally superior. 'Simulating' employers' 'authentic whiteness' is a practice that we can see in employers' interviews, in their need to perform their social position within the home through, for example, a cult of appearances. This cult of appearances (Montecino, 2007) became important by the end of the 19th century in Chile, when upper classes wanted to be perceived as 'similar' to their French and English counterparts (Vicuña, 2001) through their consumption practices, but also by showing the possession of *servants*. Today, 'having a *nana*' is still a symbol of status. That is, employing a rural or immigrant domestic worker rearticulates forms of performing upper classes' whiteness. In addition, as argued in the introduction and in the literature review, upper-class women have had a special role in the protection of social boundaries and distinctions.

'... very often it is women, especially older women, who are given the roles of the cultural reproducers of 'the nation' and are empowered to rule on what is 'appropriate' behaviour and appearance and what is not and to exert control over other women who might be constructed as 'deviants'.' (Yuval-Davis, [1997] 2007; 37).

Both 'having a *nana*' and protecting social borders are callings that the employers interviewed perform today. Together with reproducing their racial status, they distinguish themselves as authentically superior and their workers as morally marked by their 'bad origin'. Now, along with differentiating themselves in terms of 'origin', employers also reproduce racial and class difference within their homes through sexuality, and defining workers' sexuality as deviant and, therefore, a key aspect of social control in order to protect their homes.

Controlling workers' sexuality, controlling social mixture within upper-class homes

'The embodiment dimension of the racialized 'other' puts sexuality at the heart of the racialized imaginary which projects dreams of forbidden pleasures and fears of impotency onto the other.' (Yuval-Davis, 2007; 51).

As Yuval-Davis (2007), McClintock (1995) and others point out, racial discourse and practice is always intertwined with a sexual narrative of the *other*. For example, racialised *others* are seen as more sexually available due to their racial condition, while 'white' men and women are viewed as sexually pure. In addition, the sexual mixture between 'white' and racialised *others* was a site of anxiety within colonial settings, and racism a way of managing difference within intimate spaces (Stoler, 1995). The fear of this mixture has been articulated through racial and sexual rhetoric. Mixed marriages and sexual practices between people from different racial, class and ethnic 'origins' was a concern of the Spanish Crown for the reproduction of social order. During the colonial period, upper classes in Chile were encouraged not to mix with the *other*, promoting the closure of family networks. The employers I interviewed echo these concerns in relation to domestic workers and perform their racial position through workers' 'deviant' sexuality.

Aspects that make most employers interviewed wary are a worker's age and her sexuality. Young and, to a greater extent, physically attractive domestic workers are seen as a threat to household management because of their supposed lack of experience in domestic work, their need to look for other experiences outside of work (sexual partners, active social lives), the presence of a worker's own children (which can generate unexpected demands of workers) and the possibility that workers may engage in sexual relationships with men of the family or within an employer's network of friends.

'Once I had a young nana, super well looking, she was brunette but had a great body. The problem was that my husband's friends started to come to the house more often and they stayed talking to her in the kitchen so I had to stop the events unfolding and let her go.' (Claudia, 44 years, employer).

As Douglas (2002) suggest, the fear of sexual contamination refers to preoccupations with broader social frontiers, and as Saldaña (2013) points out in the Mexican case, workers' sexuality is a point of concern for employers regarding social boundaries.

'... the sexualisation of paid domestic workers in Mexico might be deeply linked to notions around dirt, morality and sin and with broader concerns over the permeability of the individual and the social body.' (Saldaña, 2014; 198).

As Saldaña explains, and as in Claudia's case, employers interviewed in this thesis express anxiety over the idea of workers mixing with their men and their children, perceiving this mixture as a point of contamination of the family. In this sense, controlling workers' sexuality is also a way of reproducing employers' own racial status: that is, their authentic and pure white status.

'As the employer suggests, immorality has an outside source, and like dirt, it 'spreads' throughout the workers' community and ultimately into the workers' body. As the worker is contaminated, bodily margins are deployed to avoid transgressions of order.' (Saldaña, 2014; 203).

By defining workers' sexuality as deviant and in need of control, Chilean employers self-define as morally superior, performing their white racial status (Echeverría, 2007). Thus, *bad nanas'* racialised and class 'origin' is linked to their sexual practices. Either because they are foreigners or lower-class, workers supposedly reproduce their 'lack' of culture, education and even 'emotional deprivation' through their sexual practice. Urban women are seen as more promiscuous; Peruvian women as looking for sexual encounters in Peruvian parties in the centre of Santiago; and black women as sexually available and more prone to becoming sex workers. In addition, sexually deviant practices can also reflect workers' supposedly poor hygiene practices.

'I prefer an older person, not very young, because they already have more experience, they know how to run a house, I do not want a girl that is worried about the holidays or drinking. It disgusts me because you do not know what they do on weekends, I try to always look at their nails, because the manipulation of food is an issue and that I have gloves but they do not always work with gloves. When they do bathrooms, they put on gloves, but to cook, they do not ... When I'm interviewing them I check their hands, I look at them.' (Cecilia, 48 years, employer).

'When the girls were little, I had young black girl who was sent to me by some nuns, she had been a prostitute. I started to see that this girl was leaving she had a transformation, she was another person. I think she was wearing a wig, how weird, it was like the femme fatale. Imagine, a woman who is going to sell her body on the weekend and then comes to take care of your daughters and washes the toilets. The Bolivian ... she was very nice, but for her maybe this was normal, I do not

know, maybe she was used to it. I said to my husband, ‘did you see her when she went out?’. She was transformed, dressed in bright colours, so I had to let her go too.’ (Gloria, 58 years, employer).

For Gloria and Cecilia, workers’ sexuality is seen as dirty, and therefore, a danger to employers’ families, it is seen as deviant, morally reproachable and disgusting. ‘... class and racial conflicts are still described through a language of morality and backwardness.’ (Saldaña, 2014; 203).

Workers’ sexuality is valued in moral terms, explained by workers’ racial, class and ethnic origins. Domestic workers become racially marked through their sexuality. Furthermore, workers’ sexuality is defined implicitly in opposition to that of employers, which is understood as morally superior, reproducing their ‘whiteness’. As Echeverría (2007) argues, race is less about colour and more about ethical behaviour – the correct way of being. Employers such as Carla argue that they would make better decisions regarding their reproduction and motherhood projects.

‘The Dominican was not taken care of when she was a young girl, 21 years old and she already had a little girl of three and she again got pregnant with another baby. This happens because they are lacking, because there are always options, they always have a problem ... They also have emotional deficiencies, they tie themselves to a boy, they fall in love and that makes them silly, it is a circle of things.’ (Carla, 42 years, employer).

Marriage, monogamy and heterosexuality are attributed to the healthy family lifestyle of employers, while promiscuity and irresponsible sexuality are related to workers’ practices. I suggest that the negative evaluation and control of workers’ sexuality operates as a device for producing the racial status of ‘authentic employers’; that is, the daily performance of the status of employers’ whiteness is possible because of the sexualisation and racialisation of workers’ otherness.

Conclusions

As shown throughout this chapter, closeness and distance generate many tensions and anxieties in employers, who manage their feelings through the constant repetition of the racialisation and sexualisation of workers. By defining *bad nanas* as sexual deviants due to their ‘origins’, employers are able to manage their own wounds and perform their racial and class status, their *blanquitud*, and

their condition of ‘authentic employers’. Employers define themselves as morally superior to workers (and therefore whiter) and reproduce such moral condition by assuming a ‘saving’ project with workers. Such a project provides them with their racial status. Employers assume the task of teaching workers everyday manners: how to set the table, how to dress and clean the toilet. It is a pedagogical exercise that cites a history of upper-class women in roles teaching poor women how to be good mothers.

‘... I correct her, you have to teach them. When I have visitors and I want to have a nice table so I do it with her so she can learn.’ (Josefina, 37 years, employer).

To teach them how to clean or how to set the table are strategies that position workers as subjects without knowledge, and housewives – like Josefina – as ‘experts’. Such expertise is handled within a condescending rhetoric: housewives ‘understand’ workers’ ‘lack’ of knowledge because of their origin.

‘If I’m going to have visitors at night on a day week, she has her sleeping schedule, it’s not that she cannot sleep, I’m not going to ask her to stay to attend my visits until the end of the night, I understand she needs to sleep.’ (Josefina, 37 years, employer).

In the case of Josefina, she does not feel that asking for more hours of work is something she cannot do, but something that she decides not to do because she ‘understands’ the worker. She, and other employers, evaluates her relationship with workers from a notion of ‘justice’ defined by themselves, as they view themselves as moral subjects able to empathise with workers. The ‘understanding’ discourse legitimises the moral white status of employers. The rhetoric of ‘moral superiority’ in employers can be interpreted as a way that employers perform their racial status, their *blanquitud* (Echeverría, 2007). In this sense, workers could never ‘be’ like employers; their attempts at imitating employers’ ways of ‘being’ are interpreted as ‘ridiculous’ as they do not possess the moral, class and racial status for such a project. Through employer/workers’ relationships, paid domestic work performs racial difference.

CHAPTER 6: FROM NANAS TO TRABAJADORAS HONRADAS

Talking to domestic workers about their resistance.

In this thesis, I have proposed that we should regard domestic work as an intimate site of performance of cultural values and power relations, one that carries the legacies of feminisation and racialisation (Gutiérrez, 2010) and in which are embedded emotional and affective relations. Intimacy and politics – within domestic work – become intertwined in the context of these legacies and in emotional labour, aspects that I will highlight throughout this chapter. The relationship between intimacy and politics within domestic work – stated in the literature review and analysed in chapters four and five – has at least two dimensions. On the one hand, intimacy is a relational construction. Drawing upon Ann Stoler's work on imperialism, race and intimacy (1995, 2002), racial, class and gender identities, borders, and representations are crafted in intimate relationships and practices within households. While Stoler focuses on the formation of the colonisers' white identity through boundary work with the *internal others* – the servants – in Dutch and British colonial households, I argue that upper-class Chilean homes are also places where political distinctions are made – more specifically, where racial difference between employers and workers is performed, the upper class's *superiority* is normalised, and inequality is naturalised. Inspired by Stoler's work, I argue that in the Chilean context, racial and class difference are reproduced through intimate relations between workers and employers; relations that are carried out within domestic duties such as cleaning, cooking and caring, where both workers and employers 'learn' the racialised and gendered culture of servitude. As Camus and de la O Martinez (2014) suggest for the case of Guadalajara, the culture of servitude constitutes a colonial legacy that understands relations of subordination between employers and workers as part of the hegemonic order, which is reproduced in everyday practices and is emotionally embedded. Gutiérrez (2010) further analyses the transmission of servitude.

'The condition of "servitude" leaves affective traces on domestic workers' bodies. It is the sensation of "servility" that is constantly projected towards them, even though this is not always explicitly expressed; it leaves an impression on their bodies. It does this through the symbolic and actual violence they experience in their everyday lives. The affective transmission of this violence is manifested through the household tasks assigned to them and the living conditions that they are exposed to as "undocumented migrants". "Servility" is affectively addressed and impressed on these women's bodies through a variety of feelings, expressed on occasion by the projection of disgust and contempt onto them.' (Gutiérrez, 2010; 137).

Servility and the culture of servitude are affects transmitted onto workers' bodies. This culture, in the Chilean case, was articulated in colonial periods and is maintained today in complex relations of proximity, through everyday household routines, and with the construction of emotional boundaries. This makes evident the performative power of domestic work in reproducing upper-class white status, by concealing their racialised and poor past, and by naturalising their *right to servitude*. In this chapter I show how this feels for the workers themselves.

On the other hand, intimacy is a site at which discourses and subjectivities meet. Following Lauren Berlant's (2011) understanding of intimacy in the United States' neoliberal democracy, it is understood as a form of transmission of knowledge, memory and meanings between individuals and the political domain. What is transmitted is grounded in the expectation of finding individual *happiness* and *love* by embodying political discourses and ideological articulations of what it means *to be happy* within a neoliberal model. She problematises intimacy and politics in relation to affective intimate attachments – that is, forms in which available cultural discourses and ideologies navigate through different means and institutions, and are embodied by individuals who struggle to both be part of the collective and live their personal desires. Berlant (2011) argues that political definitions of 'having a life' are referred to in a familial rhetoric where family and nation are intertwined. Hence, family figures promoted by the nation are seen as ideal for an individual's search for happiness. However, specific ways of 'having a life' become more normal (Ahmed, 2010) and the tensions, the conflicts and the labour necessary to obtain such *a life* are concealed. Employers interviewed in this thesis benefited from such concealment, especially regarding all the labour domestic workers perform so that employers can have a 'successful family life', naturalising their class and racial status, and justifying their 'right to a good life'.

Within the context of post-dictatorship, consensual democracies (Castillo, 2007), and the reunification of the family and the nation (Grau, 1997; Vera, 2009), I argue that today neoliberal Chile is based, in part, on the notion of the *Chilean happy family*: a notion represented by an upper class white image (PNUD, 2012), and which is successful by concealing the labour performed by paid domestic workers. Drawing upon these two lines of analysis regarding intimacy and politics – the first, which enables us to understand how employers and workers 'learn' broader racial and class boundaries and justifies workers 'subordinated position', and the second, which allows us to interpret how such subordination is normalised through the invisibilisation of workers' labour within upper-class homes in order for the *Chilean happy family* to be a visual representation of the neoliberal Chilean democracy's success – I am interested in this chapter in the ways in which

workers live and manage the relation between intimacy and politics; that is, how they experience racial and class difference and the concealment of the work they do in order to reproduce the employer's status and lifestyle, and associated national emblems (McClintock, 1995) such as the *Chilean happy family*.

In this chapter, I will analyse the interviews carried out with the domestic workers in relation to topics that have emerged throughout this research, in order to contrast and read the differences between employers' and workers' perceptions and practices. I will later draw upon these differences to follow the ways in which workers may both reproduce and resist power relations within intimate relations in the employers' households. First, I will place in dialogue the figures of the *good nana* (a re-enactment of the figure of the servant), defined previously by employers and seen by them as essential and natural for the reproduction of their lifestyles, together with the figure of the *trabajadora honrada* – honourable worker – which appears in the interviews with workers.¹⁹ I will look at their relationship with broader racial, gender, class and ethnic forms of power relations within the Chilean society. The main argument is that the figure of the *trabajadora honrada* is in constant dialogue with the figures of the *good* and the *bad nana*, either because workers are aware of the existence of employers' expectations and/or evaluations of workers' performance and wish to be recognised by them, or because they are aware of power relations with employers and wish to defend and give value to their devalued work and their devalued position as *servants*. In many cases, both situations can occur at the same time, or may vary in the life course of each worker, depending on their experiences and their trajectories. By questioning these figures, workers directly challenge the racial and class distinctions between them and employers and the naturalisation of their subordinated position, defying the reproduction of upper-class families and the continuities of the *culture of servitude*.

Second, I intend to analyse how the figure of the *trabajadora honrada* responds to and reacts to a discourse – a product of the culture of servitude – that intends to naturalise domestic workers' *difference* and, therefore, their position as *at the service of* employers. The *naturalisation of difference* discourse, I argue, is a product of repetitive forms of subordination that many workers experience in their first years of work within intimate relationships with employers; forms that reflect broader political definitions of difference based on racial, ethnic, national, and class definitions of workers' *origins*. I suggest that the *naturalisation of difference* discourse has traces of colonial and modern logics based on the inferiorisation of women's labour and the racialisation of

¹⁹ By *honrada*, domestic workers refer to their status as honest and decent workers.

servants' labour, where being named as *india*, *huasa*, or migrant reproduced the idea that racialised women are naturally available for servitude, to serve the upper class. As Gutiérrez (2010), Ochoa (2014), and Saldaña (2013) have argued in their studies on domestic workers, the logics of inferiorisation are based on the fact that domestic work has been devalued because it is considered a labour performed by servants, racialised women and slaves. I have previously described that the racial division of labour in Latin America has not only placed racialised women's bodies in specific labours, such as domestic service, but it has also influenced people's subjectivities (including those of both employers and workers) and their understanding of their roles and places in societies through the citation of the culture of servitude. Workers deal with and navigate this heritage that names them as *servants of society*.

But rather than being a given, the naturalisation of their difference – that is, their status as servants of society, and the status of employers as having the 'right to be served' – is a discourse that requires the constant performance in order to survive. Furthermore, without everyday practices of cooking, cleaning, caring, and even emotional and conflictive relationships between employers and workers, the power of this discourse is questioned. More specifically, I suggest that it is through constant actions of simultaneous subordination and emotional attachment in relation to employers that workers, first, 'learn' their inferior position within homes and society in general, and second, through actions and emotions such as anger, 'learn' to de-naturalise such positioning, at the same time challenging the invisibilisation of their labour, the notion of 'being part of the family', and the reproduction of the *Chilean happy family*.

Third, I will reflect upon workers' possibilities of resistance (questioning of their subordinated status) within intimate relations with employers. How can workers produce subversion and question the naturalisation of their difference and the normal functioning of the *Chilean happy family* in intimate actions? Because of its performative character, I challenge this discourse by bringing to the surface a diverse range of acts of constant resistance – based on different strategies – arguing for the impossibility of the sole existence of subordination logics within paid domestic work. These acts of resistance, I argue, reveal the importance of anger as a political and intimate affect that can perform mobilisation, transformation and critique of employers' status and power relations within households, and become a constant threat to the reproduction of the *Chilean happy family*.

Dialogues between the figures of the *good nana* and the *trabajadora honrada*

Understanding domestic work as an intimate-political site allows us to describe it as a place where racial, class, ethnic and gender distinctions are not only performed through everyday practices of cooking, cleaning and caring, but also naturalised in order to serve different interests. As suggested in chapter four, employers' 'natural right to be served' was framed by employers within a rhetoric of the family (McClintock, 1995), specifically the upper-class family. I analysed that such naturalisation was the product of the concealment of workers' labour, the racialisation of workers and through the affective management of difference performed by employers, justifying the gender and class superiority of upper-class women, and the racial and ethnic superiority of upper-class families in general. This naturalisation became embodied – within employers' narratives – by the figures of the *good* and the *bad nana*. The first, the *good nana*, being the ideal worker: one who knows and embraces her inferior position but is also able to engage with modern necessities within homes, such as efficiency, enabling the project of the modern Chilean woman. Employers' expectations in relation to the *good nana* were assembled within a nostalgic repertoire (hooks, 1992) regarding how things used to be, in a past where relationships between employers and workers were, supposedly, more smooth and peaceful, and homes and society in general were more organically ordered. The second, the *bad nana*, being the more contemporary worker (implying that *bad nanas* did not exist before) and representing the loss of the ideal worker. These workers demand their rights and have a more dubious class, racial and ethnic origin, making them untrustworthy and posing a danger for families (Douglas, 2002). As other studies have reflected (McClintock, 1995; Stoler, 1995, 2009), I analysed the descriptions of the *other* women as part of a process of self-definition that has less to say about workers and more to say about the self-perceptions of the upper classes as racially, socially and morally superior. Thus, by defending the *good nana* as she who knows her place and the *bad nana* as a threat to the home, employers not only define themselves as superior and *nanas* as inferior, but also perform their whiteness and naturalise this social order.

It was within this line of interpretation that I read the interviews I performed with Chilean and Latin American migrant domestic workers, trying to identify their own perceptions about their relationships with employers, and how they also defined themselves and employers. I was interested in the dialogues and anxieties one could read within workers' narratives and experiences in relation to the power relations described in previous chapters and how superior/inferior positionings were or were not always naturalised. I also looked at what Chilean workers could tell me about historical

changes – immigrants could articulate more about contemporary perceptions regarding different forms of intimate production of political distinctions.

As I have described in chapter two, Stoler (1995, 2009) – in her reading of Foucault's 'The History of Sexuality' (1990) in light of the French and Dutch imperial order – suggests that the formation of bourgeois morality and class identification was not only constituted through the control and differentiation of sexuality between colonies and metropolis, but also within imperial everyday dynamics in the colonies in coloniser–servant relations. Thus, not only class but also racial difference between servants and families were constitutive of the European self, both in the metropolis and in the colonies, where households were intimate spaces for racial differentiation. While Stoler (2009) describes how employers recall being held by their servants when they were babies or very young, workers suggest that the physical and symbolic boundaries between them were very much policed by adult employers, due to the imperial fear of hygiene and cultural contamination with racialised *others*. Employers reproduce a nostalgic and romantic version of the relationship with servants, whereas servants describe the distances they had to maintain. Stoler (2009) exposes the discrepancy between employers' and workers' descriptions of the organisation of colonial households, highlighting the difference between employers' recollections of supposedly close relations with their nannies when they were young and workers' accounts of more distant relations due to colonial rules that did not encourage physical relations with servants. Similar to her description, we can see dialogues between employers' and workers' perceptions in the Chilean case that are not always in direct opposition, but are, at least, in tension.

I suggest that the relationships between workers and employers interviewed in this research are in tension, rather than in opposition, because, unlike in Stoler's case, all workers still worked within households – though many had shifted from living where they worked to living outside their workplaces, giving them the possibility of having more time and space for themselves. Moreover, they were not in a colonial setting (although the culture of servitude is cited), and narrated complex emotional and labour relationships with employers, marked by the constant movement between closeness and distance – a movement that also affected, as I argued in previous chapters, employers' experiences.

Workers struggled with desiring, rejecting or simply being involved in both close and distant relationships with their employers, and their employers experienced a similar complexity. This struggle of the workers affected their position within households, their status as 'part of the family',

their capacity to negotiate working hours and salaries, the emotional attachment they felt with employers and with children (they were in some cases even seen as maternal figures, and this was sometimes used as a means of emotional manipulation by employers, in order to get workers to do more hours of work without payment), among other complex emotional and power relations. We cannot describe just one form of living or dealing with these scenarios as it can vary from worker to worker, and even within one worker's experience. For example, if a worker started working at the age of nine (as many of the Chileans I interviewed did) they struggled and even desired, at an early stage, more familial relationships with women employers; then, after more experience, understood that 'being part of the family' could also mean being oppressed and manipulated by them, and even came to feel that 'being part of the family' was never really possible. Thus, emotional desires and relations from both employers and workers are in constant tension throughout the workers' career trajectory, and, as I will describe, this means the power relations within this labour are rarely clear cut. This is just one example of many throughout this chapter, which show the complex emotional and labour relations, a situation that has been extensively studied by other scholars (Gutiérrez, 2010; Anderson, 2000). These situations become the context in which the dynamics I will describe occur and are key to understand how the figure of the *good nana*, the *trabajadora honrada*, and inferiority/superiority power relations between workers and employers operate.

It is within these complex emotional and labour relations that we can understand the employers' figure of the *good nana* – a label which suggests both the history of the figure of the *servant* and employers' supposedly superiority – within workers' narratives, and their own expectations regarding their positions within employers' homes. In relation to and in dialogue with this figure of the *good nana*, almost all workers described themselves less in good/bad binary definitions, and rather in a language of recognition of the value of their work. They said that they were proud of being domestic workers, naming themselves as *trabajadoras honradas*. Both being proud and *honrada* seemed to respond to various aspects and consequences of the inferiority legacy that this labour historically carries (Gutiérrez, 2010), affecting both the definition of this labour as well as those who perform this labour. Being proud of being domestic workers was a response to the historic social devaluation of this labour defined as non-waged or under waged, and further defined, as a 'dirty work' (Anderson, 2000) performed mainly by lower classes and by racialised *others*; a work performed largely by indigenous and poor rural women, with an origin which was devalued by employers (see chapter four). Isabel, a Chilean domestic worker, describes the devaluation of workers through the naming them as *nanas*.

'We need to be respected, our working hours, but specially make people understand that we are also people. Why the nickname? What are nanas? It doesn't have a good content, even when said without a bad intention. With time I realised that with that name one no longer is a Mrs and becomes a nana. It bothered me when I felt it as an irony, I disappeared, it wasn't with respect. People become content with being named nana. Being named a worker allows that they respect you. There are many nicknames for nanas that don't describe what the person does, it's part of a history of slavery.' (Isabel, Chilean, 53 years, worker).

For Isabel, *nana* carried the legacy of slavery; she *felt* this legacy every time she understood it was said with irony, therefore replacing her personhood with a name that devalued her work and took from her dignity as a human being. As Anderson (2000) described in her brilliant book 'Doing the Dirty Work', domestic work carries the legacy of slavery, and the very personhood of workers is put into question when this legacy is cited in situations of mistreatment or abuse. Creating distance from the label *nana* is a concrete way in which workers address this legacy. Thus, being proud and *honrada* meant first, valorising their economic activity, and second, distancing themselves from the name *nana*. We can see in that in the workers interviewed, while *nanas* meant the devalued history, regarding slavery, of this labour and the way in which employers named them in relation to their inferior positions within households, the label 'workers' stood for a re-appropriation of this labour by workers themselves and, even, a form of demand for respect.²⁰ 'Worker' did not only function in opposition to *nana*, but also to the dehumanisation, the *diminishing* of the person, that *nana* implies. In opposition to the label *nana*, which can make their work *disappear*, 'workers' meant to make visible their condition as human beings, as workers, and as individuals. *Nana* functioned, according to Isabel, towards the concealment of domestic workers and their labour, towards, one could suggest, the performativity of the naturalisation of their inferiority and the naturalisation of employers' superiority.

For Isabel, as for most of the workers interviewed, being named *nana* reproduced power relations and logics of inferiorisation, both of their labour and their human condition, through the invisibilisation of their labour, while 'workers' was a label that challenged such conditions and enabled their visibility within their workplaces, a different visibility that was not that of the *servant*.

²⁰ By uniting 'honourable' with 'workers', one can interpret the intention of questioning their inferior social position by using the markers of the elite. As has shown for the Chilean case, honour was part of the making of the colonial and modern elite within Chile. Therefore, one can think about the appropriation of this quality to transform their low position, and become 'closer' to employers, an aspect that can be conceived as a threat, as we saw in previous chapters. Thus, by using a quality that historically has been imposed by employers, workers use the available social values to challenge the social position of domestic work.

One should reflect about the critical importance of the logic of visibility/invisibility in the naming of a person. On the one hand, as Butler (1999, 1993) has analysed, being named creates the conditions of possibility of existing within the social world, and within power relations, allowing the eligibility of oneself. At the same time, it provides the possibilities of questioning the social norm. These conditions of possibility, in the case of domestic workers, are grounded in colonial power relations that –although transformed throughout history due to changes of economic and cultural structures – have created different forms of naming the figure of *nanas* based on their inferiorisation. I suggest we understand the importance of the performative power of *nana* in the context of the racialisation and feminisation legacies (Gutiérrez, 2010). I have already introduced these legacies in the literature review. I would argue that these legacies do not only have the effect of marking certain bodies as *servant bodies* (indigenous and slave women), but that they also question the humanity of the indigenous population.

Decolonial feminist Ochoa (2014) has argued that theologians in the 16th century were unsure as to whether indigenous people were human or not, and whether the Catholic religion could transform them from their bestial condition to a human one. Denying their identities, theologians like Ginés de Sepúlveda negated and subordinated indigenous people. According to Ochoa (2014), these lines of thinking were based on three epistemological definitions of the other: its bestialisation, its racialisation, and the feminisation of the indigenous population. It is this third aspect that I wish to develop in relation to domestic work.

'In order to validate his position on the Indian problem, Sepulveda had to 'feminize' the Indian (in the discourse) and annul it as a subject, endowing him with characteristics suitable only for servitude. What we call the feminization of the Indian undoubtedly sums up the very fact that the 'bestial character of the Indian' is equated/exchanged with that of 'being a woman', whose condition of tutelage is perpetual and permanent.' (Ochoa, 2014; 106) (author's translation).

The feminisation of indigenous people, therefore, becomes an epistemic theme that accompanies the dehumanisation and subordination of this population, instilling the idea that, because of this bestial, dehumanised and feminised condition, the indigenous 'natural place' was that of servitude. This colonial condition did not necessarily change through the process of humanisation of the indigenous population in the 16th century with the *derecho de gentes*.

'The "humanization" of the Amerindian had no tangible impact on their lives. It represented barely a change in its legal status dictated by the distant Castile. Nor did the "dehumanization" of the African slave end the atrocious violence against the Amerindians. Amerindians, African slaves, and the mestizo population that originated from the mass rape of indigenous women never succeeded in achieving the ontological status of human being of the Europeans. Theological–legal discourses of "people's rights", which apparently sought to establish an ethic of non-violence in the New World, could not change at all abusive and exploitative behaviour towards non-white populations. The formal recognition of the "rights of the people" failed to halt the development of a social ethos characterized by violence, the absence of law, and impunity on the part of European settlers, and was also unable to set a limit to physical vulnerability or as Butler [...] says paraphrasing Levinas, "the precarious life" or "the invisible lives" of the people of the New World.' (Mendoza, 2007; 89, cited in Ochoa, 2014; 109).

Thus, rather than humanising the indigenous population, *derechos de gentes* only re-enacted the colonial violence, and naturalised the inferior biological conditions of the indigenous by further feminising the population, defining them as subordinated and servants. This situation, according to Ochoa (2014), but also to others such as Quijano (2000) and Lugones (2008), became the modern colonial model of power, legacies that we can see today in the exploitation and control of Latin American and indigenous women's bodies and labour (Mendoza, 2007). Mendoza (2007) studies the case of brutality, sexual abuse and murder of women in Central America, concluding that the humanist ethics from the 16th century persists in the contemporary logics of the neoliberal democracy. As explained in the literature review, for the case of servitude, Camus and de la O Martinez (2014) also suggest the continuity of a culture of servitude from colonial periods to modern and neoliberal contexts. In a similar line, I suggest that the dehumanisation and feminisation of the indigenous population was appropriated within colonial Chile, and after independence, in different figures of the *servant*, which represent the racialisation of the *servant* condition of rural, indigenous and migrant women: concealing their labour, naturalising the superiority and 'right' of upper-class families, and today reproducing Chilean neoliberal democracy. One label that today works within this logic is *nana*.

As Chaney and Garcia Castro's (1993) seminal book on domestic work in Latin America suggests, workers have been named *muchachas*, *cachifas*, *criadas*, *empleadas*, *empregadinhas*, *sirvientas*, among many others, and in Chile one can add *niña de mano*, *niña del sur*, and *nanas* – all names with the performative power of constituting and sustaining the conditions for the feminisation and

inferiorisation of this labour and the invisibility of workers. And one can still hear this naming used in the language of the employers interviewed for this research, as well as by the media, and even by Chilean members of parliament when they were legislating for a new law in 2014 that defined them as *trabajadoras de casa particular* (Fernández, 2014). Thus, insisting on being named as workers, and not as *nanas*, shows a resistance to that history, still very present today, as a way of dignifying their labour.

The figure of the *trabajadora honrada*, however, seems to be more complex. A simple reading of ‘resistance’ to the *disappearance* of workers, and their inferiorisation, does not allow us to comprehend more complex relations between workers and employers, and between colonial, modern and contemporary forms of power relations, as well as the performative power of paid domestic work. As well as being a form of resisting the label *nana*, the *trabajadora honrada* can also be actively used by workers in two additional ways. First, as a *carta de presentación* (presentation letter) with which workers negotiate better labour opportunities and conditions, and second, as a label that helps them to differentiate and distance themselves from employers’ critiques and definitions of *bad nanas* – those perceived as uneducated and untrustworthy, that is, to dialogue with their racialisation.

For example, Monica (Chilean, 56 years, worker) was being fired because she was accused of stealing. Her reaction was ‘...she told me that I was a thief, my letter of presentation is my honesty, it’s the only way to work, I do not have to steal, I told her I did not steal so I left’. Later, Monica was being interviewed and told employers: ‘I like to work, I am honrada, people call me back to work, I like children, I like a good treatment.’

Pilar, another Chilean worker, told me ‘it does not affect me to be called *nana*, but we are looked at as little things, by employers and society in general, my own mother and my partner. I had to argue that it was an honest job, worse is stealing.’ (Pilar, Chilean, 34 years, worker).

As a *carta de presentación*, the *trabajadora honrada* relates to employers’ notions of the *good nana*, as workers actively define themselves as efficient and responsible – echoing employers’ definitions – and at the same time distancing themselves from this very notion by arguing that they are not submissive and docile, and that their work is dignified, that it has worth. It is not only resisting the figure of the *good nana*; *trabajadora honrada* is also an active use of the positive values related to the *good nana*, such as responsibility and trustworthiness, as a way of navigating

through possible work offers. As Monica suggests, they are more willing to be *good nanas* – efficient, follow orders – under certain working conditions, which include good treatment by employers. Situations of abuse or overload lead to workers deciding to leave the job.

'I spent a year with them. But I began to know abuse and mistreatment. I left because of that, I did not feel comfortable, I went through several houses but there was a lot of abuse, they made me work a lot, I would go to sleep late, I could not sleep. You cannot work this way.' (Monica, Chilean, 56 years, worker).

Thus, while the *good nana* could function as an expectation employers have, regardless of work conditions, workers' narratives suggest that being a good worker can only be actively performed within favourable working conditions. Being a *trabajadora honrada*, therefore, was not only a demand for respect, but for good material and work conditions – a demand for their labour rights. We will see later on this chapter how the self-naming as *trabajadoras honradas* is many times a statement that in everyday practice is more complex and difficult to accomplish, and is, in many cases, only a reality after the first work experiences, where they 'learn' how to demand respect and their rights.

In this sense, being a *trabajadora honrada* was a way of negotiating their own definitions of themselves and their labour in dialogue with the idea of the *good nana*, thus looking for both employers' recognition and for value for their labour, without necessarily being submissive and accepting abusive work conditions. The *trabajadora honrada* label is also in tension with employers' definition of *bad nanas*. Furthermore, the *trabajadora honrada* is a useful category that enables workers to distance themselves from the constant accusations of being untrustworthy and dirty, and therefore a danger to the family, questioning their racialisation. In the case of Silvia, a Chilean worker who started working at a house at the age of 13 and stayed there for 23 years, she was asked to clean the bathtub with chlorine after every time she showered because she could contaminate the rest of the house with her supposed foot fungus.

'I would get up at 5am to be serving breakfast at 6am. I bathed in the night but had to leave the tub washed because they told me I had fungus on my feet, but I never had fungus on my feet, I had a bad nail on my foot, so they thought I had fungus, but it wasn't like that. They told me that I was filthy, lazy, that I did not say things the correct way, I was angry, my dad told me to leave ... and so I left.'

At that moment I did not know how to defend myself, but today, with the new work I have, I arrived saying that I was an honest, clean worker.' (Silvia, Chilean, 57 years, worker).

One can see how employers' perceptions and fears of class, racial and ethnic contamination (Silvia's supposed foot fungus) are felt by workers, affecting their self-esteem and sense of self, and even taking them many years to put an end to the effects of the verbal and emotional violence. As Saldaña (2014) shows for the case of Mexico, proximity (bathing in the same tub) provokes fears of contamination, or mestizaje, in employers. Their fear becomes a form of racialising domestic workers, which was felt by Silvia – she felt angry about the violence exercised through the racialisation of her body.

In addition, it seems that in Silvia's narrative, as in others who are also from urban areas, she is aware of the possibility of falling into the group of the 'dirty others' and labelled as 'different' from the family, and therefore in an inferior position. Struggling against that labelling through the figure of the *trabajadora honrada* can be seen as a way of surviving in a hostile environment and dealing with employers' perception of urban origins. However, in Silvia's account she does not directly intend to differentiate herself from lower classes in general, but from those labelled as dirty, sluggish, and lazy, echoing employers' descriptions of the *bad nana*. As Stoler (1995) argues, the racial and sexual control between the bourgeois family and the racialised others in imperial settings is managed within intimate relations between servants and employers, not with distant *others*. Thus, by defining themselves as *trabajadoras honradas*, workers try to manage the racial, ethnic and class boundaries arising within domestic relationships as they are the internal *others*.

The boundaries between employers and workers, as we saw in chapter five, are many times defined in terms of 'origin'. Thus, the figure of the *bad nana* was defined by employers in terms of origin, referring to those workers that came from urban poor areas of Santiago. In opposition, *good nanas* were those who came from rural areas, being *huasas* those who came from the south but needed a bit of 'polishing'. While for employers, *huasas* was not necessarily a bad feature of workers, workers themselves related to it through emotions of shame. Gutiérrez (2014) analyses the fluidity of positive affects in the case of employers, and negative ones in the case of workers, arguing that negative feelings are felt by workers as they carry the burden of the racialisation and feminisation of domestic work.

'Employing a domestic worker enables the household to engage with positive feelings, which affect the household and its members in animating ways, while the domestic worker takes on the negative affective burden ingrained in this work.' (Gutiérrez, 2014; 49).

For the workers interviewed, shame and anger are negative feelings associated with the racialised history of domestic work, one that is related – in the case of Chile – to rural/urban distinctions. As I have discussed before, the urban/rural division was key for the formation of the elite, and *huasa* was the name given to those *girls* from rural areas who were, supposedly, more innocent, naïve, uneducated, unpolished, unfamiliar with the ‘feminine’ manners of ladies from the city. But for workers, being also *huasa* meant the exposure of being from another culture and another place than urban cities: it meant revealing their ‘origins’, their life in the countryside, their lack of urban culture, and their racialisation. Pilar narrates how she learned to be less *huasa*:

'In the south people are more traditional. I arrived very young and my first boss helped a lot, I changed, my way of speaking, I was brute, I was angry and serious, typical of the countryside people. I am very fond of my first boss. I arrived when I was 15 and she taught me many things. I'm ashamed to tell you, a country girl is different from a city girl. Compared to my cousins we were like ... we did not know anything, huasas. But I was brute, I learned a lot, I'm ashamed to tell you. For example, using and placing cutlery, I did not know how the silverware was called. She also taught me to respect people, for example when visitors came I learnt to serve them a glass of something. My boss taught me a lot, even cooking, I did not know how to fry eggs, she taught me how to make noodles, beans, rice. How to sit at the table. Or the spoon, I would bring my head to the spoon and she would say to me 'daughter, it is the spoon to the head. The meat is not eaten by hand. You can do it but when you go to another house they have to give you permission.' (Pilar, Chilean, 34 years, worker).

Speaking about what it meant to be *huasa* provoked shame and laughter in Pilar, as it did in the case of Monica and Diana. They all laughed at how they used to be, how foolish and unaware of the feminine code of being silent and demure, and how much they had to *change* their language, their forms of communication, and even their behaviour in order to become domestic workers. Workers who came from rural areas were aware of being perceived as different and came to feel that being *huasas* belonged to a past, almost to a phase of childhood, but a phase that could reappear. Their inferiorisation is an affect transmitted through their work as domestic workers. Managing their ‘past’ – their inferiorisation – meant managing their ‘difference’ today, that is, negotiating their

identities within the historical racial and ethnic distinctions in contemporary Santiago that still defined them in terms of *good* and *bad* workers. Workers from rural areas had to manage with the endurance of the past, of the culture of servitude, of that time that racialised them as children, inferior and brute, with the legacy of the feminisation of this labour and their bodies (Ochoa, 2014), a time that stayed with them spite of the transformations in the organisation of domestic work. They still struggled for the recognition of their rights and with their ‘inferior’ position within households. It seems that their transformation enabled them to assimilate to their new roles as domestic workers, as *nanas*, but was never enough for them to be considered less inferior and as workers.

Migrant workers’ experience

In the case of migrant workers, racial and ethnic difference became problematic in a different way. Many Peruvian workers interviewed were aware of employers’ preferences towards them, either because of their level of education or their cooking, or because they were more dependent on their jobs for their visa and, therefore, more willing to accept worse working conditions. As Gutiérrez et al. (2014) have shown for the European case, Chilean employers’ perceptions are affected by the legal framework that both grants and endangers migrants’ rights. Migration Law 1,094 was created in 1975 under Pinochet’s dictatorship and is inspired by the notion of national security. It is a law created with the objective of protecting Chileans from external *dangers*, which in that period meant the possible influence of communist and anarchist ideas on the public and political domain. Under this law, regular migrants are allowed to enter Chile either as tourists or as workers, the latter needing a formal invitation from an employer. As workers, migrants are entitled to the same rights as Chilean workers. However, the law itself creates such conditions that migrant workers are at the mercy of employers’ practices. Many domestic workers enter with a tourist visa, which they can later change to a ‘subject to contract’ visa, to later obtain residence. In order to apply for the residency, workers must have a working contract with the same employer for at least two years and show the last 12 pensions contributions (paid by employers). The need to stay with the same employer,²¹ as well as depending on employer’s willingness to pay their contributions, puts domestic workers in a vulnerable position where their labour rights and negotiation capacities may be ‘put on hold’ or postponed in order to obtain the residency. Thus, as in the case of the UK (Anderson, 2014), the legal framework reinforces the notion of domestic migrant workers as

²¹ Workers are allowed to change but must inform the Migration Office and apply for a new visa with a new employer within 30 days. If migrant workers take longer than 30 days they may end up in a vulnerable situation.

servants, rather than workers with rights. This contributes to employers' racialised and devalued perceptions of migrants. Employers interviewed for this thesis showed preferences for migrant, and especially Peruvian, domestic workers because of their racialisation: being seen as more submissive, and the workers interviewed were aware of such preferences.

'Immigrants who have just arrived are super exploited; when I just arrived I did not have documents, so I arrived vulnerable, I would do everything employers asked. In a house two to three years to have the final visa, and there come the abuses, I was paid every three months, they dispose of you, they have your hours and time. I was conditioned to that, they had me. I felt discriminated against, she told me that there were three nanas who were called Ana, so that she was going to call me Sofia, she simply changed my name! One accepts that because one is afraid, because they are going to deport you, the bosses may pay you or not, if they don't want to they won't pay you.' (Ana, Peruvian, 43 years, worker).

Ana, who has lived in Chile for more than 10 years, knows and understands the difference between just arriving and having lived for more years in the country. For her, those first years represent a period of extreme vulnerability due to the limitations the legal and the visa conditions place on migrants, and on domestic workers in particular. *Belonging* to the host family, because of the 'subject to contract' visa and employers' abuse, creates a condition of subordination within households and makes it difficult to manage such condition. Not only are their labour rights put into question, but also their personhood (Anderson, 2000), and even –as in the case of Ana – their names. Ana's name is replaced, changed to comply with the employers' desires. They are also forced to change their history in order to become *nanas*. While many Chilean workers felt shame about the social attributions made of their history, Peruvians felt vulnerable, abused, and even anger at such attributions.

Thus, migrants – especially in the case of Peruvians – have to deal with the racialisation of their origin (based on nationality) and accept and/or confront their inferior position. A crucial distinction with the case of Chilean workers is that for them all these negotiations are new. Many migrants never worked as domestic workers in their countries, and this is their first experience in the field. Many Chilean workers started work in households very young, and so historical legacies and emotional bonds with employers have a more profound impact on their possibilities to resist. In the case of the migrant, however, it is the fear of being in an irregular status or being deported that effects their subordinated position as workers in Chilean households. Thus, for both workers, their

status and labour are devalued by the same logic (racialisation legacy) but by different means: Chileans by their history within the Chilean territory, and the migrants by their legal status.

I will describe further how many Chilean and migrant workers deal with racial and ethnic stereotypes, but at this point I argue that, although many of the workers suggested that they were *trabajadoras honradas* and were, therefore, good workers when good conditions were met, one can also see that it was not something they achieved or lived in their early experiences of domestic work (young girls in the case of Chilean, or the first experience in the case of migrants). Rather than being a given, *trabajadora honrada* was a result of long-lasting struggles: struggles with employers and even with themselves; a product of a process of acknowledging the worth of their labour and themselves. As I develop in the next section, the figure of the *trabajadora honrada* is the result of years of questioning of the power relations within homes, of understanding the emotional attachment it implied, and of de-naturalising their inferior position.

(De)Naturalisation of difference: on the performative power of domestic work

As I suggested in chapter four, ‘having a life’ is an ‘obvious thing’ for employers, and in order to have one, employers needed *good nanas*. The employers interviewed managed boundaries between themselves and workers through emotional labour, enabling them to benefit from class, ethnic and racial boundaries between them and workers – which echo broader forms of inequalities in society in general – to reproduce their own ‘superior’ status, and therefore justifying their ‘right’ to a ‘good life’. They naturalise their own status through emotional labour by marking closeness and distance with workers, and reproducing, on the one hand, loyal and trustworthy *nanas*, and on the other hand making visible and natural *nanas’* difference by making invisible their labour towards the reproduction of *Chilean happy families*. Thus, the visibility of their ‘natural’ difference makes possible the invisibility of their labour and the fragility of employers’ projects. This is how historical political discourses and imaginaries regarding difference and inferior/superior status are performed today and attached to people’s subjectivities and practices through intimate relations: in other words, how the political becomes intimate.

The *naturalisation of difference* – a specific form in which the political becomes intimate, or the political becomes justified through intimacy (Berlant, 2009) – is crucial as it enables the concealment of the processes by which power relationships, based on supposedly hierachal

positions, are formed in the performance of domestic work, avoiding the visibility of aspects that could describe equality between employers and workers (employers' racial wounds such as, for example, having similar origins of mestizaje and poverty). This notion of *naturalisation of differences* is, therefore, a product of the performative power of emotional labour and boundary management done by employers and has traces of the figures of the *servant* and *patrones*, and the supposedly natural inferiority of the first and superiority of the second. Furthermore, I am interested in understanding how this *naturalisation* (the attachment of such notion) is lived (if so) by workers, and how they perform and/or contest such naturalisation through everyday practices of domestic work that may lead towards the de-naturalisation of their 'difference' (inferiority) and employers' 'superiority'.

In reading the interviews one can interpret their responses as revealing a constant tension between a *naturalisation* and a *de-naturalisation of difference* within workers discourses, between the attachment and the questioning of difference. The *naturalisation* discourse was present in a small group of workers, those who started working when they were very young and have had poor contact with other workers (because they always lived where they worked, having little time of their own), or have just arrived in Chile and therefore do not know how to manage this new situation, or lack experience in political and union organisations. For them, this discourse was useful to understand why they were domestic workers, and if paid domestic work was the obvious labour they should perform. It was a discourse grounded in different lines of justifications which were based on the notion of being a *natural* effect of broader social order; one more related to religious beliefs, and the other more related to the effect of social class and education, that suggested that class division and their role as *servants* of upper classes was a *natural* situation.

'We are different, it is not because they say it, it is because we are, they have money, education, they have travelled more, in this world there has to be rich and poor, rich to give us work. I don't like it when they say that we are all equal, we have rights, but we are not all equal because there must be rich in this world to give us work, to my class, not everyone is professionals, that's how I think, a lot of people do not like how I think. We are here in this world to help each other, but we are here to help other people, the point is for them not to take too much advantage. ... I've heard a lot of people who claim against the rich, how they get richer ... but I think there has to be rich people with companies to give work to us. Not everyone has to be professional, the Lord did things so well, he gave some people the ability to study and to do business and others to work on more basic things, like us, to help people to get them to work, to do their things and we take care of their'

children. Equality sounds to me false, that we all have to be equal or have the same rights is false. We have rights; no one disputes that, but not all rights. Before, people had no right to anything, like slaves. And now we demand so much. One has to thank God, I go through many things, but people have to go through that to know what life is, we shouldn't be resentful.' (Diana, Chilean, 34 years, worker).

According to Diana, being different and serving the rich is only the natural order of things, an order justified by her social class and made by God, who gave each social class different capacities, giving her class the ability to *serve*, to *help* the rich perform their lives by taking care of their homes and their children. One can see the legacy of the figure of the *servant*, and its role in serving the elite, within Chilean history, a figure which represented one way that the elite had to obtain social status and economic benefits within colonial times (Araya, 2005), and that became crucial for economic order in the haciendas up until the mid 20th century (Bengoa, 1990) with the agrarian reforms. I suggest that this figure, rather than just *disappearing*, has transformed in order to assemble into a more modern and neoliberal rhetoric. Thus, today, as we saw in chapter two, the figure of the *servant* and the culture of servitude are intertwined with modern notions related to rights and gender discourse, juxtaposing different logics of justification of domestic work. Paid domestic work is that which allows but, at the same time, reveals the fragility of the Chilean democracy, its intention of being a modern country without changing pre-modern relations of servitude. Today, modern Chile co-exists with the culture of servitude, as servitude is the condition for the *Chilean happy family*. While upper-class women and the state can be framed as modern, working-class and migrant women are compelled to become servants of the nation, reproducing racial, class, and ethnic differences between women within the nation. One can see this in Diana's narrative. Even though she does not agree with the idea of equality and justifies her condition because of class difference and God's way, she does not think that the labour of serving the rich should mean that employers have the right to abuse their position of power. Thus, she distinguished between serving and being a slave.

Even though her account is very particular within the narratives of the workers interviewed, one could see how many workers confess to having agreed with this *naturalised* discourse at early stages of their life and only later learned that social class and difference was not only unnatural, but even that it could be changed. Monica, for example, started working at the age of eight in a *hacienda*, and for her, working there was the obvious and natural thing to do. Even though she did not want to, and preferred to study, she started working and saw it as almost fate. It was only later

in her life that she realised that she could have studied and that working in the *hacienda* was not fair, making a direct challenge to her condition as a servant.

'I lived in the countryside; I was the eldest of six sisters, my father died. The boss let us stay, we all started working at his home. I started as an assistant to the housekeeper. I used to give food to the dogs, the chickens, and the cats, collecting eggs, helping in the garden, carrying firewood for the kitchen, washing dishes, chopping vegetables, and doing the cleaning in the house. The housekeeper told me what to do, not the employer because he was single. I was sleeping there, I had a room. I would wake up early, go get my sisters and go to school. I was with them at school and also at weekends. It was not for me a job, I did it with pleasure, it was like another house ... Many workers do not like this work, but I think it's because they do not accept it, I accepted it as a girl and I enjoyed it, I always assumed it, I never questioned it, because I had no studies to do anything else.' (Monica, Chilean, 56 years, worker).

A similar sensation was felt by Alicia, who describes how power relations were in the mid 20th century in the countryside, and how she knew it was how things were but how she also felt how unfair it was for her to work in the *hacienda* while the children she was looking after (who were the same age) could study. Alicia also speaks about the employers' ownership of workers, and the justifications of such situation as natural. As workers describe, I suggest that ownership is a key element of culture of servitude that is cited today in the notion of 'being part of the family' with which workers struggle, an argument that I will further develop in this chapter. Alicia describes the unfairness of having to leave school to work in the employers' household.

'[Employers] took the [workers'] family as property and we all worked, I was a girl, it was a dualism, the bosses and us, they were owners of us, they were managing our lives, people were super humiliated, there was no possibility to rebel because that was the system, they were masters and lords in the countryside, they owned the lands. What I lived in the 50s was much better than what my older sisters lived; they lived a very patriarchal model. The bosses were going to look for girls to run errands for the orchards and for the harvests. I was a kitchen helper. I was in school but they asked my parents to send me to the main house to work. I did not want to, I did not want to live with them, you were locked up, and you had no contact with your family. There were 12 nanas at the hacienda. There was a common space for all of us. Then I became the nana of the patron's children. I was very uncomfortable, I wanted to rebel, to react. I talked to my sisters, but they told me to stay calm. I found it so terrible. The people did not see that I reacted because of an injustice'

and my mother told me to obey the patrona. My parents did not talk about this injustice. They were submissive, kind, had no speech.' (Alicia, Chilean, 66 years, worker).

Both Monica and Alicia describe this *natural* organisation between *patrones* and *servants* as part of the life in the countryside up until the mid 20th century and suggest that today these power relations have partly changed and that workers are aware that such organisation is not natural or even desired. In both their cases, as in others, workers point out that even though subordination was expected from them it could never be fully accomplished, revealing constant actions and situations where workers were either treated or demanded to be treated on more equal terms, or where workers rebelled directly against the household organisation or their employers, and demonstrating the fragility of 'difference', and hence the constant need for its reproduction. For example, Alicia describes how even when she was a young girl she would go off and play in the mud and return dirty to the *patrones'* household, and Monica speaks about how she would negotiate having Fridays free to go dancing. These accounts question the consistency, in real life, of the *naturalisation* discourse, showing its performative character.

In addition, while the employers shown in this thesis are more nostalgic in their recounting of the 'good past', workers are very clear and direct in declaring a distance from this period. I suggest that these different perceptions – within the *naturalisation of difference* discourse – underline the current relevance of the figure of the *servant* and the continuities, in modern logics, of the culture of servitude. Either because workers perceive this figure as no longer existing in the same way, or because employers long for the reappearance of this figure in migrant workers, the figure of the *servant* is still a legacy with which both workers and employers have to deal – it still underlines the notion of *nanas*. However, the figure of the *servant* seems to be less a reality – scholars question that total submissive and docile servants ever existed apart from in the desires and imaginaries of the elite (Stoler, 2009) – than a ghost that haunts images and the performance of paid domestic work, and tries to materialise itself in the label *nana*, a label that employers use to name workers and that workers fight against. Thus, the *difference* discourse intends to re-enact today through the figure of the *nana*, revealing its fragility and its constant need for re-attachment through intimate relationships.

It is in this context of struggle with the idea of the *servant* and the label *nana*, that a great majority of workers appropriate a discourse that *de-naturalises* hierarchical differences between employers and workers. It was through key experiences that workers became aware that their situations were

unfair and that they could be different. Extreme experiences of exploitation, desires to have their own spaces and lives and/or obtaining the residential visa (in the case of migrant workers) became key experiences that made them question and change their views regarding their subordinated positions within households, their emotional attachments towards the families they worked for, and their rights to better working conditions. It is with these experiences of intimate relations that difference is both reproduced and questioned. For example, Monica tells me about how she started to question the number of duties and the amount of free time she could manage in her work, a questioning that started when she wanted to obey her own desires.

'I had to entertain the girls, give them dinner, do their homework, what I did not understand of their homework they did with their parents. I was 13 years old then; I was only a little older than the girls. The parents bathed them. Then I would prepare dinner, wash up, around nine I would finish. Then I would go to my room or I would watch TV in their room when there was an entertaining movie, they invited me. On the weekend they would party and I would stay with the girls. Every 15 days I had a free Sunday. I never questioned whether that was normal or not, that started to be a problem when I was 18 because I liked going to parties, what I liked most was dancing cumbia, rock and roll. The parties were on Saturdays and we were dancing all night. Then I felt uncomfortable with the rules of the house, so I had to rebel against the bosses and also with my mother who was very traditional. But I was going to the parties anyway.' (Monica, Chilean, 56 years, worker).

Monica narrates her process of *de-naturalising* her working conditions when she started feeling the desire to dance, to have more free time for her own activities. The *natural order of things* is put into question when workers multiply their own spaces and privilege their time, creating a direct challenge to employers' request for constant availability. Another example is one that Silvia narrates in relation to a breaking point regarding the amount of abuse she had received from her employers.

'At 15 I came to Santiago to work indoors. I did not know anything about holidays; I worked there for 23 years since 1991. One day I went out and when I got back they were angry because they said that I had no right to leave. On my day off, I could leave at eight in the morning and had to return at eight at night, that was not fair. I came that night to go to bed and they told me to get to work, I told her it was my day off and that I didn't have to do anything, and [the boss] yelled at me, then I told her that I was leaving and she did not want me to leave. I left the next day with the help of a

lawyer who lived nearby with whom I went to the police and then I filed a labour abuse claim and because I had no rest, no holidays, and the same day I had to work, I had no private life. This always bothered me, in the early years I was so angry. They would not let me out. I woke up at 6am and went to bed at 11pm. I did the breakfast, I woke up the children to go to school, then I kept doing things, went back to lunch and so, I slept late. If I went to bed, my boss would get angry, I could not go to bed until 11pm, I had to keep working, serving coffee, they were incapable of serving a coffee when there were visits. If I was sitting in my room watching TV before 11pm she would get angry. When I arrived I was 15 years old, they were like my family, they went out everywhere with me, but later they did not, and things got worse. When I was shouted at it made me angry, I would start to cry.' (Silvia, Chilean, 57 years, worker).

In Silvia's case, she started work very young with a family and stayed with them for 23 years in spite of an abusive living situation. However, a breaking point for her was to question such abuse and other aspects of her work such as her employer's need to have her constantly available, even for things – such as serving coffee – that seemed beyond the employer's real needs and were related to petitions which naturalised her *servant* position. Thus, Silvia began to de-naturalise the idea of being 'part of the family' and her employer's demands for servitude.

In the case of Julia, a Bolivian domestic worker, the isolation she felt from living in her workplace, her employer not letting her go outside, and the threat of being detained by policemen made her stay in a prison-like situation. This situation was difficult to change because of her fear, and it was only when she started losing this fear that she began to question her labour conditions. With the help of another worker, and with obtaining her residential visa, she could leave her job.

'When I arrived I cried so much, I thought how it was for someone who lived in a prison, here I could do nothing, I had no life, that's why I do not know Santiago, I did not have the visa. Thanks to another girl, my boss let me go out at night to jog, the Chilean girl had that permission and I was allowed too. I had to go out with her. But over time I was losing my fear, and with the visa I was able to change my job to one with better conditions, one where I was not tied up all day.' (Julia, Bolivian, 42 years, worker).

For different reasons – having their own desires, living through abusive experiences, needing to obtain a visa – Chilean and migrant workers were able to actively question a key condition (very much desired by employers) of the *good nana* figure, that is, the permanent and constant

availability that workers are asked to have for the employers' families. I will further develop the importance of these specific motivations (personal desire, anger and legal recognition) in the articulation of strategies and forms of resistance, but here I would like to address the importance of these experiences in questioning the *natural order of things*, workers' apparent different inferior positions within households, their racialisation, and employers' power over their time and movement. This *de-naturalisation* of their difference, inferiority and availability has a direct impact on their own lives, as well as directly affecting the dynamics within domestic work and power relations. I argue that, in part, it explains employers' complaints regarding the loss of, or difficulties in finding, the *good nana*. The movement towards *de-naturalisation* questions the 'natural' disposition of workers to be available, *truly* care and desire to be the *good nana*, demonstrating the performative power of both discourses (*naturalisation and de-naturalisation*).

Through workers' accounts, we see evidenced the performative character of these discourses: they need constant repetition for their survival and they produce powerful effects on the reproduction of difference. In the case of the *naturalisation of difference* discourse, on the one hand it produces notions of superiority and inferiority between employers and workers (in spite of its inconsistency with reality), and on the other hand, it does so by reinforcing repetitive practices of constant subordination and racialisation of workers. Similar to the case of employers, where this discourse was part of everyday practices of boundary management within intimate spaces, this discourse in the case of workers seems to be a product, rather than a pre-justification, of constant repetition of their supposedly natural subordination.

It is a product of the 'training' process, described by employers, in chapter four, as an almost 'natural' and abstract way in which workers learn to do domestic work within their households, but that workers describe in very concrete ways. However, the *de-naturalisation* discourse is a process of becoming aware of the *unfairness* of their inferior position, provoking them to question the 'natural' order of the household. This affective process is a direct questioning of the politics of these intimate spaces, of their labour and of upper-class families' statuses. As Gutiérrez (2010) argues, domestic work produces value not only through its productivity, but also because it circulates affective values such as inferiority and superiority.

'Domestic work, thus, reveals the affective dimension of labor by connecting its value production to the circulation of feelings and emotions. Through affects notions of value, translated into gestures of "superiority" and "inferiority" in the households, are expressed by women's bodies and

impressed on other women's bodies, leaving a corporeal sense of devaluation or estimation.' (Gutiérrez, 2010; 127).

For Gutiérrez (2010), it is this corporeal sense of devaluation and exploitation felt in workers' bodies that demonstrates the affective and performative value of domestic work. By declaring the *unfairness*, workers do not only question their inferior position, but the affective value of their labour, and the lack of equality between them and employers, and the supposedly superior position of employers. Thus, feeling that the abuse received is unfair becomes an affective form (Gutiérrez, 2010; Ahmed, 2004) with which workers – in modern labour relations – resist the culture of servitude within employers' homes. In the next section I will discuss examples in which workers start to question the 'superior' condition of employers through everyday actions and affects (such as anger), the ways in which workers perceive the *unfairness* of their situations, and how workers 'learn' to de-naturalise the 'natural order'.

Anger as an intimate–political affect for the resistance of difference

Workers' narratives and experiences in relation to their 'different' status and the naturalisation and questioning of such status, are forms in which the political is reproduced through intimate relations between workers and employers, revealing the performative power of paid domestic work in the reproduction and challenge of political discourses. Everyday practices of cooking, cleaning and caring are intertwined within affective and power relations between employers and workers, and workers produce and challenge their own status, labels and names within these practices. I argue that, through intimate practices, political discourses, distinctions and orders are reproduced and challenged.

The process of *de-naturalisation* – the questioning of the *fairness* of their situation and of their employer's status – is one that comes to be a process of dealing with abusive and violent situations where their difference justifies their discrimination, lack of rights, racialisation, and constant subordination within households. It happens through the acknowledgement of their own personal desires for autonomy, their own spaces and their own time. Thus, exploitative experiences and their own desires are key sources of the political question for the *fairness* of their own, and their employers', status and everyday relations, which are mainly felt through anger: anger regarding the 'naturalisation' of their lack of personal and social rights and employers' abuse. As Gutiérrez

(2010) suggests, the affective character of domestic work enables the questioning of power relations:

'... the social fabric of domestic work is shaped by affection, the expression and exchange of affects. Affects are here not just perceived as emotions and feelings, but as intensities, sensations and bodily reactions disturbing, but also stretching and reaffirming, power relations.' (Gutiérrez, 2010; 5).

Anger and frustration are affects which are transmitted through domestic work and that are part of the production of value of such labour (Gutiérrez, 2010). They are also political affects that allow a challenge to such labour conditions. Audre Lorde (1984) described anger as a response (to racism) to an unjust and structural violence lived by women of colour, an emotion with which one lives due to several experiences of oppression. For Lorde (1984), anger is not a destructive but a creative energy towards the challenging of structural and everyday violence.

'Every woman has a well-stocked arsenal of anger potentially useful against those oppressions, personal and institutional, which brought anger into being. Focused with precision it can become a powerful source of energy serving progress and change. And when I speak of change, I do not only mean a simple switch of positions or a temporary lessening of tensions, nor the ability to smile or feel good. I am speaking of a basic and radical alteration in those assumptions underlining our lives.' (Lorde, 1984; 127).

I am in agreement with Lorde; anger is a political affect that is lived by workers and which functions towards the dismantling of the 'natural order', of their 'inferior position', of their racialisation because of their difference, and employers' 'superior' status. I will describe concrete ways in which anger is a powerful political affect for the challenging of difference within domestic work in upper-class homes in Chile, to later conclude with the consequences these acts of challenging have on the reproduction of upper-class families and the idea of the *Chilean happy family*.

In the context previously described, workers *de-naturalise* their inferior status through the performance of domestic work. Personal desires, abusive experiences or obtaining a visa are some of the motivations that produce anger within workers, provoking them to not only question their position and the social order within the household, but also to start demanding transformations. It is

through various practices – either through verbal communication, or non-verbal actions such as not doing a specific task, or not assuming emotional bonds with children, etc. – that workers express their anger and question their relationship with employers and therefore the ‘harmonious’ reproduction of *Chilean happy families*.

1. Questioning time and pain of serving others

*'The routine begins with me at dawn,
Washing the dishes, making the bed, sweeping the street,
Watering the plants, serving breakfast, buying bread.
That's life in Chile for a domestic worker.
Kitchen clock stop now because time wants to reach me.
Kitchen clock stop now because time wants to reach me.

The poor are forced and unrecognised, serving with pleasure to strangers.
They feel happy with my work and they do not realise that at moments my soul feels pain.
Kitchen clock stop now because time wants to reach me.
Kitchen clock stop now because time wants to reach me.

I left my family to go to serve, even that in my soul I have pain.
I miss my parents my children too, with my child I know that someday I will return.
Kitchen clock stop now because time wants to reach me,
Kitchen clock stop now because time wants to reach me.'*

(The Kitchen Clock Song (1995) by Isabel, Chilean domestic worker).

I heard this song in SINTRACAP (the domestic workers’ union) in Santiago, a song that talks about the lack of personal time and the pain of giving all their time, labour and care to serving upper-class families. Isabel explained to me that she wrote this song not only because she felt pain, but most importantly because she felt anger. As in the case of Alicia and Monica, Isabel feels anger regarding employers’ demands for all her time and care. It is not only a sorrow for not being able to be with her parents and children, but also to a clock that does not let her rest, a constant demand of her time and the labour that exploits her. This song reflects upon the different temporalities that function within domestic work: a worker’s own personal time with her family and the pain of losing such time; the employer’s constant demand of a worker’s availability and labour; colonial times with the figure of the *servant* and the action of serving; and modern times which demand efficiency and the performance of tasks in a time which does not allow for the worker’s personal life. Isabel’s song

questions the simultaneity of such temporalities, situated in a history of violence and exploitation, and the pains it costs her and others in the constant need for survival. Pain and anger are affects transmitted through domestic labour onto workers (Gutiérrez, 2010). However, it is not only a critique of the lack of time, of working against time in their workplace, but also a demand for her own time.

The questioning of serving others and the demand for *time of one's own*, can question and endanger the harmonious reproduction of upper-class families – workers, as in Isabel's case, may want to change from living in their workplace to renting their own room or house, providing time for themselves or for caring for their own families, and taking away the possibility of being constantly available for employers. Anger – from being in pain and *lacking time of one's own* – questions the servility transmitted onto workers and becomes a point of awareness of the *unfairness* of serving others.

2. Questioning being part of the family

Together with questioning employers' demand for constant availability and servitude, workers also question the emotional bonds built through time with employers and their families. For Diana, as for many other women interviewed (Chilean and migrant), she was very emotionally involved with her employer's children, in her case because her employer had depression and constantly asked for her help with the children. This connection resulted in Diana often living through abusive situations. While she wanted to leave her work because it was too demanding, her employer would beg her to stay, manipulating (according to Diana) her emotions. This manipulation led only to more exploitation, motivating Diana to question her emotional attachment towards her employer and the very idea of her being 'part of the family'.

'You put up with it a lot, she asked me not to leave, she had a problem of depression because her son did not eat. She thanked me for understanding and listening. But I do not know anything about them anymore. I also told her things because we were both alone. We did everything together. I think you are not part of the family, even though they make you feel part of the family, but I told her that I had my own family and that I worked for her. I was trying to mark a difference. You know you work for a while and you can raise the kids but then you never know about them. I think they told me I was part of the family because they wanted to manipulate me. One feels more responsible for them; it is already a responsibility to take care of the children and the house. It is not a pleasant

job, not all are good employers. They play with us, only if they appreciate you they would pay the wage taxes, that's why one is not part of the family.' (Diana, Chilean, 34 years, worker).

Diana suggests that 'being part of the family' was a way of manipulating her to stay for more time, and it did not respond to a 'true' care on behalf of employers (who did not pay her wage taxes). The discrepancy between being named as 'part of the family' and not being truly cared for provoked anger in Diana as she felt she was being exploited by the family, moving her to question her emotional relationship with her employer, establishing more limits between her and the family, and eventually leaving. While employers use the notion of 'being part of the family' to reinforce power relations and emotional bonds with workers, workers feel it as another form of abuse. Feeling anger towards the false notion of 'being part of the family' can, thus, lead to the questioning of their inferiorisation, a demand for their own rights, and instability in the reproduction of the *Chilean happy family*, a notion founded in the needs of employers and the invisibility of workers' demands.

3. Questioning employers' maternal skills

While the questioning of the workers' constant availability and the emotional bonds between them and employers speak about reflections that workers have regarding their own situations and status within homes, other forms of resistance go beyond the demand for their own rights and directly critique the status of the employer. One example of this is the critique of employers' maternal skills, a key aspect of 'Chilean modern women' subjectivity, and of employers' 'superior' status. After speaking with Peruvian workers – those preferred by employers because of their 'loving' character towards children – it became clear that having a more critical view on their employers' mothering skills was a common argument.

'Here the children are in command, they manipulate the parents and the parents let them, instead of correcting, they congratulate them, it should not be like that, the child does what he wants. One is perplexed. I do not like how they breed here.' (Marisol, Peruvian, 53 years, worker).

Marisol, as many other Peruvian women, directly criticises her employer's maternal skills by suggesting that it is children, and not mothers, who have control within Chilean homes, a situation that angers her as this is not how 'families are supposed to function'. She compares the employer's maternal skills with her own, or with her mother's, comparing, at the same time, Chilean and Peruvian forms of upbringing. It is curious that while many employers choose to employ Peruvian

workers because of their ‘loving’ dispositions towards children (defined by employers as the ideal contemporary *nanas* in chapter four), Peruvian workers themselves critique employers’ maternal roles. This critique can be interpreted in, at least, two related ways. On the one hand, Peruvian workers become aware of employers’ preferences and empower themselves as ‘better carers’ and therefore with the right to critique employers (questioning their ‘inferior’ position). On the other hand, this empowerment can mean the direct questioning of employers’ status, as it questions the core fibre of their superiority (maternity) and of upper-class families’ superiority (reproduction of children and the nation). Thus, workers’ anger allows them to critique their inferior position within households and their devalued labour, as well as employers’ maternal skills, existing like a fracture within the reproduction of the *Chilean happy family* and its relation to the reproduction of the nation.

4. Questioning and teaching employers to be clean

Workers do not only critique employers’ status (for example, their maternal skills), they also directly challenge employers’ supposedly natural knowledge, authority, and superiority. Pilar became tired of having to constantly re-organise and clean her employer’s clothes, especially their dirty underwear, warning that she would get *la indiá* (angry) one day, and so she did. She told her employer she was filthy and that if she wanted cleanliness she also had to be clean, *teaching* her not to be disorganised, crazy and a fighter. It is interesting to note how Pilar previously showed shame towards being *huasa*, a name used to label women from rural areas, but when she feels anger, she appropriates the word *indiá* (to get indian), using in a positive way her indigenous and rural origin. While *huasa* was a name given by employers to impose her subordinated position, *indiá* works towards Pilar’s empowerment of her origin and allows her to set limits of power relations within her employer’s home and to challenge the purity/dirty distinction.

‘You do everything and they leave everything messy, you have to do three times the toilet, but she says ‘you have to do it every time I ask’. I told a friend ‘I’m going to get la indiá and I’m going to stop her’ and my friend says, ‘you cannot do that, she’s the boss’. I said, ‘you sweep and get trampled on but not me’, ‘but you cannot do it, it’s disrespectful’, she says, ‘you have to respect her and accept how she treats you’. I told my boss that she is rude and that her house was disgusting, I told her it was a mess. I raised my voice because she did it first. I told her that she was filthy, that if she demands cleaning she also needs to be clean, because one works to the rhythm of the boss. I

grabbed her panties and threw them in the trash, I told her and she learned. She learned a lot of things from me, not to be so filthy, disorderly and crazy.' (Pilar, Chilean, 34 years, worker).

Not many workers suggested that they ‘taught’ things to employers. However, Pilar not only questions employers’ authority but also suggests that her employer learned to be a better person thanks to her. Power relations of inferiority/superiority and servitude, regarding the act of cleaning and being clean, are challenged, as it is Pilar the one teaching and not her employer. This inversion of roles is, I suggest, a direct challenge to power relations and employers’ authority within homes, a direct questioning of the difference between workers and employers, and a direct critique to the ‘natural’ order of homes and of the functioning of the *Chilean happy family*. However, while the critique of the natural order can change everyday relationships between workers and employers, it does not necessarily endanger the figure of the *Chilean happy family*. As I have shown, the success of the *Chilean happy family* functions through the repetition of domestic work, and any critique shows both its fragility and its performative power. I suggest that it is not isolated acts but the constant act of making visible that which is intended to be invisible – making visible the labour of domestic workers and the fragility of the difference between workers and employers – which moves towards the questioning of the exploitative nature of domestic work and the figure of the *Chilean happy family*.

Conclusions

I have argued that domestic work and employer/worker relations become an exceptional space to observe and analyse the politics of intimacy and the intimacy of politics. Domestic work has a performative power in both reproducing and challenging class, racial, and gender distinctions based on historical and situated legacies of feminisation and racialisation based on inferiority and superiority distinctions through intimate relationships. In addition, I have put into tension employers’ accounts of harmonious homes and their difference to workers’, by highlighting the affective responses of workers’ experience. As Gutiérrez (2010) argues,

'Giving domestic workers a concrete face and analyzing domestic work as affective labor represent an erasure of the dominant impersonal script in which value is produced as a "neutral" abstract

code. Further, it suffuses abstract categories of value and labor with the corporeal and emotional fabric from which our lives and encounters are constructed.' (Gutiérrez, 2010; 145).

The examples described in this chapter are key for the understanding of the affective labour of domestic work, and the value of producing inferiority/superiority distinctions, as well as questioning the difference between employers and workers. In their narrations, workers move towards making visible that which is constantly devalued: workers' labour and the functionality of workers' difference. By revealing workers' labour, exploitation and subordination, and the ways in which such situations are transmitted through affects of shame and anger, I described how such abuse is constantly questioned. I argued that workers are not only subject to subordination. Rather their everyday performance of domestic work also produces the space for questioning of such subordination and their own political subjectivity. These subjectivities respond to power relations of exploitation and subordination, and to their own interpretation of these experiences and what they define as *fair*, articulating political subjectivities that are embedded in intimate and emotional experiences such as anger. Sensations of *unfairness* regarding the inferiority/superiority distinction, and of the feminisation and racialisation legacies, are felt by workers through anger, becoming the political intimate (Lyman, 1981). As Cock (1980) showed in the case of workers in South Africa and Gutiérrez (2010) in the case of migrant workers in Europe, workers feel anger towards inequalities and the demand of servitude.

Thus, through acts of resisting in intimate spaces and relationships, political distinctions and discourses are fissured and de-naturalised, both enabling and endangering the reproduction of the *Chilean happy family*. Understanding the affective character of domestic work allows us to read more complex forms of both reproducing and challenging power relations, as power is not just transmitted within domestic work, but also perform and contested. *Nana* and 'being part of the family' transmit servitude and abuse, but such notions are responded to with the *trabajadora honrada* and anger, demonstrating workers' political possibilities and the performativity of difference.

CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSIONS

A critique of the Chilean democracy.

In this thesis I have looked at paid domestic work as an intimate-political site where difference is performed within the (dis)continuities of a culture of servitude in the context of neoliberal Chile. I have argued that the production of difference happens in the contexts of the coexistence of these servitude logics with more ‘modern’ discourses regarding women’s rights. The legacy of the figure of the *servant* takes new forms in a neoliberal society based on the expectations of having a *Chilean happy family*. These new forms are produced and sustained through the employment of domestic workers by wealthy families, and do not only reproduce their class but also their racial status. It is in the affective relationships between workers and employers that we can see the reproduction of broader social contradictions related to class status, racial difference and gender roles in a ‘modern’ Chile.

By looking at the complex emotional and affective relations between employers and workers I observed the importance of the management of the boundaries between them in dealing with the ‘nanny problem’, the possibility of mixing, or the danger that the invisibility of their difference had for employers. Phrases such as ‘workers are not like they used to be’ or ‘homes and families are having more difficulties in coping with everyday life’, mirror the performative power of paid domestic work in producing neoliberal demands regarding happiness and women’s rights. Inspired by Gutiérrez’s (2010) understanding of domestic work as affective labour, and Berlant’s (2011) reading of intimacy as a place of political dispute, I suggested that in the Chilean case the figure of the *Chilean happy family* does not only circulate, but, most importantly, is reproduced through worker/employer relationships, showing the performative power of paid domestic work in the reproduction of national notions of family and gendered expectations of happiness. I read this phenomenon through the careful analysis of interviews with both employers and workers, gaining comprehension of the fruitfulness of researching intimacy. What follows is a review of the key arguments of each chapter, after which I will share some final reflections regarding contemporary Chilean democracy.

Review of key arguments

In chapter one, I introduced this thesis by making the case for studying paid domestic work in Chile. Drawing upon the ‘nanny problem’, that is, the danger of the reduction of difference between workers and employers, I argued that paid domestic work performs the white Chilean nation and the racial and class status of the upper classes. *Nana* is a name that gives continuity to the figure of the *servant* in modern terms, that marks workers as different but in a familial and affective language; maintaining power relations between workers and employers today. By looking at the exceptionality discourse and the family crisis debates, I proposed to read the ‘nanny problem’ as a symptom of colonial wounds regarding upper classes’ whiteness and the figure of the family as a symbol of national unity, represented by upper-class families. Having *servants* – internal others – becomes a strategy for upper-class families to conceal their colonial and racial wounds and reproduce their family lifestyle. Paid domestic work becomes, thus, a key node to understand these discourses in the reproduction of the patriarchal and racist organisation of both domestic and public spaces, questioning such division, and, therefore, becoming a practice based on political distinctions reproduced within an intimate rhetoric, revealing its performative power.

In chapter two, I provided a critical review of the literature on paid domestic work, paying close attention to historical debates that take into account gender, class, race, and origin to understand the social and economic value of this practice. Drawing upon historical and contemporary examples in the Chilean case, I analysed the feminised and racialised aspects of this labour, intertwined with class difference, to further problematise the importance of national narratives in the configuration of paid domestic work and their role in the reproduction of what I have named the *Chilean happy family* in neoliberal Chile. It is in this chapter that I provided a sociological definition of paid domestic work as a performative intimate–political site, that is, a site where both workers and employers produce and reproduce notions of gender, racial and class difference linked to national narratives, narratives that are not always coherent, and work through emotional and affective relations. In chapter three, I reflect upon researching intimacy and intimacy in research. I analyse about the importance of intimacy in interviewing the performative power of domestic work and of the performativity of difference.

In chapter four, I worked through Berlant’s (2011) notion of intimacy; that is, a form of communication grounded in the expectations of ‘having a life’. I showed that employers declared a desire to ‘have a happy family’, one which meant having ‘good and happy’ children, a working

husband and a beautiful house. Employers feel the need to have both a happy family life and a professional life, creating different strategies to fulfil these gendered neoliberal demands. In order to organise all these requirements, employers feel that ‘having’ a domestic worker is a necessity, one that cannot be avoided; and the worker herself has to have specific characteristics: she must be someone who knows her subordinate position; who is proactive with domestic chores; and who is willing to exclude her own personal life from interfering with the ‘harmony’ of employers’ homes.

In addition, having a domestic worker is not always an unproblematic condition for employers. Emotional bonds, dependency, and having to deal with workers are problems for older and younger generations of employers, who either feel that workers no longer perform their duties with the ‘right’ (servile) attitude, or with genuine care, or feel guilty employing other women to perform their own duties as housewives. Traditional and modern definitions of middle- and upper-class housewives, and women’s subjectivities, become points of conflict – negotiated within employer/worker relationships. I argued that employers’ intentions of ‘having a life’ are affected and challenged because of employers’ complex relations with workers based on employers’ simultaneous desire for and rejection of domestic workers. Workers are desired as they enable the reproduction of employers’ lives and their notions of home; and are rejected as they represent a threat. Having a *Chilean happy family* becomes a cruel object of desire: one that promises happiness, but that is never possible – without conflict – in everyday practices. In this context, racial and class differences are managed by employers by distinguishing between the ‘good’ and the ‘bad’ *nanas*: the first being ideal workers who enable the natural reproduction of family life, the second representing a danger to such goal.

I suggested that both the reproduction of an upper-class lifestyle and the management of difference are based on the continuity of a culture of servitude: that is, a colonial institution based on gendered and racial coloniality of power that naturalises the right to be served of those considered superior, and the duty to serve of those considered inferior. The culture of servitude is performed today in the relationships between workers and employers. The culture of servitude aids employers in dealing with their expectations and the difficulties of fulfilling the neoliberal promise of happiness. In this sense, employers are able to obtain gender and class status as housewives and autonomous women, concealing the neoliberal contradictions, making the *Chilean happy family* project possible and rightfully theirs.

The labour performed by domestic workers, and the management of difference between employers and workers in upper-class homes, is invisibilised in order for the *Chilean happy family* to be seen as a natural effect of the upper classes. The ‘dirty work’ is invisibilised; but at the same time, racial and class differences that constitute the production of the elite’s status as white, superior and, therefore, with the right to servitude and a ‘good life’ are made visible.

As in colonial settings (Stoler, 1995), having a domestic worker today represents class and racial status, it makes employers, their families and their houses whiter. Ally (2013) researches detergent ads in South Africa to understand the raced-gendered of labour and paid domestic work. She argues that ‘detergent ads (together with other kinds of cultural performances) domesticated a relation between race and labour that made whiteness justifiable to itself’ (Ally, 2013; 333–4). Having a beautiful and clean house provides employers class status, and employing domestic workers makes employers’ households white. The visibilisation of whiteness, in the Chilean case, is justified through a discourse of naturalisation of difference between employers and workers – making workers naturally servants, performing a colonial legacy of racialisation. In this sense, the figure of the *servant* and the act of ‘serving’ is made visible in everyday practices within homes in order to reproduce the racial status of the upper classes. Thus, ‘having a *good nana*’, becomes a symbol of class and racial status.

In order for this to be possible, however, employers define those *good nanas* by doing boundary work with workers’ proximity and by racialising them. Very specific characteristics of *good nanas* are desired: docile and submissive workers who are always available and motivated, transmitting positive affects towards employers’ families. Definitions of *good nanas* vary through time and from different generations of employers; however, they are all based on a nostalgic version of the figure of the *servant*, and Peruvian *nanas* in particular become the contemporary representatives of such a figure. In order to have *good nanas*, employers perform emotional labour as a strategy to both create a bond of loyalty and define workers’ inferior position. This emotional labour includes the training and teaching of workers in upper-class values and lifestyles; demonstrating the performative power of paid domestic work in reproducing class and racial status for employers. For employers from older generations imitation is a way of training workers, for younger generations imitation is a threat to their distinction.

In chapter five, I described the performative power of domestic work in concealing employers’ poor and mestizo origins, together with defining workers’ inferiority and racialisation because of their

origins and sexuality. In the context of the Chilean neoliberal democracy, employers feel threatened by the promise of equality and by workers' apparent closeness to them, so new forms of differentiation between employers and workers are created. Together with looking at these new forms of differentiation, I questioned in this chapter the newness of such closeness and proposed that employers' and workers' racial and class differences have never been as fixed as employers portray. Rather than a reality, racial and class difference is more a performative effect of moral notions of whiteness. Inspired by Stoler's (1995) argument regarding the formation of the European self as the product of intimate and everyday relations and boundary work between colonisers and their internal *others* (servants), I argued that Chilean employers employed racialised domestic workers in order to produce their own whiteness. Rather than having a different origin, both employers and workers share a history of poverty and *mestizaje*.

I analysed the formation of the Chilean colony, being the poorest of Latin America, contrasting this with the exceptionality discourse that describes Chile as whiter and richer than its neighbours. Upper-class developed the desire to be more European, which understood alongside Chile's independence and persists today in a more diverse upper-class. Today, Chile's upper classes still wish to self-identify as white and as having racial superiority. I argued that, both in the past and today, employers require the constant performative act of differentiating themselves from the rest of society and from their internal *others* for the reproduction of their racial and social distinction, giving continuity to a culture of servitude. Rather than the difference, it is the closeness between lower and upper classes that creates anxiety for employers. In this sense, the employment of an *other* racialised domestic worker becomes a key strategy of concealment of such mestizo and poor origins.

In this chapter, I analysed how closeness with workers affects employers' self-definitions as naturally rich and white, and provokes feelings such as disgust, uncomfortableness, and being in danger. With the figure of the *bad nana*, employers, I suggested, define workers as different due to their cultural 'origins' and sexual practices, and thereby manage the dangers of closeness. Defining workers as pathetic or weird becomes a strategy to put limits to workers' demonstrations of closeness – of being like employers. For employers, who have a need to reproduce their racial and class status, certain attitudes or intentions go beyond workers' social position.

Hence, *bad nanas* are those considered untrustworthy and uneducated because of their problematic and violent origins: rural, urban, foreign, indigenous, poor. They are therefore more prone to violent

behaviours, poor hygienic practices and more promiscuous sexual relations. It is, thus, their origin that explains workers' racialisation and employers' superior status. This situation, I argued, reflects an original wound: upper-class insecurities regarding their whiteness. Within the context of the coloniality of power, I claimed that after colonisation the new upper classes were also part of the mestizaje process and not skin-colour white. However, new and diverse strategies of appropriating whiteness as their natural status were performed. I provided a key historical account of the formation of the upper classes, and the importance of both having and differentiating with servants as ways of reproducing their 'authentic *blanquitud*'. Together with defining workers' origins as deviant, employers also defined workers' sexuality in negative terms. This definition and need to control workers' sexuality allows employers to self-define as morally superior and for them to reproduce their racial status.

In chapter six, I analysed how servility and the culture of servitude become affects transmitted onto workers' bodies, and how they react to those affects. I contrasted the figures of the *good* and *bad nana* with the figure of the *trabajadora honrada* (honourable worker), suggesting that the figure of the *trabajadora honrada* appears both when workers are aware of the existence of employers' expectations and in power relations with employers. In both situations, workers may desire to defend their devalued position as *servants*. I argued that workers question their racial and class difference and the naturalisation of their subordinated and racialised position, producing a direct challenge to the harmonious reproduction of upper-class families and of the culture of servitude. Workers both 'learn' their inferior position within homes and deconstruct such positioning through actions and emotions such as anger; challenging the notion of 'being part of the family', and the reproduction of the *Chilean happy family*; demonstrating the affective and performative power of paid domestic work.

A critique of the Chilean democracy

According to Anderson (2014), in the British case it is through everyday intimate relations between employers and workers that national projects and consensus, such as *Britishness* and the normative figure of the family, are reproduced. In the Chilean case, paid domestic work represents a particular form of commodification of domestic work; one that is based on the continuity of colonial legacies of racialisation and feminisation of servitude, and which enables upper-class women and families to reproduce their privileged lifestyles and live the modern gender promise of autonomy, while having

a happy family. This combination of modern and colonial organisation of upper-class households can be observed in the figure of the *Chilean happy family*. This figure has become a consensus – related to broader political and national projects of the Chilean modern democracy – and is desired in private households. It is a consensus related to a democracy that declares it stands for gender equality and labour rights but continues to see working-class women and domestic workers as racialised bodies in the service of care and domestic duties. It is a democracy that is both built upon and provides continuity for the culture of servitude.

A legacy that continues to haunt the figure of the *Chilean happy family* today is the notion that the aesthetic value of upper-class families is linked to ‘national unity’, something that Chilean feminists have criticised since the 1980s. Further studies suggest that this aesthetic representation of the middle- and upper-class family was one that was bi-parental, white, and *well constituted*, and is the same aesthetic still promoted in media and advertising today (PNUD, 2012). During the military coup, and thereafter, upper classes and the figure of the *Chilean happy family* became the political subject of national stability and later of the *democratic transition* from the 1990s onwards.

During the most violent and brutal period of the military and civic dictatorship (1973–1989), feminist activists and theorists fought and campaigned for democracy. Their theme, *democracia en la nación y en la casa (y en la cama)* (democracy in the nation and at home [and in bed]), echoed feminist struggles in the Western world, making a direct relation between the ‘private’ and the political, between intimacy and the ‘public’ sphere. Making the political personal is also a reaction to the efforts made during the dictatorship, by the political and economic elite, to unite the people with the national project, especially through the conflation of family and nation – a conflation which would supposedly allow social harmony in a moment of crisis. It is with this union that the coup promoted social cohesion by elevating the figure of the nuclear (heterosexual, white, middle-class) family, and defining it as guarantor of political and economic stability.

Nowadays, with the *democratic transition*, this notion of family not only continues, but is perfected by adding the figure of the *modern woman*, one that can manage being a professional/worker, a housewife and a good mother. This figure was promoted and represented as a key person in the new modern and neoliberal Chilean society (Castillo, 2016), used in social policies within the new democratic governments, allowing them to define themselves as having modern gender equality ideals. The *Chilean happy family* is an ideal that circulates and promotes both traditional and modern definitions of the Chilean democracy and is felt and desired by employers. Furthermore,

this ideal gives continuity to the culture of servitude every time upper-class families employ domestic workers. Paid domestic work performs and, at the same time, reveals the fragility of the *Chilean democracy*. It is the dichotomy of wanting to be a *modern country* without changing pre-modern relations of servitude. Today, *modern Chile* co-exists with a culture of servitude, making servitude the condition for the *Chilean happy family*. While upper-class women and the State can be framed as modern, working-class and migrant women are compelled to become servants of the nation, reproducing racial, class and ethnic difference between women. Revealing this condition becomes a feminist strategy to destabilise the norm of the *Chilean happy family* in order to critically address the *Chilean promise* of being a modern democracy for everyone and to show the performative power of paid domestic work in reproducing such norm.

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Appendices

Consent Form: Interviews

Original and signed consent forms are not included as they show interviewees' name, which is to remain confidential.

'Performance of domestic work in Chile: negotiating ethnic and racial distinctions'.

Through this document I request your consent to participate in the research project 'Performance of domestic work in Chile: negotiating ethnic and racial distinctions'. The objective of this study is to understand how ethnic and racial distinctions are negotiated, produced and transformed within domestic work, between Chilean employers and Mapuche and Peruvian workers. The project is being developed by me, Rosario Fernandez (sociologist, PhD student at Goldsmiths, University of London). The study results will be published in the final thesis and will be publicly available.

Your participation in this study is optional. There will be no problem if you decide not to participate in any moment of the research process. Participants are selected by being an employer, a domestic worker or part of an organization that focuses in domestic work or immigration. You are invited to participate through an interview whose purpose is to know your thoughts on changes and continuities of domestic labour in time and everyday practices that characterizes this work. The interview would last about 60 minutes and would be recorded and transcribed for its use in my thesis. The content of the interview is confidential and anonymous. This means that the transcript and the audio file will be saved in my personal computer and not be released to third parties. Citing excerpts from your speech for the thesis will not use your own name or that of the company or employers with whom you work with. A fantasy name will be used instead. All information you supply will be kept confidential according to the law 19.628 of 1999 on protection of privacy and protection of personal data. No source will be released, unless it is required by law. Transcripts and audio files remain stored in the archives of this research, will be kept by me, and could be used for future academic publications in my charge.

I do not foresee any risk or harm caused to you by participating in this study. As for the benefits, you will not receive remuneration or have any tangible benefit involved in the study. Your participation in this study is voluntary. It is the right of all respondent to receive a good treatment, choose not to answer any questions, ask all questions you need to hold a conversation and to be

understood. You can withdraw from the research at any time you want, during the development of the project or revoke the use of the information provided by communicating its decision to the responsible researcher. If appropriate, you may request copies of the reports generated by this research.

In the case that any illegal activities or evidence of physical or emotional abuse of children and others, I am obligated to inform the relevant local authorities.

If you have questions during any stage of the study, you may contact me: Rosario Fernandez
sop01rf@gold.ac.uk

I am stating all this to you because the decision to participate in a study must be informed. To ensure it is part of the ethical duties of social research.

This document will be signed in two copies, one of which will be left to the respondent.

I declare to know the nature and scope of this research project and the type of participation that I will have in it. My doubts have been satisfactorily resolved. And I consent to participate in the project, which is expressed in the signature of this copy, which I will be given a copy.

Rosario Fernandez

PhD Student

Goldsmiths, University of London

Sop01rf@gold.ac.uk

Interviewee

Date _____

Interview Schedules

Interviews with both employers and workers were based on a list of key aspects and in relation to their former and current experience. Specific questions were made in each interview situation, depending on the interviewees narrative.

Interview with Employers.

1. Introduction: purpose of the study and the interview.
2. Childhood experiences with domestic workers: how was the relationship, what did domestic workers do, and how were they treated in their homes.
3. First experiences as employer: hiring domestic workers, justifications for hiring, expectations, and first emotional bonds.
4. Everyday relations with current domestic worker: how workers' or working conditions have changed, how they manage intimacy and conflict, and what are the similarities and differences between employers and workers.

Interview with Workers

1. Introduction: purpose of the study and the interview.
2. First experiences in paid domestic work: when and why they started working as domestic workers, emotional relationship with employers, and first expectations.
3. Trajectory: changes to different households, experiences of exploitation, intimacy with household members, and changes they have experienced.
4. Current work: working conditions, differences with past experiences, emotional relationship with employer and their views about how domestic work is organised today.