INSTITUTO DE INVESTIGACIÓN Y ESTUDIOS DE LA MUJER
MUJER Y POLÍTICAS PÚBLICAS
ISSN 2955-8751
Vol. 4 Núm. 1 Enero-junio 2025
http://revistas.urp.edu.pe/index.php/mpp/

"Subversive Care": The Exile of Uruguayan Communists in Mexico and the Support of Life

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Received	:	16.09.2024
Approved	:	03.03.2025
Published	:	18.03.2025

ABSTRACT: The article is about the exile of Uruguayans belonging to the Communist Party of Uruguay (PCU) in Mexico. This article starts from a feminist analysis, in this way the focus is on the consequences that the Uruguayan civil-military dictatorship (1973-1985) had on the support of life, specifically on the care developed in exile as forms of resistance to dictatorial regime. The plots of dependency among the militancy developed in exile are made visible; insertion into the productive sphere and care work. It is considered that care tasks had an intrinsic relationship with militancy in exile, but that have not been made visible or valued on a par with classic political activities. On the contrary, within the framework of communist party politics and the conditions of exile in Mexico they implied disadvantages for women and privileges for men. This objective is mainly achieved by conducting interviews in the form of life stories with Uruguayans exiled in Mexico City during the 1970s and 1980s.

KEYWORDS: uruguayan exile, Mexico, Communist Party of Uruguay (PCU), care, life histories.

HOW TO CITE:
Cedrés Ferrero, I. (2025). "Subversive Care": The Exile of Uruguayan Communists in Mexico and the Support of Life. *Mujer y Políticas Públicas, 4*(1), 25-45. https://doi.org/10.31381/mpp.v4i1.7303

INTRODUCTION

The Uruguayan civil-military dictatorship (1973-1985) was sustained by a harsh repression of political and individual freedoms and of the physical and psychological integrity of individuals, with clear repercussions on the integration of the social fabric. Within the framework of the National Security Doctrine, promoted by the United States, the proscription and massive persecution of the "internal enemy" were used to establish a new political and economic order (Dutrénit, 2015). For these objectives, State terrorism was applied, defined as the use of the State's repressive apparatus in the systematic violation of human rights. The methods used were torture,

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forced disappearance, murder, imprisonment, and the appropriation of children, as well as the political control of society in general.

Concerning the PCU, despite its illegalization on November 28, 1973, the organization continued with its activities in a semi-clandestine manner and with a relative margin of action until the application of Operation Morgan at the end of 1975. Under this operation the communist structure experienced October 21, 1975, massive and constant repression aimed at "exterminating the communists" and "eradicating the party from the Uruguayan scene for at least 50 years" (Rico, 2021, p. 258).

However, before the institutional break, mainly since 1968, there was an increase in state repression, and it is possible to observe multiple modifications in the daily life of communist households. During these years the Communist Party of Uruguay (PCU) and the Union of Communist Youth (UJC) experienced the arrest of numerous militants and in some cases political assassination[2]. With Operation Morgan, the communist militants experienced a worsening of their living conditions; those who avoided arrest experienced daily persecution and harassment by the repressive structures: requisitions, raids, and threats. On the one hand, this led to a considerable number of people being forced to go underground and, later, into exile; on the other hand, these experiences were passed on to their relatives and loved ones[3].

State terrorism generated changes in all aspects of life. Clandestinity, political imprisonment, and exile had repercussions on civil society, family, and community nuclei. These transformations had an impact not only on the configuration of a new country in political and economic terms but also generated a new network between these three vital spaces (the community sphere, the productive sphere, and the space of care). In this paper, exile will be taken as an example of this restructuring, as it is considered a complex phenomenon that developed to prioritize life in the face of the conditions imposed by the regime. This is exemplified in the data: about 13% of the population had to migrate forcibly during the period 1968-1985 (Schelotto, 2015; Lastra, 2016).

[2] In chronological order: Liber Arce (08/14/1968), Hugo de los Santos (09/20/1968), Susana Pintos (09/21/1968), José Ramón Abreu, Elman Milton Fernández, Raúl Aparicio Gancio, Ricardo Walter González, Rubén Claudio López, Luis Alberto Mendiola, Juan Washington Sena (04/17/1972), Héctor José Cervelli (04/28/1972)
[3] For example, Diego reports that his home was raided 10 times during 1975. Interview conducted on 06/15/2021 in Mexico City, Mexico.

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In this sense, the methodological approach proposed was that of oral history, which is based on the analysis of oral sources through interviews with people who lived through the events under study (Sanz Hernández, 2005). Oral recollections are generally complemented by the analysis of documentary sources. This methodology is based on a perspective that privileges the experiences and subjectivities of the protagonists, distancing itself from historiography centered on great figures and approaching the stories of ordinary people.

In this research, life history interviews were conducted with Uruguayan men and women exiled in Mexico City during the 1970s and 1980s. The purpose of the interviews was to delve into the gender tensions generated by the dimension of care in the life trajectories of exiles. These experiences, generally made invisible, are part of the private sphere and are not present in the official archives produced neither by the Mexican State nor by the Uruguayan dictatorial regime, nor, to a large extent, in the publications generated by the exile.

On the other hand, the current historical moment makes possible an opening of testimonies, both from people who previously did not consider themselves as victims, as well as from the political group under study: PCU (Silva, 2015). Finally, an attempt was made to learn about other experiences beyond those of adult men, to avoid characterizing and recounting the phenomenon of exile as a defeat[4]. Thus, the research incorporated interviews with women, girls, boys, and adolescents at the time of exile.

RESULTS

Routes to the country of refuge: Mexico

The three main ways in which Uruguayan communist men and women arrived in this country were through diplomatic asylum in the representations of the Mexican Embassy in Montevideo; as refugees by UNHCR, mainly from Buenos Aires; and by their own means as tourists.

[4] Derrota en un sentido político y también subjetivo en torno a la pérdida de lo que se dejó en el país de origen.

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With the development of Operation Morgan, a significant number of communist militants took asylum in the Mexican Embassy in Uruguay and later traveled to this country. As pointed out by Buriano and Dutrénit (2003, p. 62) "the preferential option (...) was not generally based on the applicants' knowledge of the country or their understanding of its culture, but on the fact that they considered it the 'possible alternative'. Diplomatic asylum allowed the arrival in Mexico of approximately 400 Uruguayans[5] between 1975 and 1979[6]. Of these people, approximately 300 lived, from a few months to a year, in the headquarters of the Mexican representation in Uruguay until they were able to leave the country for Mexico. In all the accounts and analyses, the figure of Ambassador Vicente Muñíz Arroyo, as the person directly responsible for this diplomatic opening, is of vital importance (Buriano and Dutrénit, 2008; Rico, 2008).

The social organization of care in exile in Mexico

During the 1970s, the feminist movement began to debate the value of domestic work for the development of wage labor. This conceptualization had its peak in the global north, with renowned Marxist feminist theorists and activists such as Silvia Federici and Maria Rosa Dalla Costa. By unraveling the relationship between productive work and the reproductive sphere (the home), the authors located the basis of the oppression of the capitalist system in women. Thus, reproductive work is the basis that makes possible the subsistence of the population, the reproduction of the labor force, and, therefore, the accumulation of capital (Carmona, 2019.)

In this sense, the nascent Latin American feminism of the second wave incorporated the struggle for the visibility of reproductive and domestic work, but with a Latin Americanist imprint, emphasizing the conditions of structural backwardness of the continent (Cedrés, 2022). However, most of the Latin American left did not place itself on the same plane, maintaining the argumentative preeminence of the class struggle. Based on an illusion of gender egalitarianism centered exclusively in the public sphere, the sexual division of labor was not problematized to a great extent within communism, but men and women were seen as fundamental pieces in the construction of a new world, beyond their differences, responsibilities, recognition, and differential valuation.

[5] Although most of the asylum seekers at the Embassy belonged to the PCU, there were also asylum seekers belonging to the Unifying Action Groups (GAU) and the Tupamaros National Liberation Movement (MLN-T).
[6] There are also some cases of Uruguayan communist exiles from Buenos Aires, Argentina.

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Thus, care was not valued in the same way as party political militancy and the activities that shaped it: meetings, coordination, political responsibilities, participation in events, and dissemination of the situation in Uruguay. However, this paper considers that, during the context of State terrorism, it acquired a sense of fundamental resistance both for the exile and in its link with Uruguay. For this reason, it becomes relevant to make visible the always hidden and naturalized work of human reproduction, in the light of contemporary theoretical tools.

Regarding the way care needs are met, most studies point out that in contemporary societies four spheres are articulated to guarantee them: the family, the community, the market, and the State (García, 2019, p. 242). Another relevant distinction has been that which distinguishes care according to the characteristics of the action performed, thus differentiating between the material dimension of care, the affective dimension, and the moral dimension (Martín, 2020).

The most visible dimension is the material dimension since this sphere is observable in the use of time, money, and space in which it occurs. However, it is not possible to analyze other dimensions that act at the moment of caring, as Martín expresses: “concern for the other, affections, availability, anticipation, responsibility, the meaning incorporated in the acts” (Martín, 2020, p. 248). These last areas of care were the ones that had the greatest adjustments in gender relations during the exile, as a result of a collective construction of concern and affective demonstration within the exile group. As well as the repressive situation in Uruguay that promoted solidarity with the families of political prisoners.

In the material strategies that women and men in exile in Mexico constructed in order to ensure the tasks of caregiving, the necessary adaptation to the separation of the extended family group, and its fragmentation according to the repressive experiences of each member, is emphasized. Those who had more favorable conditions were able to coincide in exile with one or more members of their family. In material terms, it is observed that the exiled women faced an overload in the time dedicated to the care of the children, due to the lack of support in the care by the women of their extended family, mainly grandmothers and aunts. In addition, this situation was influenced by a sexual division of labor that freed men from this responsibility by encouraging them to focus on the productive and political spheres.

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Although due to the characteristics of the research, it is not possible to estimate the amount of time women in the extended family spent on care in their families, it is clear from the accounts the relevance they had in Uruguay for the articulation of militant life with motherhood, study, and work. The abrupt lack of extensive family care arrangements led to greater recourse, i.e., more assiduity and longer working hours than expected in Uruguay, to private care services provided by the market. This translated mainly into the employment of Mexican domestic workers in charge of childcare and some household chores, as well as access to childcare centers.

In exile, at the monetary level, the concern of the family nuclei to have better economic levels than those they had in Uruguay was observed, in a society where, in certain strata, there was greater ease and need for access to consumer goods. The resources obtained in the labor market were designed for the household, mainly to pay the employees in charge of the direct care of people (attending to the physical and emotional needs of children, the elderly, and the elderly), as well as, in several cases, indirect care (food preparation, cleaning, laundry, among other tasks).

These resources were also used to ensure private care and education services outside the home. This distribution of money is delimited by the predominant forms of meeting care needs in Mexican society at the time. First, the lack of public provision of early childhood care, and the perceived low quality of universal services, such as primary education. Secondly, articulated with this lack was the almost exclusive role of the family as the main caregiver in the first years of life.

The lack of public or state collective structures dedicated to care, and its delegation to the "circuits of intimacy" (Pérez Orozco, 2019), was a differential characteristic of exile in Mexico, compared to exile in the socialist and capitalist countries of Europe. In those scenarios, the universal care benefits provided by the State played a fundamental preponderance, they allowed the exiles to sustain themselves in them to organize their lives (De Giorgi, 2020).

Ana María first went into exile in Sweden, together with her daughter who was a few months old, and later moved to Mexico for work reasons and for what she considered to be greater cultural proximity. In this case, she experienced a change in the care structure between the two countries:

> "- Gabriela: But you felt safe and could study.
>
> - Ana María: Sure, sure, and for example, suppose the child gets sick, you call and you have to do your studies, you call and explain your case and a person comes, to whom you

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> have to leave the food, she is not going to cook for you, she is not going to clean the house, but she is going to take care of the child, she takes care of the child. They take care of the child, so you don't run any risk (...) they are very well prepared for this job (...) They take care of the child while the child is sick, the child can't go to the daycare center, so you don't have to stop your activities. It was at that time, I don't know if it is now, but there was the Social Democracy, they had fantastic security, the security, that's a little bit of what I missed when I came here. Of course, I had a security, which well, here I don't have it, nor did I have it"[7].

Also, by promoting co-responsibility, these countries favored changes in gender relations, as men adapted their understanding of masculinity to the model favored by the environment. However, these changes in the model of fatherhood were limited to their stay in the country of exile.

> "He was part of the care after he got out of prison, and in Sweden, just as there was this network of solidarity, there were other habits among couples. For example, on the buses, there were advertisements for fathers to take paternity leave. I took the first six months and he took the second six months and stayed at home with the children. Since it was relatively new there were campaigns for men to use those things, advertising with men with baby bottles [bottles]."[8].

In this sense, access to private care services in Mexico was conditioned and was fundamental for the exiled women's labor insertion opportunities, their professional development, their projects, and their leisure time. Thus, several of them recall the need to articulate the personal dimensions of their lives with the care of their children, which resulted in an overload of material and emotional work.

> "- Isabel: Did you notice any difference in this way of upbringing that you said, "now I have to dedicate myself to motherhood", with those of Mexican women or men?

[7] *Refugio en la memoria. La experiencia de los exilios latinoamericanos en México*, Archivo de la Palabra, FFyL, UNAM, Ana María interview in Mexico City, by Gabriela Díaz, 05/12/1997.
[8] CEDRÉS, URRUZOLA and PUIG, Vejeces y Género Award, Prof. Rosario Aguirre, 2020-2021, *Aquellas que lucharon: voces de mujeres mayores que vivieron el terrorismo de Estado en el Uruguay*, FCS, FCS, UDELAR, Rocío, interview by Zoom, 23/04/202.

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> - Mariela: You know what happened, that in my relationships with Mexican women, none of them had children, my classmates in college did not have children and did not have children until sometime later. I was the only one who had children and so I was like a toy for all of them. I would take her, and they would take turns, and if she cried I would not always leave the class. Daniel could go out if Daniel [her partner] was there, but also other classmates and everyone would take care of her"[9].

For middle-class Mexican women, especially those who married, there was, in general terms, an identification with the care of the home as the main obligation assigned to their role as wives. According to De Barbieri (1984), social norms assigned women, especially middle-class women, the main role within the household, making them responsible for domestic chores, guardians of family morals, and dependent on their husbands. This responsibility limited their participation in activities outside the domestic sphere, such as paid work, leisure, and other activities related to the public sphere.

Despite these restrictions, women did not have less of a workload; their efforts were simply concentrated on household chores and family care. In addition, motherhood meant an important change in their working lives, as many reduced or temporarily abandoned work outside the home when they had children, resuming it only when the children reached an older age (De Barbieri, 1984). This context reflects how gender roles conditioned the lives and opportunities of Mexican women at that time.

In Uruguay, especially in the younger generations, the primacy of the home was not so directly reflected in women, even if they were mothers. However, there was also an overload of tasks, which was alleviated somewhat by the benefits provided by the State. The model of women with an accumulation of responsibilities in different areas: productive and reproductive work, studies, and personal projects (political militancy) was based on the idea of strong gender egalitarianism, reflected in the participation of women in politics and the economic contribution to the household, although care work was not considered as part of this equation. Because of this, most of the interviewees had a perception of Mexican society as more sexist and with a more unequal construction of gender relations. However, this relationship did not have a strong influence on the

[9] Mariela, interview conducted on 07/26/2021 in Montevideo, Uruguay.

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division of household tasks between men and women, nor greater involvement of fathers in tasks associated with food preparation, household cleaning, and organization.

> "It never occurred to anyone that a woman could not work, but you could not find men in charge of care and housework, except for small nuances. I don't know, I don't know, I don't know of any, all my friends' mothers, let's say they worked[10], some didn't, but they all took care of the house and my friends' fathers didn't take care of the house"[11].

This is visible in the life trajectories of the interviewees. When they became parents, their labor insertion was not altered, nor did they recall any type of conflict when considering the adequacy between both spheres, work, and reproduction. In most cases, when they were in a couple, it was the woman who was in charge of taking care of ensuring the care, and therefore they, to a greater extent, disengaged themselves from the matter. When they were single, they generally did not have children to take care of.

> "- Juan Pedro: Then I went to live in La Merced, which was a terrible neighborhood. When we arrived there, there were many Uruguayans who had practically taken over a building. I remember that all the women who went out were given a small coin and they told them: "Well, when you go out shopping, take this tightly in your hand, and women and children at dusk to go inside". While I was there I got my first job, I got a job pretty quickly at the racetrack (...).
>
> - Isabel: How did your wife do?
>
> - Juan Pedro: And she at first did not work until the child was born.
>
> - Isabel: And did he take care of the other during the day?
>
> - Juan Pedro: Yes, of course"[12].

The temporal dimension played an important role in the speed of life recalled by several interviewees. Reflected in the immediacy with which the exile was lived, in addition to the sensation of exploiting to the maximum a period of residence that was always unstable. The

[10] Rioplatense slang meaning to work.
[11] Sebastián, interview conducted on 12/17/2020 in Montevideo, Uruguay.
[12] Juan Pedro, interview conducted on 12/06/2021 in Mexico City, Mexico.

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urgency of making the most of the time lost due to the time spent in prison, clandestinity, and other previous forced migrations, was a fact that conditioned both men and adult women. However, due to the conditions of the world of work and its lack of connection with the benefits of care, women faced greater disadvantages. In particular, for some of them, this implied having to relegate their professional training and recreational time, in addition to the incompatibility of schedules with their participation in the political militancy spaces in exile.

The moral responsibility of caregiving is related to the sacrifices associated with parenting, to the detriment of women's well-being and autonomy. It is also related to the need to move forward and adapt quickly to the needs of girls and boys. In this sense, the distribution of tasks by gender, implies a differentiated construction of subjectivities, according to which: "men are socialized in being cared for and women in taking care of the rest" (Pérez 2006, as cited in Brunet and Santamaría, 2016, p. 77). Despite the high vital cost that this duty *represents* for women, in exile motherhood became a *lei tmotiv* for many of them, reflecting the flats of care work, marked by internal dilemmas and contradictions (Martín, 2020).

> "More strength, Helena has always given me a lot of strength and, besides, well, also difficulties, no? But also, I think she made it easier for me. And always, because no matter what happens, well, the important thing is to get ahead, right? To get ahead because Helena is there, and because you have to do things, and you can't stay in the same place (…)"[13].

The difficulty in accessing state social benefits due to their corporative characteristics, and the diverse legal situations through which the exiles arrived in Mexico, meant that the Committee for Solidarity with Uruguay (COSUR) played a predominant role in providing support in matters related to immigration, labor and health procedures (Dutrénit, 2006). This same network of exiles, at times, was also a way of ensuring the material dimension of care. In Lucía's case, it was the existence of a benefit provided by one of the Argentine exile organizations, although the support of individual companions is also remembered.

> "When I was looking for a job, I had no one to leave him with, so there was a daycare center run by Argentine asylum seekers, who took care of him while I could not get a job,

[13] *Refugio en la memoria. La experiencia de los exilios latinoamericanos en México*, Archivo de la Palabra, FFyL, UNAM, Paula, interview in Mexico City, by Gabriela Díaz, 05/12/1997.

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> they took the child without paying anything, without anything, in solidarity (...) I mean the only thing I had as a fixed reference was me. And if I left him somewhere else, of course, I could not go out to look for a job with a two-year-old child in my hand."[14].

A constant was the perception of the great solidarity of the Mexican people towards the exiles, for example, in the agreements that were generated with certain unions, and through COSUR, networks were woven for access to jobs and health coverage (Dutrénit, 2006). In addition to the existence of campaigns to provide them with clothing, there is also the support based on friendship, work, and neighborhood ties that were produced with the integration into the society of arrival.

> "The UNAM union official said that there was a possibility, that the union could put in a percentage of foreign workers. And that the union had a policy of helping the exiles, that it would let them know when there was a possibility of work"[15].

Care work in exile and the employment of domestic workers

The majority employment of domestic workers in the home by exile households responds to a transition in the articulation of the reproductive and productive worlds, characteristic of Mexican society during the 70s and 80s of the 20th century. In several accounts, it is suggested that domestic servants are hired to alleviate absence in the home, as Virginia recalls:

> "[my parents] were busy, yes, we were busy in general. They were busy and well there was always someone, in the sense that there was a Mexican woman who took care of us, let's say. This one, yes, there was always a lady who was the one, I don't remember her name now, because I think there were two or three, different ones, let's say, but, well there was always someone who while my father was away and they had to take us to school, they took care of us. Something that didn't happen here [Uruguay], and my parents kept on working a lot. Well, I was 9, I was 9, 10, and my brother was 8, Ernesto was around 16. I already have memories there, like cooking very early, of moving around Montevideo very young and doing everything before my parents came home from work, we had like the tasks assigned to us"[16].

[14] IM, MUME, Archivo Oral de la Memoria, interview conducted with Lucía, interviewer Elena Menini, 04/09/2018.
[15] Mariela, Interview conducted on 07/26/2021 in Montevideo, Uruguay.
[16] Virginia, interview conducted on 09/12/2020 in Montevideo, Uruguay.

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In other words, the hiring of domestic workers to carry out care tasks was the way available in Mexican society to make up for the lack of an extended family, and the incorporation into the Mexican labor market (with longer working hours in some cases than in Uruguay). This phenomenon is associated with two factors that occurred during the period under study in Mexico: first, the greater incorporation of women into the labor market, largely from the popular sectors to provide economic support to the household, and second, the process of transition from a mainly rural country to an urban one. This combination of factors produced a very important rural-urban migration wave of women "who came to the big city to take charge of domestic chores" (Durin et al., 2014, p. 30).

In turn, the employment of young girls by the exiles responds to a labor supply generated by the precariousness of living conditions in the zones of migratory expulsion from Mexico. This results in domestic work consolidating as the most important occupation for women of rural and often indigenous origin, preferably from the Huasteca region and towns in Oaxaca (Durin et al., 2014). Thus, the chain of care during the expansion of the female labor market is built among these young women who migrate as caregivers for the daughters of women who joined the labor market in Mexico City, and who, based on this income, support their families of origin.

Another factor that interfered with caregiving strategies was the existence of relationships mediated by the ethnic and racial diversity present in Mexico. These differences between women situated (situated) and pigeonholed (pigeonholed) indigenous women in Mexican society as women who care, and women incorporated into the capitalist dynamic as women (with a Western lifestyle) who delegate care. For the relationship rooted in the "female heterogeneity around work and employment" and based on the difference in social class and ethnicity (Durin et al., 2014) itself provides a response to the care needs of the system as a whole, based on the female sacrifice of both parts of the chain.

This framework is reflected in the absence of the State in the provision of care, since it is the women who enter the labor market who must worry about these tasks taking place and other women who must perform them. In other words, the existence of women of rural and/or indigenous origin who must provide care work, as a mandate, is linked to a socially devalued conception of them as women and of the work they perform, reflected in the low pay and informality of domestic work.

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Affective families and social reproduction of life at the community level.

The social networks that human beings rely on (friends, family, partners) are part of the identification of subjects with their environment and the shaping of their identity. These socialization networks are fragmented in any migratory process (Romero, 2006). The construction of a new socialization space in a new country is a process, in the words of Romero "that takes years to reach levels of satisfaction; at the same time, the detachment from the previous network implies a period of mourning during which the capacity to incorporate new figures is diminished" (Romero, 2006, p. 483).

With respect to the tasks carried out at the community level, which provide the symbolic support of the subjects, these can be defined as traditions, stories told, festivities, celebrations and struggles for social, political and community rights (Jelin, 1998). For the subject of study, through these activities, the Uruguayan community of exiles in Mexico was transcendental at the moment of adaptation and organization of daily life, as well as to generate a new network, centered in the cultural sphere and in political militancy. An important communist exile group was formed in this country, which facilitated the adaptation process, as a result of the advice, perceptions and recommendations shared by this group towards those who arrived later. In the same sense, it was essential for the socialization process of the sons and daughters of the Uruguayan exile in Mexico. That is to say, it played a relevant role in the education of children and adolescents, as well as in the transmission of the Uruguayan national identity and the communist political identity.

With respect to the cultural sphere, the group of interviewees mentions the recreational activities of the Uruguayan theater group based in Mexico: El Galpón, a place lent by Carlos Salinas de Gortari's father[17], where plays were performed, and theater classes were given[18]. Also mentioned is the Foro Contigo América, as a meeting place, a space for theatrical creation and production created by Uruguayan exiles.

> "And I remember some things, but not others. For example, always being on the committee, or always with the people from the Galpón. One of the last things we went to was a

[17] President of Mexico during the six-year term from 1988 to 1994. It is possible to hypothesize that this contribution to the Uruguayan community was produced as part of the PRI's policy during that period to support the southern cone exile, for the reasons mentioned above.
[18] Sebastián, interview conducted on 12/17/2020 in Montevideo, Uruguay; Matilde, interview conducted on 06/17/2021 in Mexico City, Mexico.

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> Communist Youth camp they had set up, but it was also for children, so we were the younger ones with the older ones, and there I met them, and they taught us "A redoblar" and all those things about, about communists [he laughs]. But in reality, I think that all that later led me to join in '87, in '87, '88 when I entered high school, in the first year of high school at 12 (...)"[19].

Socialization with Argentine and Chilean exiles, outside the spaces of political coordination, is specifically recalled in the interaction in educational institutions where the children of exile congregated. For example, the Madrid School, founded by the Spanish Republican exile, and the Luis Vives School, also of Spanish origin, as well as the Paulo Freire School were named by the study group as institutions that provided support to the South American exile, where a group of children and adolescents from the Uruguayan exile attended.

As a result of the experiences and life trajectories of the exiles interviewed, it seems to be observed that the exchange with nationals was also frequent and constant, based on work, friendship, and kinship relationships. These links allow us to analyze the construction of new uru-mex national subjectivities in the group of people and to delve into the transnational family arrangements of exile in a Latin American context.

It is possible to propose that in Mexico there were particular forms of integration, propitiated by the context, of the exiles about those who settled in other destinations; fundamentally in those societies with a language other than Spanish (Rico, 2021). In comparison with Sweden (characterized as another destination for Uruguayan exiles relevant in numerical terms and about the memory and identification of the exiles as a group) (Allier, 2008), there is a different integration of Uruguayan men and women into Mexican society. Several Uruguayan exiles in Sweden mention the existence of a "ghettoization" of Latin American exiles in this country, as well as their settlement in certain Latino neighborhoods within Swedish cities.

About the Uruguayan exile community in Mexico, a repeated reference was the role it played in the affective dimension of life. This sphere is associated with the social reproduction of human beings, specifically of children, that is, with education in certain patterns of behavior and norms accepted and expected (Martín, 2020, p. 256) by a community. In this context, the militant

[19] Virginia, interview conducted on 09/12/2020 in Montevideo, Uruguay.

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companions came to occupy preponderant places, being considered by several of the exiled children as their new family.

> "I don't know if this happens to everyone -although it did happen to me-, but I love my family there: my uncles, my cousins, my grandparents; but I have a different "feeling" with my friends and family that we made here, with whom I lived for I don't know how many years, every weekend and every vacation[20].

This transmission of values was also on an emotional level, sharing not only the cultural practices of Uruguay, but also the feeling of longing and sadness always present in exile. For certain people this fact intervened in the distancing of the closed group from the communist exile in Mexico, since with the passing of time, it became necessary to get involved in the life of the country in which they lived, in spite of the concern, affection and support always present, it was also necessary to have their feet in the territory that served as home. In this aspect, the daily life of children and adolescents who grew up in Mexico, generally took place in a mixed space between the sociability of the exile and the daily relationship with nationals in educational and social spaces.

Beyond the distance, another aspect that influenced the affective support of the people was the communication with the family in Uruguay, which had a very relevant role in the same process of education, the transmission of values, and cultural tastes.

> "- Virginia: Well, they sent a lot of cassettes, didn't they, with the sending of photos.
>
> - Isabel: Did they send you cassettes?
>
> - Virginia: Yes, there were cassettes, there were letters, and at certain times there were phone calls when we could because they were very expensive. The ones who sent the most, I think, the thing is that we had that, my uncle (...) who was in prison, they also sent things that they made for everyone. Then they sent the family on my mother's side, they sent more letters, or they sent cassettes. And also, friends, real friends of my parents, sent cassettes, that everybody listened to at the same time, or with music, it was like, I don't know much. I, for example, there are things that I knew there.

[20] Interview with Carolina Falkner, 28/10/2012, México, DF; DUTRÉNIT, *Aquellos niños del exilo,* p. 342.

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- Isabel: From Uruguay?

-Virginia: From Uruguay, they did not send us "*Canciones para no dormir la siesta*", the last records that came out of Rumbo, of Zitarrosa. All that was there, and we could take it from one place to another".[21]

In addition, during the integration process (1980-1985), which coincided with a greater opening of the repressive regime in Uruguay, the migration of some family members who had been released from political imprisonment was facilitated. In this context, some people whose parents were released experienced, during exile, the process of moving from considering them as caregivers to becoming their primary caregivers. They had to readapt their lives to receive and care for these new exiles. As possibilities allowed, in several cases, members of the extended family (fathers and mothers, brothers and sisters, grandmothers, grandfathers, uncles, aunts and uncles) settled in Mexico. In the first place, due to the characteristics of the organization that tried to harmonize political militancy with reproductive life, understanding the domestic unit as part of communist life. Secondly, due to the destination of exile within the American continent, which offered greater geographical and cultural proximity, mainly thanks to the language, which facilitated the subsequent relocation of family members.

Finally, in several cases the economic conditions and the greater emotional stability of the exiles during the integration stage (1980-1985) were better than those their families were experiencing in Uruguay. Therefore, many played a fundamental role in the economic and emotional support for their families, in some cases welcoming their fathers and mothers in Mexico in their old age (Rico, 2021).

CONCLUSIONS

The consequences of the pre-exile, exile and return periods influenced and still influence the protagonists of this historical period, since exile generated changes in the family and economic relations of a significant part of the Uruguayan society (Zavala De Cosio and Rozeé, 2014, p. 15).

[21] Virginia, interview conducted on 09/12/2020 in Montevideo, Uruguay.

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In this paper we proposed to deepen the analysis of exile as a migratory process, beyond its forced nature, and thus shed light on the repercussions it had on the family space and specifically on the organization of care work. By considering that the impossibility of sustaining their lives in their countries of origin is what unites these very diverse experiences and calls into question, at the present time, the existing division between forced migration and economic migration.

In the first place, we sought to generate a contribution to think about migratory movements through the feminist perspective of life care. The research was based on the conceptualization of exile as a way of prioritizing life in a context that made it difficult to sustain one's own subsistence and that of family and community networks. Thus, instead of seeing these people exclusively as victims, the focus was placed on the importance of their actions to generate a life that is feasible to be lived. In this context, it was made visible how the care work developed mainly by women was essential, but also the affective support produced by the exile community, for the adaptation in a new geographical and cultural space and the development of binational urumex identities.

Finally, the analysis of the relationship between caregiving tasks and left-wing political militancy makes visible the difficult articulation that both spheres had in the context studied. And it makes it possible to think about the difficulties that continue to exist today incorporate the daily activities of care in the banners of the left.

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