

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the Ann Duncan Memorial Fund for enabling me to undertake this travel.

In September 2019, I travelled to Santiago, Chile, to undertake a research project regarding Chile's public reaction to the Pinochet dictatorship of 1973-1990. The trip was centred around two museum visits – Londres 38, a clandestine detention and torture centre used by the DINA secret police, and the Museo de la Memoria y los Derechos Humanos, a memorial to the victims of the human rights violations of the regime.

From the outside, Londres 38 appeared to be an unassuming house on a charming, cobblestoned street. However, the inside told the haunting tale of DINA's torture and execution of political prisoners, deemed enemies to the regime. One room upstairs was covered in pictures of young women, many of them students, who had disappeared during the dictatorship. Alongside images referencing the indignity of the house's past, however, were banners and drawings designed by recent schoolchildren. It was clear that the museum was fully dedicated to educating the younger generation of the atrocities of the regime, a trend I noticed during my stay in Chile. For example, the Museo de la Memoria y los Derechos Humanos was extremely busy, largely due to groups of schoolchildren. There was no sugar-coating the harrowing scenes within, the museum's non-linear structure reflecting the senseless violence and uncontrolled changes to society.

Something I found fascinating was that the Chileans I met were fiercely proud of the country's literary history, particularly the works of the poets Pablo Neruda and Nicanor Parra. One of Santiago's must-see spots is the Centro Cultural Gabriela Mistral, named after the poet from Montegrande, the first Latin American author to win a Nobel Prize in literature. Whenever I mentioned the research I planned to do during my visit, people were eager to share their opinions, with many earnestly telling me that in Chile, the greatest literature arises from the worst of times. It was a source of great shame for the country, according to the Chileans I spoke to, that so many writers and other intellectuals were forced into exile under the dictatorship, due to their political beliefs and the censorship that was rife.

The trip was an amazing and eye-opening experience for me. I would like to reiterate my heartfelt thanks to the Ann Duncan Memorial Fund for allowing me to visit such a beautiful and fascinating country.

