

*Thus The Dream Of My Youth And The Love Of My Life Passed Away And Left Me Desolate*

A lay-by on the A30, opposite one of the entrances to the Wentworth Estate, was occupied regularly by the Chile Committee Against Impunity, known as 'El piquete de Londres', during the fourteen months that Augusto Pinochet lived there under house arrest in a rented house named 'Everglades'. The former Chilean dictator had been arrested by the Metropolitan Police on the 16th of October 1998, while he was recovering from medical treatment in The Clinic, a private hospital in North London. Spanish Judge Baltasar Garzón issued the warrant for Pinochet's arrest and extradition on charges of torture, state repression, disappearance and homicide, perpetrated in Chile between the 11th of September 1973 and the 31st of December 1983. The doctrine of Universal Jurisdiction allows national courts to try cases of serious crimes against humanity even if these crimes are not committed on their national territory, and even if they are committed by government leaders of other states. Universal Jurisdiction is founded on the consideration that the victims of state repression are extraterritorial, universal bodies.

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Wentworth is a private residential estate in the small town of Virginia Water, south of London. It is the home of a select minority of wealthy people, including rock and media stars, footballers, bankers, foreign sultans and kings, and local near-royals, as well as Hong Kong triads and the Russian mafia. It extends over the grounds of the former country estate of Ramón Cabrera Griño, count of Morella, a renowned 19th-century Spanish warlord who fought in the Carlist Wars and gained notoriety for his ferocity and cruelty, savagely raiding towns and shooting hundreds of prisoners and civilians in the mountains of Catalonia. Cabrera Griño moved to England in 1850 and lived in Wentworth House until his death in 1877. The estate was sold by his daughter in 1920, and soon after it was developed into a golf course with scattered residential properties. A grandson of Cabrera Griño returned to Spain in 1936 to fight alongside General Franco in the Spanish Civil War, and died near Ceuta when his car was blown up by a bomb. During WW2 the Rear HQ of the Army Group took shelter in Wentworth House, which had become – and still is – the Wentworth Club, to lay the plans for the invasion of Europe. The Wentworth Estate was Pinochet's sanctuary for fourteen months, protected by his entourage and the occasional visit of Margaret Thatcher, held custody by the British police, and by the London Picket banging pots and pans not far away from his garden, establishing the sonic boundaries to his universe.

The small town of Virginia Water is named after the lake created in the late 18th century inside Windsor Great Park, a large parkland owned by the Crown Estate. By the southern shore of the lake, close to the lay-by where the London Picket stood guard on Pinochet, are the ruins of a Roman temple, laid out with stones and columns from the ancient Roman city of Leptis Magna, in present-day Libya, brought to England in 1816 as a gift to the Prince Regent. Royal architect Jeffrey Wyattville was in charge of the commission to create a fake ruin out of the stones of a real one. With time, however, the 'Temple of the Gods', or 'Temple of Augustus', as it was known in the early years, had itself fallen into ruin, damaged by the elements and by visitors, and in 2008 a project was undertaken to repair the ruins, and to restore the 'monument' as closely as possible to its 1827 design. The collapsed walls were rebuilt where it was clear that the damage was not part of the original ruin, and all the columns that were known to have fallen were re-erected and made secure using modern fixing methods.

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When Pinochet was allowed to return to Chile on the 2nd of March 2000 his parliamentary immunity was removed, and he lived under house arrest until his death in 2006. Pinochet's arrest in London became a landmark in international law, setting the precedent that crimes against humanity are universal crimes that are not subject to statutes of limitation or to immunity. As a result, other leaders who have committed well-documented crimes and are wanted in numerous jurisdictions either for trial or as prosecution witnesses, have restricted their international travel for fear of Universal Jurisdiction being applied to them. In recent years, however, several state governments, including Spain, have significantly limited the use of Universal Jurisdiction in their domestic courts under pressure from countries such as the United States, Israel and China.