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This excerpt from my independent capstone course in History and Latin American & Caribbean Studies explores the relationship between posters, politics, and human rights. Here, I study the political particularities between movement groups within the international Chilean solidarity movement (1973-1990). Through the lens of political posters, this essay addresses the simultaneous movements in the San Francisco Bay Area, the Netherlands, and in the German Democratic Republic (East Germany) to end the Pinochet dictatorship and restore democracy in Chile. In the study of human rights and international politics, political posters offer us a way to situate our studies within the time that they were carried out. As historical texts, political posters communicate, as political art only can, an aesthetic sense of the particular political pressures, alliances, and collective sense of possibility that existed within the movement. This essay seeks to develop the idea of international solidarity by understanding firstly, what about the case of Chile motivated people around the world to offer their ideological and material support. In addition, how do the political posters show the ways in which concerned groups responded to their own collective memories as they fought for Chile to be free from political repression? In these Cold War years, how did state foreign policies influence the ideological goals and tactics of grassroots movements? In the Chilean solidarity movement, posters served as visual, public, street communication that, today, offer a look into the complexity of international solidarity amidst an ideological war.

Note: Because of the many images woven throughout this paper, the essay exceeds the page limit. The word count is within 25 pages, double spaced.
Radical Aesthetics:  
Posters of the Chilean Solidarity Movement

"Where there is radicalism, there is a need for visual identity and propaganda."¹
- Lincoln Cushing, Bay Area activist, poster artist, and archivist

With the democratic rise and violent fall of Chilean President Salvador Allende, the sole example of democratic socialism crumbled before the world.² As bomb smoke rose from La Moneda on September 11, 1973 and General Pinochet’s Junta took control of the state, groups of Leftists around the world expressed outrage in different political circumstances. In the San Francisco Bay Area, after a decade of sustained anti-establishment activism, Nixon was president. In the post-World War II Netherlands, what would come to be known as a ‘human rights’ establishment was well integrated into the government. And in the GDR, “real socialism” functioned according to Soviet dictates. Political posters from each locale’s solidarity movement with Chile show how Leftists responded to their own political histories and visions of socialism as they fought for Chile to be free from the reign of US imperialism and Pinochet’s regime.

The international movement in solidarity with Chile took hold in politically diverse communities, each with different undergirding ideologies and tactics to ending the Pinochet dictatorship. This study of three localized solidarity groups, conceptualized through the political posters from each locale, demonstrates the complexity of the international solidarity movement in the Cold War years of 1973-1990. Posters from the


² For a timeline (1970 – 1990), see appendix 1.
Dutch movement, the East German movement, and the Bay Area movement show how activists in distinct geopolitical contexts responded to the fall of Allende and installation of the Pinochet dictatorship. Through public artistic expression, movement groups communicated their distinct collective experiences and current political goals. In the movement, posters served as an important means of educating the public and garnering support for the Chilean Left – both ideologically and in a material sense. In the face of extreme political repression, this public art played a critical role in actual politics of movement. As David Craven and Russ Davidson write, “politics does not preclude the aesthetic.”

In the first sections of this essay, the posters serve as illustrations of the political particularities under which each of the three movement groups operated in response to the military’s takeover in Chile. In the final section, I will discuss the posters on the subject of cultural resistance to show the commonalities between the Bay Area, Dutch, and East German movements and the critical influence of Chilean exiles in the international solidarity movement.

**Fear and Loathing of the Allende government: US representations**

Unlike in The Netherlands and the GDR, where solidarity with Chile was encouraged by and in alignment with state foreign policies, solidarity groups in the U.S.

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operated in a harsher political climate. Political posters served as a means of disseminating information and messages that supported the Chilean Left in a political climate where democratic support for Marxism posed a threat to official US foreign policy.4

U.S. mainstream media created a “common sense” about the Allende government, the Pinochet regime, and the solidarity movement. Journalists Jeff Cohen and Norman Solomon write, “Many reporters took their cues from the Nixon White House, which had special venom for Allende.”5 During Allende’s campaign for president in 1970, U.S. mainstream media editorials warned about the possibility of his election.6 On August 27, 1970, 2 months before the election, the New York Times editorial board explicitly cautioned of the unprecedented nature of a democratically elected Socialist president. “The effect of such a development – on Chile and throughout the Americas – would be cataclysmic,” the editorial warns. “It would enhance immeasurably the standing and influence of Fidel Castro, who has been used often on Chilean television in the campaign to back the Marxist candidate, Senator Salvador Allende. It would also boost the prestige of both Russia and Communist China.” In regards to the United States specifically, the editorial states, “Senator Allende’s election would plunge United States prestige in the Americas to its lowest point in the modern history of the inter-American system.”

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On September 12, 1973, the day after the coup, mainstream U.S. newspapers published biased headlines on the military takeover, mostly emphasizing his reported suicide. In the *Los Angeles Times* headline, reporters present the Junta as the authority on the question of how Allende died: *Allende Suicide Confirmed by Military Junta.* While several newspapers included no image of Allende, the photo of choice for sources like *The Baltimore Sun* depicts Allende as an unhealthy, apathetic politician. His picture includes neither of his titles as “President” or “Doctor.”

In the direct aftermath of the coup, political posters countered the anti-Marxist media coverage with Chilean styles of homage to Allende. Nina Serrano, a staff member of the Free Chile Center in San Francisco during the movement remembered, “We were shut out of the mainstream media – there was nothing about the solidarity movement in

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the mainstream media. There was just support for Kissinger and Chicago Boys - it was horrible. Art was the only effective means of communication that we had.”

The posters, as opposed to mainstream media coverage, drew on a Chilean aesthetic to represent Allende and his politics. During the Allende years in Chile, the politics of the UP inspired a specific aesthetic, which was made visible in political posters where ideas of change and mass participation converged. Patricio Rodríguez-Plaza writes about how Chilean Leftist politics inspired art, “The UP government instilled in Chilean society…a sense of strength of the social imaginary.” In the place of interpersonal exchange of ideas – the street – the posters articulated this sense of possibility, of mass change and of strength from below.

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9 Interview with Nina Serrano by author, March 17, 2015


12 Ibid, 126.

13 Ibid, 127.
Six thousand miles from Santiago, Bay Area poster artists portrayed Allende as a revolutionary connected to the masses with a strong national identity. In these 1973 posters, his face appears against the backdrop of the Chilean flag, symbolizing strong pride in the indigenous strength of Chile. This representation countered the notion of Chile, rooted in US foreign policy and reproduced in neoliberal news coverage, as a place of international commerce or US political involvement. Allende is shown with immense respect and honor, and he is referred to as both a Doctor and as the late President. His

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14 [author unknown], “Honour to Dr. Salvador Allende,” 1973, All of Us or None Collection (2010.52.18234), Oakland Museum of California.

patriotism and determination as a leader of the masses contrasts his image in mainstream newspapers as a singular radical.

**Coalition Boycotts in the Bay Area**

The denouncement of human rights abuses in Chile Solidarity movement posters of the Bay Area reflect what was going on “off-stage” in the community. Not immediately visible in the text and images of the posters, the political motives of different groups operating in the Bay Area – dock workers, exiles, and North American allies – shaped the political culture of the movement from 1973-1990. As Pinochet’s military regime became established, the Bay Area movement reacted with a locally specific protest repertoire, which was profoundly shaped by the geography of the Bay Area. As an entry point to the West Coast from abroad, the Bay Area ports were important sites of protest for internationalist movements, which influenced both the constituency and the tactics of the movement.

On labor union protest of US foreign policies in the Bay Area, Peter Cole writes, "Since its birth in the 1930s, the ILWU [International Longshore and Warehouse Union], especially Local 10, repeatedly has used its power for political ends while occupying a central node (maritime transport) of global capitalism." With the power to wreak havoc on employers’ profits, union workers at the San Francisco port risked their own earnings

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to express dissent at U.S. foreign policy in the Chilean solidarity movement and other twentieth-century anti-imperialist struggles.

Through symbols, text, and aesthetic choices, the Bay Area posters make visible the significance of labor unions’ direct action protest in the Chilean solidarity movement. Dock workers, organized through their union and mobilized by internal solidarity groups like the Bay Area Trade Union Committee for Chile (BATUC), promoted the connection and mutual struggle of the West Coast workers and the laborers in Chile. Through direct action protest at the port, they sought to end the violence on suspected Leftists and union workers in Chile.\textsuperscript{17}

![Poster of a ship with text: STOP THE JUNE 21 ESMEERALDA](https://example.com/poster.jpg)

In June 1974, the ILWU allied with movement activists to protest \textit{La Esmeralda}, a Chilean Navy ship on its world tour. Set to dock in the Oakland Naval Yard on June 21\textsuperscript{st}, \textit{La Esmeralda} was known among activists to be a torture site for political prisoners.


\textsuperscript{18} [artist unknown ], “Stop the Esmeralda,” 1974, courtesy of Lincoln Cushing and Docs Populi.
by the military regime in Chile. Movement activist Nina Serrano remembers the protest:

That protest included the International Longshoremen’s and Warehousemen’s Union who were very militant, and they were great supporters of us during all of the solidarity work. It wasn’t just the churches, it was also the unions, especially the ILWU. And so the ILWU members refused to unload cargo while the Esmeralda was docked and they closed down the port because of the Esmeralda. And of course all of the U.S. State Department propaganda that appeared in the newspapers was about how beautiful the ship was, with no mention that it was where people were taken to be tortured.

Activists forced their message into the public’s eye by hanging a “Junta No!” banner from the Golden Gate Bridge. Remembering the spectacle of mass solidarity on the Bay, Serrano recalls, “There were also people with boats who came. And they organized with their sailboats and had banners and signs and balloons. That was a marvelous moment when the land and the water were full of strong, colorful protest.”

United with activists through their support for the Chilean Left and for oppressed workers, Bay Area dock workers were important members of the movement. This 1975 poster demonstrates the commitment of individual dock workers to international solidarity with Chile:

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19 Interview with Nina Serrano by author, March 17, 2015.

20 Ibid.


22 Interview with Nina Serrano by author, March 17, 2015.
Cushing, activist, poster artist, and archivist remembers, “Since this was screenprinted, I don't think many were made, and were likely distributed in "safe" places - such as sympathetic union halls - rather than smeared all over the street.” The invocation of individual responsibility and Bay Area workers’ personal connection to Chilean workers is visible in the dock worker’s sign that reads, “It’s our fight, too.” The aesthetic of solitude is heightened by the vast blue open space above the dock worker. BATUC’s call for workers’ individual support signifies an individual-focused aspect of the Bay Area solidarity movement, which is often represented through images of the collective. The

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23 [author unknown], “Boycott All Trade with the Chilean Junta: Restore Trade Union Rights,” 1975. All of Us or None Collection (2010.54.523), Oakland Museum of California.
poster suggests that an attack on labor union rights in Chile was an attack on workers everywhere. By refusing to unload ships with Chilean goods on them, Bay Area workers resisted the authoritarian regime with the tools and political power that they possessed. In doing so, they fought in ideological tandem with the Chilean workers.

Several years after the Esmeralda protest posters sparked a mass action on land and sea, a coalition of South African solidarity groups, anti-imperialist labor unions, and Chile solidarity groups planned a rally in support of a joint boycott of South African and Chilean goods.

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24 Inkworks Press, “Rally: Boycott all trade with the fascist regimes of Chile & So. [South] Africa,” 1977. All Of Us or None Collection (2010.54.12727), Oakland Museum of California.
This 1977 poster, “Chile Vencerá ~ Amandla ngawethu! Matla ke a rona,” demonstrates the commitment of a coalition of Bay Area dock workers and activists for a joint anti-imperialist cause: Chile and the African Liberation Movement. The intertwined hands on the poster clutch a hammer, emphasizing a belief in the power of the working class to which many Bay Area demonstrators belonged. Of a higher order in this poster’s aesthetic is the portrayal of the Chileans and South Africans in struggle. By drawing the viewer’s eye to the nearly identical black and white masks, this poster centralizes on the connections between people affected by political violence. The Bay Area movement linked the Pinochet regime to another, more known repressive regime of South Africa. Joint-cause posters and events promoted the cause of Chile to a higher order of public consciousness. 25

With the mid-1970s push for a boycott on Chilean fruit by movement groups, Heidi Tinsman explains, “solidarity expanded from an idea that had overwhelmingly relied on moral denunciations and calls to isolate the regime...” 26 Instead, groups called on concrete actions from Bay Area people – to boycott Chilean products. In doing so, they “stressed the direct connection between the Pinochet regime’s economic model and the regime’s repression of democracy.” 27


27 Tinsman, Buying into the Regime, 200.
As the Pinochet dictatorship endured, movement groups continued to advocate for an economic boycott through the 1980s. With the above poster, the Chilean Boycott Campaign called various Chilean products into Bay Area grocery shopper consciousness. In 1986, activist and poster archivist Lincoln Cushing remembered, “We produced this image as a small card, about 2x6”, to shove into offending merchandise at supermarkets.”

Lincoln Cushing, 1986

This 1975 poster, a visualization of the economic boycott, superimposes human rights abuses committed by the military regime on a bleeding apple, signifying the commodity that connects US consumers to Pinochet’s economy, implicating them in the dictatorship’s economic vitality through foreign trade. Sponsored by the Chilean Refugee Committee San Francisco, a group focused on the economic needs of Chilean exiles in the Bay Area, the poster forces the consumers to consider their quotidian choices as a question of whether to protect or ignore Chilean human rights.

29 [artist unknown], “Boycott Chilean Products,” 1975. All Of Us or None Collection (2010.54.4038), Oakland Museum of California.
Boycott Pinochet!
A Rejection of the Dutch Colonial Legacy

Consumer boycotts in the international solidarity movement with Chile were representative of but not unique to the Bay Area. The Dutch solidarity movement employed the tactic, as well. There, other state-sanctioned consumer boycotts by internationalist, “Third World” groups predated the Pinochet dictatorship in Chile.

The fall of Allende and human rights violations carried out by the Pinochet regime struck Dutch political elites and laborers with force and prompted swift solidarity actions from both civil society and the government. With close political ties to and great admiration of the Allende government, Dutch politician Jan Pronk cofounded the Chili Komitee Nederland (CKN)\textsuperscript{30}, a coordinating committee for Chile to educate the public about Allende’s “socialist experiment.”\textsuperscript{31} On his first visit to Chile in 1971, Pronk was struck by the democratic possibility. He remembered, “I met human rights activists and exiles from Uruguay and Brazil, people with histories that until then I had only known from literature. Those histories really moved me; Chile remained a free port of democracy and human rights in Latin America.”\textsuperscript{32} When Pronk became Minister of Development Cooperation in November 1972, Dutch Allende supporters were promised “an ally in the cabinet.”\textsuperscript{33} Throughout the Dutch solidarity movement with Chile, the Dutch government provided indirect subsidies for organizations working on

\begin{itemize}
\item\textsuperscript{30} Interview with Jan de Kievid by author, March 3, 2016.
\item\textsuperscript{32} Jan de Kievid, Pablo Eppelín Ugarte, Karin Snoop (ed.), \textit{40 años, 40 historias. Exiliados chilenos y solidaridad en Holanda}, (Santiago: LOM ediciones, 2015), 54. Translation by author.
\item\textsuperscript{33} Hans Hindriks, “Between Politics and Principles,” 35.
\end{itemize}
consciousness-raising in Holland and development issues and relations with the Third World.\textsuperscript{34}

As with dock workers in the Bay Area, the Dutch working class felt a strong ideological sympathy with Chilean workers due to the fact that “direct victims were those with whom many Dutch people - in particular the Labour movement - had identified themselves in the past.”\textsuperscript{35} This poster illustrates the movement’s call to action by the Dutch working class, who sympathized with the Chilean working class:

\begin{center}
\begin{tabular}{cc}
\includegraphics[width=0.4\textwidth]{image1} & \includegraphics[width=0.4\textwidth]{image2} \\
Vicente Larrea and Antonio Larrea, 1973 & [artist unknown], 1973 \\
‘I work for Chile’ & ‘Support the Chile fighting fund Their struggle is our struggle’
\end{tabular}
\end{center}

\textsuperscript{34} Jan de Kievid, email to author, March 3, 2016.


\textsuperscript{37} [artist unknown], “Steun het strijdfonds Chili,” 1973, Nederlandse Affiches (30051001023891), Internationaal Instituut voor Sociale Geschiedenis.
On September 15, just four days after the coup, 20,000 marchers took to the streets in Amsterdam to demonstrate their indignation with the coup in Chile.38 Pronk triumphantly declared, “For three years Chile has been the country of hope. What Allende began cannot disappear so easily.”39 Key government actors with deep regard for Allende’s government complimented and bolstered civil society’s solidarity. On account of the dual civil society and political elite regard for the Chilean left, “Holanda iba a la vanguardia” (Holland was at the vanguard) of the solidarity movement with Chile.40

38 Baehr, Castermans-Holleman, and Grünfeld, Human Rights in the Foreign Policy of the Netherlands, 43.

39 Jan de Kievit and others, eds., 40 años, 40 historias, 54. Translation by author.

40 Jan de Kievit and others, eds., 40 años, 40 historias, 56.


The image of a dove/fist, oft repeated in posters of the Dutch solidarity movement with Chile, illustrates the Socialist Democratic state’s political ideals in tandem with the ideals of civil society. That the Allende government came into being through a democratic election was extremely significant for Dutch sympathizers. The strength in Allende’s Chile, many supporters felt, was in the peaceful, democratic installment of a Socialist state. Pronk reflected on the nation before the coup, “Chile was distinct, an example of peaceful change; hopeful and unique in Latin America.” With faith in nonviolent means to restore democracy in Chile, the Dutch solidarity movement centered, in part, on a mass fruit boycott – a tactic employed by past Dutch anti-imperialist groups.

The Dutch solidarity movement’s boycott of Chile continued a series of consumer boycotts of oppressive regimes in the Third World. A year before the coup in Chile, the Angola Comité launched a movement in support of the Marxist liberation movement in Angola. Formed in fall of 1972, the Angola Comité actively supported the Marxist liberation movement in Angola, the MPLA. Their explicitly anticolonial ideology situated the Dutch group’s agenda as part of international struggle against imperialism and capitalism. They targeted the grocery store Albert Heijn’s sale of Angolan coffee:

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43 Jan de Kievid and others, eds., 40 años, 40 historias, 54.

The following year, Dutch activists launched a South African orange boycott. With a graphic representation of the atrocity in South Africa, this poster shows the complicity of buying oranges with the suffering of Black South Africans. Protest of the oranges, moving from South Africa to Europe on Dutch ships, reflects the Dutch colonial legacies. The fact that the movement focused on boycotting goods from decolonized places like Angola and Chile seems to be a symbolic rejection of the role of Dutch trading in European colonization concurrently with the 1970s protests of Dutch shipping and trading in countries with unjust regimes.

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The Chilean apple – bloody, rotten, poisoned, and sinful – became the subject of the boycott of Pinochet’s regime. Poster artists showed the apple itself as a site of torture and killings, and sought to show the consumption of the fruit as touching, directly, the human rights abuses imposed upon Chileans. “DO NOT BUY GRANNY SMITH,” “CONTAMINATED FRUIT” and “BLOOD IS ON YOUR APPLE” serve as warning signs with high urgency. The text and depictions of severed fruit powerfully link the choice to purchase apples with sinful complicity in the abusive regime. Boycott posters, complimented by state-led Third World education efforts, called on Dutch people to support the Chilean Left through their socially conscious (non) purchase.

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‘Do not buy Granny Smith from Chile, Argentina, South Africa’

‘apples from Chile contaminated fruit’


Dutch Collective Memory of Nazi Occupation

Chilean Solidarity posters, with graphic depictions of torture, detention, and murder, responded to the Dutch collective memory of Nazi occupation. Of the surviving collection of Chilean solidarity posters, Dutch movement leader Jan de Kievid singles out the “association with the Second World War and Nazi-German Occupation, and fascism” as the strongest locality-specific theme.51 As Chilean exiles fled their homes in 1973,


51 Jan de Kievid, email to author, March 3, 2016.
Minister of Foreign Affairs Max van der Stoel stated, “the terror under which Chile lives reminds us of the era of the Nazi occupation in Holland, and this justifies giving temporary shelter to other victims of political persecution, even if those victims aren’t Dutch.” To provoke solidarity, this poster shows a swastika on the Chilean flag, being strangled in barbed wire.

The recent collective memory of Nazi occupation helps to explain such a strong Dutch societal reaction to the coup in Chile – exiles were welcomed as early as October 1973 and were supported by progressive party leaders, trade unions, and government

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52 Jan de Kievid and others, eds., 40 años, 40 historias, 54. Translation by author.

officials. From a foreign policy perspective, scholars believe that for the case of Chile, “the government reacted in full to these gross human rights violations,” which were of greater priority than other “general foreign policy objectives.”

To inspire state and civic action through indignation, Dutch groups used political posters to visually relate Dutch national memory and experiences of nationalist-socialist occupation in WWII to the Dictatorship. The Nazi practice of burning books and libraries “because they provide portals through which enemy value can find entry” found its violent way to 20th century Latin America and back to European consciousness.


55 Ibid.

On September 28, 1973, the *New York Times* reported, “although the new authorities have disavowed acts of book burning, Leftist literature remains highly suspect and has been removed from most bookstores and libraries.” The “anti-Marxist witch hunt,” as the article refers to it, included strict censorship from the onset. As the military Junta sought to purge Chile of Allende supporters, Communists, and any other Leftists, they violently repressed scholarship, thought, and knowledge of “foreign ideas”

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58 Haig A. Bosmajian, *Burning Books* 141

that could be considered a threat to order.\textsuperscript{60} This violent intellectual and cultural destruction took the form of open burns of Marxist and otherwise subversive books, raids on bookshops, and publishers being forced to “shred their stocks.”\textsuperscript{61} After the stage of informal terror, the institutionalization of the Pinochet dictatorship included formal decrees to limit the spread of information by books. Decree numbers 177 (1977) and 122 (1978) required all foreign and Chilean books to be approved by a DINA [The National Intelligence Directorate] censorship board.\textsuperscript{62}

Jorge Edwards, Chilean author and former exile whose memoir Persona Non Grata was banned in Chile wrote in 1984 of the “tragicomedy” of the regime’s book burnings. “On one occasion,” he wrote, “a military commander ordered the withdrawal of a book on Cubism, suspecting it might have something to do with the Cuban revolution.”\textsuperscript{63} This tragicomic theme is reflected in the Dutch book burning poster, where military commanders laugh at the atrocity before them.

\textsuperscript{60} Knuth, \textit{Burning Books}, 33.

\textsuperscript{61} Ibid.


\textsuperscript{63} Edwards, “Books in Chile,” 20.
In East Germany, solidarity groups also related the Pinochet dictatorship to Nazi Germany – instead, as a condemnation of West German foreign policy.\textsuperscript{66} The different states’ motives in invoking Nazi occupation illustrates the point that the Chilean solidarity movement intertwined with nations’ histories and ideological goals as they advocated for the Chilean Left.


‘Real Socialism’: from Chile to East Germany

When Chilean President Michelle Bachelet was asked, what does “real socialism' imply to you?” she replied, “it implies that I lived in the GDR.” Like 1500 other Chileans, Bachelet sought refuge from dictatorial violence in the German Democratic Republic. In East Germany, Bachelet remembered, Chileans “live[d] their exile in dignity.”

Among the GDR’s policies toward the Third World, solidarity with Chile occupied an important role in the “pursuit of what [were] essentially Soviet national goals.” In other words, East German solidarity activities with the Chilean Left

67 Jadwiga E. Pieper Mooney, “Chilean Exile and the Politics of Solidarity in the Cold War,” in European Solidarity with Chile, ed. by Kim Christiaens et al. (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 2014), 275.

68 Ibid.

69 Ibid.


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demonstrated the GDR’s alignment with Soviet policies and were designed by state actors to bolster “the advancement of Marxist-Leninist revolutionary goals through the South.”72 While Latin America “by no means [occupied] the same level of importance for the GDR as does Africa or the Middle East,” the region had rich potential for Soviet-bloc nations to demonstrate anti-imperialist ideological and material solidarity.73 Posters from the Chilean solidarity movement demonstrated the GDR’s alignment with Eastern Bloc international solidarity and adherence to Soviet foreign policy dictates. The Solidarity Committee of the GDR, institutionalized in 1973, sponsored projects of material solidarity, such as the Konto 444 bank account for funds to be sent to revolutionary groups in Chile.74

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73 Ibid, 134-135.

Chile, and in particular, Allende, caught the GDR’s attention, where the state’s decisive question of whether to support a state was “whether the national-democratic state and its leadership enjoy the trust and support of the popular masses and to what degree this support finds an organizational expression.” The 1970 democratic election of Allende demonstrated the popular support and sparked interest in the GDR.

As in the Netherlands and in sympathetic U.S. circles, the political alliance between the GDR and Chile predated the 1973 coup. Throughout the 1960s, German and

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77 Radu, Eastern Europe and the Third World, 110.
Chilean leaders of the Socialist and Communist parties traveled between the countries to establish transnational political alliances. “Party-to-party” contacts in the SED (Socialist Unity Party) and other GDR parties “performed quasidiplomatic functions” by traveling to Chile and organizing training for political leaders both to build Socialist infrastructures, such as media and education, and to mobilize mass support by civil society.78 In 1971, Allende set up diplomatic relations with GDR – making Chile the second country in the Americas after Cuba to recognize East Germany.79

It is important to note that scholars emphasize the dual top-down political tactics and grassroots ideological and patriotic duty to help Chilean exiles that made up GDR’s solidarity with Chile. “Indeed,” Jadwiga E. Pieper Mooney writes, “top-down government prescriptions of solidarity with Chile were always accompanied by independent solidarity from the bottom up - driven by political interest and enhanced by histories of friendships and personal ties,” as evidenced by “theatre, art, and the personal accounts of Chilean exiles.”80 East Germany civil society GDR civil society was especially moved by Chile’s “peaceful revolution, violent end, and characterization of military takeover as fascist.”81 Political posters, encouraged by official state solidarity with Chile, seek to garner material support for Chile and assert the righteousness of GDR ideology.


79 Mooney, “European Solidarity with Chile,” 278.

80 Ibid, 298.

81 Ibid, 277.
Allende’s material policies and ethical beliefs are intertwined in the poster below, which depicts Allende’s care for all Chilean people, especially those at the margins of society (i.e. the poor, children, campesinos). His kind expression, respectable clothing, and gentle hand around the child whom he feeds all are part of a Socialist aesthetic and reflect support for the paternal guidance of the SED. Echoing the lore of Che Guevara in the San Pablo leper colony, this poster makes beautiful and thematically central the physical touch between Allende and the child. The image shows the close relationship between a political leader and the masses by Allende’s suit and the child’s content half-nakedness. The child’s hat does not, in fact, resemble a Chilean, flat-brimmed chupalla hat, but rather a sort of Mexican sombrero. While the GDR sought to publicize the Chilean cause, a lack of cultural understanding of Chile can be seen in this poster.
GDR patriotism, in the Cold War context, was partly fostered by depicting the enemy of fascism. In Soviet-aligned East Germany, political functionaries "linked their attacks on the Chilean military to the East German anti-fascist mission, and thereby, to the ideological justification and foundational discourse of the GDR". In the poster below, Pinochet and the United States’ involvement in Chile are symbolized by fascist objects used against the Chilean people.

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82 Heinz Behling, "Dr. Salvador Allende: "Drink now! If the 'gringos' don't cash in anymore, you can grow big and strong!" From virtual exhibit “Transnational Poster Art: Former East Germany (GDR) and Latin America, 1970-1989,” Stanford University Libraries.

83 Mooney, “European Solidarity with Chile,” 277.
In apparent reference to Picasso’s Guernica, which was painted in response to the Nazi airforce’s destruction of the Basque town of Guernica during the Spanish Civil War, this poster shows good vs. evil in ideological war. On the left, the horse figure is made of the Chilean indigenous past and Chile’s future generations, as seen by the indigenous mask and child clutching the nation’s flag. The figure’s core and head are made of a guitar, signifying solidarity and homage to Victor Jara, beloved folk singer murdered in the National Stadium by the Junta five days after the coup. The somewhat secondary agenda of a peaceful revolution, perhaps more in memory of the democratic election of Allende than as a representation of the GDR political agenda, comes in the flower tail.

Allende’s material social programs, namely of education, are heralded as the open book on the horse’s tail. The Chilean horse clutches a Communist hammer, asserting righteousness of the GDR’s national Socialist ideology.

On the right side, the US-implicated Junta takes the shape of a military monster. Lady Liberty’s crown and Uncle Sam’s hat weigh on the head of an eagle birthing General Pinochet. In his left talon, the eagle grasps the sun, signifying the transnational corporate control of Chile’s natural resources under the free market economic policies of Pinochet. The stacked figures ride on a military tank titled “ITT” (International Telephone & Telegraph Company, whose involvement in Chile was a subject of solidarity movement protests.85

In Soviet-bloc countries, James Aulich and Marta Sylvestrová write, “posters provided a guide for the identification of real-life enemies… and promoted anti-American propaganda campaigns on the back of foreign policy blunders...”86 In posters from the US and the Netherlands, US-implications of Chilean were also visible, but perhaps not to the degree as in the GDR, where an illustration of the enemies of fascism, capitalism, and imperialism bolstered state ideological power.

Nueva Canción: Cultural Resistance in Exile


Chile solidarity groups informed the public about the National Stadium as a site of torture and extrajudicial killings with images of folksinger Victor Jara, beloved in the U.S., the Netherlands, and the GDR. Five days after the coup, Victor Jara was assassinated by the Junta in the temporary prison camp installed at the National Stadium. An anthem of the Unidad Popular, Victor Jara’s rendition of Venceremos continued to invoke strong emotional responses from those engaged in solidarity after his murder.

‘Venceremos, venceremos
con Allende en septiembre a vencer.
Venceremos, venceremos
la Unidad Popular al poder’

Rene Castro, c.1974


In the international movement in solidarity with Chile, aesthetics, music, and poetry radiated from the Southern Cone to allies across the world. Political posters contributed to this spread and constituted cultural resistance in of themselves. When military repression shut down Nueva Canción shortly after the coup in 1973, Chileans in exile and allies played the music as a “postcoup cry of protest.” Images of Victor Jara as both a remembrance of the violence imposed upon dissidents and as a celebration of Chilean nueva canción were present in the GDR, Bay Area, and the Netherlands. In the movement to oust Pinochet and restore democracy in Chile, honoring Victor Jara meant asserting the cultural resistance of the Chilean people. Nueva Canción, the music of protest in the movement, demonstrated a commitment to Chilean roots with the use of traditional folk instruments. “Few cultural movements,” wrote Albrecht Moreno, “have had as profound an effect on the social histories of their time as has the New Song movement in Chile.” Its highly political messages show how pride in Chilean culture and socialist past was inextricably bound up in the struggle for political and human rights in the midst of the Dictatorship. In this way, it is both an opposition and supportive art form – musicians like Inti-Illimani, Violeta Parra, and Victor Jara exalted populist socialism while denouncing injustice in Chile.

The exiles in the Bay Area, the GDR, and the Netherlands made and shared music as a way of connecting with home and asserting their culture in exile, and forming community abroad. As Moreno points out, “Since the music had heretofore been pretty

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89 Neustadt, “Music as Memory and Torture,” 129.

90 Neustadt, “Music as Memory and Torture,” 128.

91 Neustadt, “Music as Memory and Torture,” 128.
much confined to Chile, this internationalizing of La Nueva Canción is certainly one of the more ironic accomplishments of the military coup."92 While the Pinochet regime sought to stifle Nueva Canción, the internationalization of the music through exile communities bolstered the international solidarity movement.

A member of Grupo Raiz, a Nueva Canción group based in Berkeley, CA explains the role of music in the solidarity movement:

there was no music outside of politics… We believed that it was an arm of the struggle and that we should be not promoting Chile as a cultural postcard, but that folk music in general and specifically with Chile should be a reflection of people’s lived reality. And at that time people’s lived reality was for many people, certainly people on the Left, was very brutal, very dangerous and had very big consequences. We wanted to honor that and reflect that in our music, as well as reflect the cultural roots as a way to push back against cultural imperialism.93

Jan Pronk recalled, on his first visit to Chile in 1971, “I listened to the singing of Víctor Jara and Ángel Parra. It was wonderful!”94 The Dutch love of Nueva Canción is evident in testimonials from exiles and Dutch sympathizers. Hugo Bascuñán, a Chilean exile who settled in the Netherlands in 1977, served as the cultural coordinator at el Centro Salvador Allende in Rotterdam.95 While in the Netherlands, he helped to plan the Victor Jara festival (called VLAM) and brought groups like Quilapayún and Inti-Illimani to the Netherlands.

Through exile communities, the music itself educated the Dutch public about Chilean culture and politics. Winanda van Vliet, a Dutch singer, learned Spanish singing

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92 Neustadt, “Music as Memory and Torture,” 129.

93 Interview with Ellen Moore by author. March 16, 2015.

94 Jan de Kievid and others, eds., 40 años, 40 historias, 54. Translation by author.

95 Ibid, 68.
Chilean songs like “Venceremos” and “El pueblo unido.” Like other Dutch people, her political education was enabled through Nueva Canción music. She remembered, “The songs of Violeta [Parra] fit into my emerging political consciousness.” Since being an active artist in the movement, Winanda van Vliet has continued to make music with Chilean artists for over 40 years.

The cultural vibrancy of the Dutch movement is apparent in the multitude of

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96 Jan de Kievid and others, eds., 40 años, 40 historias, 180.

97 Jan de Kievid and others, eds., 40 años, 40 historias, 180. Translation by author.

98 Ibid.


Victor Jara tribute posters and brilliant Victor Jara festival posters, both of which served to popularize Chilean culture and promote the movement to oust Pinochet. As in the Victor Jara poster, the music never stood independently from the political cause. Figures with fists raised appear in red atop the yellow profile of Victor Jara, showing the always-intertwined music and political resistance.

In the GDR, organizers integrated Nueva Canción into mass demonstrations and official literature of the movement. In an address by Kurt Hager, member of the Politburo and Secretary of the SED Central Committee to a solidarity meeting on September 14th, 1973, he ends his remarks with a cheer of Venceremos:

“Venceremos! This is the battle-cry of our Chilean Comrades, of the Popular Unity coalition: Venceremos! Victory will be ours! / Long Live the Communist Party and the Socialist Party of Chile! / Long live the Unidad Popular! / Long live anti-imperialist solidarity!”

The tenth World Festival of Youth and Students, held in East Berlin, welcomed Chilean artists and political leaders just weeks before the coup. Gisela May, East German actress and singer performed with Inti-Illimani at the festival. “Although we hardly knew each other’s language,” she recalled, “we felt that close ties of solidarity existed between us. Now that reports of murder and terror by the reactionary forces are coming in from Chile, I am deeply moved and concerned about the fate of these youth revolutionary singers and the thousands of working people who fought for a free and democratic country.”

Solidarity posters reflect East German movement organizers’ merging of cultural resistance with the state agenda. Below, Victor Jara’s portrait appears alongside an

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101 “GDR’s Fervent Solidarity with the Courageous Chilean People” (Berlin: Panorama DDR, 1973), 12.
102 Ibid, 14.
inscription, “Viva RDA [República Democrática Alemana] y Chile / Victor Jara.” The fusing of asserting strength in both the GDR state and of Chile shows the centrality of East German sovereignty in their Third World solidarity agenda. Alongside, “Für Victor Jara” shows a withered plant growing through a broken guitar, demonstrating the ability of Chilean culture to grow through exiled communities despite domestic military oppression of oppositional culture in Chile.

“I have put all I possess at the disposal of the people’s struggle” — Pablo Neruda


Pablo Neruda’s poetry is a testament to the idea that politics and art never exist without the other. With his lifelong commitment to Chilean workers, Neruda’s poetry inspired formerly-exiled Chileans and movement allies in the long fight to restore democracy in Chile. Neruda’s signature hat, a symbol of political opposition and of the working class, and his humble, committed expression is represented in Rachael Romero’s poster, in homage to Neruda.\textsuperscript{106}

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Neruda wrote his last poem “Las Satrapías” in September 1973, after the coup, and died shortly thereafter in Chile. The following poster from 1973 foreshadows the atrocities that would endure in Chile during the 17-year-long dictatorship. Amidst the hunger, the violence, and the torture, the strength of the Chilean people and the fallen UP government

\textsuperscript{105} Kelly Austin, “I have put all I possess at the disposal of the people’s struggle’: Pablo Neruda as collector, translator, and poet.” The Comparatist 32 (2008): 40.

\textsuperscript{106} An excerpt of “Ode to things” by Pablo Neruda: “I have a crazy, / crazy love of things. / I like piers, / and scissors. / I love / cups, / rings, / and bowls – / not to speak, of course, / of hats.”

endured. Through the solidarity movement, the crimes of Pinochet and political repression were made known to communities throughout the world. Chileans in exile and ideological allies of varying sects used boycotts, Nueva Canción, and material assistance to fight to restore democracy in Chile. Through political posters, movement groups in the Netherlands, Bay Area, and the GDR gave the enemies of Chilean democracy a face, a fight, and a refusal of complacency.

Though activists responded to the fall of Allende and atrocities of the Pinochet dictatorship with political particularities based on their local histories, the Chilean Solidarity movement did form an international collective who saw, in the Chilean struggle, their own fight to realize a just society. Both internationalist in its political orientation and international in scope, the Chilean solidarity movement fought to assert an alternative vision to globalization and neoliberalism. To this end, the posters did real political work in the Bay Area, the Netherlands, and the GDR movements. Through appeals to collective histories of oppression and violence, the posters garnered ideological and material support for Chileans in struggle and identified the enemies to Chilean democracy. Most importantly, the posters paid homage to Chilean visionaries and honored the courage and resilience of the Chilean people. They are artistic artifacts of resistance – sites of radical aesthetics.
Nixon, Frei, and Pinochet
up to this day this bitter
month of September 1973,
with Bordaberry, Garrastazú, and Banzer,
hyenas ravening
our history, rodents gnawing
at flags that were raised
with so much blood and fire,
hellish predators
wallowing in haciendas,
satraps bribed a thousand times over
and sell-outs, scared
by the wolves of Wall Street,
machines starving for pain,
stained by the sacrifice
of a martyred people,
prostitute merchants
of bread and american air,
deadly seneschals, a herd
of whorish bosses
with no other law but torture
and the lashing hunger of the people.

Pablo Neruda, September 1973
tr. J. Felstiner

[author unknown], 1973

Appendix 1

November 4, 1970  Democratic election of Dr. Salvador Allende as President of Chile despite counter-efforts from the United States government

September 11, 1973  Military coup d’etat, during which Allende reportedly commits suicide. His final words, broadcasted on the radio as the Presidential Palace, La Moneda, was bombed:

I will pay for loyalty to the people with my life. And I say to them that I am certain that the seed which we have planted in the good conscience of thousands and thousands of Chileans will not be shriveled forever...Long live Chile! Long live the people! Long live the workers! These are my last words, and I am certain that my sacrifice will not be in vain, I am certain that, at the very least, it will be a moral lesson that will punish felony, cowardice, and treason.

Military Junta established under General Augusto Pinochet with neoliberal economic policies of the “Chicago Boys.” Pinochet is then appointed President of Chile by the military Junta.

Disappearances, torture, extrajudicial killings of suspected Leftists and former Allende supporters. Over 3,000 people were killed and 30,000 were tortured over the course of the dictatorship.

October 1, 1973  Informed of initial massacres by the Junta, Secretary of State Henry Kissinger responds, “I agree that we should not knock down stories that later prove to be true, nor should we be in the position of defending what they’re doing in Santiago. But I think we should understand our policy—that however unpleasant they act, the [military] government is better for us than Allende was.”

1973-1990  International Solidarity Movement with Chile is established with groups of exiles and sympathetic allies across the world

October 1988  Oppositional “No” campaign, Pinochet ousted in a national plebiscite

December 10, 2006  Pinochet dies with nearly 300 criminal charges still pending, despite many attempts to prosecute and the reversal of impunity

109 “Secretary’s Staff Meeting notes, October 1, 1973” National Security Archive. http://nsarchive.gwu.edu/NSAEBB/NSAEBB110/chile03.pdf
PRIMARY SOURCES (interviews, newspaper articles, documents)


“Secretary’s Staff Meeting notes, October 1, 1973” National Security Archive. http://nsarchive.gwu.edu/NSAEBB/NSAEBB110/chile03.pdf


POSTERS (in order of appearance)

[author unknown]. “Honour to Dr. Salvador Allende,” 1973, All of Us or None Collection (2010.52.18234), Oakland Museum of California.


[artist unknown ]. “Stop the Esmeralda,” 1974, courtesy of Lincoln Cushing and Docs Populi.

[author unknown]. “Boycott All Trade with the Chilean Junta: Restore Trade Union Rights,” 1975. All of Us or None Collection (2010.54.523), Oakland Museum of California.

Inkworks Press. “Rally: Boycott all trade with the fascist regimes of Chile & [South] Africa,” 1977. All Of Us or None Collection (2010.54.12727), Oakland Museum of California.


[artist unknown]. “Boycott Chilean Products,” 1975. All Of Us or None Collection (2010.54.4038), OMCA.


Heinz Behling, "Dr. Salvador Allende: "Drink now! If the 'gringos' don't cash in anymore, you can grow big and strong!!” From virtual exhibit “Transnational Poster Art: Former East Germany (GDR) and Latin America, 1970-1989," Stanford University Libraries.


SECONDARY SOURCES


