Arpillera with hands holding up 'Where are they?' pickets

A recent arpillera by Violeta Morales takes up an image from a Dali painting, with a young woman looking out of the window at some distant hills, but adds the words 'Dónde Están?' in the background. These arpilleras show that the arpilleristas continue to be very much involved in the problem of disappearance, but now also view it in more analytical terms; they are not depicting real life scenes; rather, they evoke the problem of disappearance.

A new theme in the Nineties is 'Truth and Justice', the Agrupación's new demand faced with the democratic government's refusal to punish or name the human rights violators of the Pinochet regime. Several arpilleras show groups of people holding banners saying 'Truth and Justice' or merely 'Justice', in an urban setting. Both the above themes are denunciatory, at a time when the Vicaría was not allowing the shantytown women to denounce strongly.

'No to impunity. Justice'

The Agrupación women only made arpillera pictures of 'medium size' (the same as the shantytown arpilleristas' 'medium' size), and occasionally they made murals consisting of several of these sewn together. They did not make cards or functional objects with the appliqué technique.

Over the twenty year period, therefore, the arpilleras have changed a great deal. The very personal and emotional depictions of traumatic experiences are replaced by arpilleras of a more general and conceptual nature, in accordance with changes in the way the group was thinking. What the Agrupación and shantytown arpilleras have in common is, during the Pinochet regime, an expression of resistance to state authority and the new system. Both show scenes of repression and economic deprivation. Both depict the institutions which helped them cope (the survival organisations and Vicaría).

Furthermore, both engage with conceptual issues such as rights, towards the middle of the period. The main difference between the groups was the move towards naiveté in the shantytowns women's case, and resistance to this in the Agrupación's case. This is partly because the Agrupación's problem did not go away, whilst the shantytown women's problems lessened considerably (they no longer face severe political repression, unemployment or hunger). Also, the Agrupación continue to be a highly militant group, whereas the shantytown arpilleristas are not (see Chapters 6 and 7). Finally, the Agrupación women had a strong sense of dignity and felt offended by the Vicaría's attempt to neutralise their arpilleras, whereas the shantytown women were more willing to obey the Vicaría's orders (see below).

How exactly the buyers influenced the arpilleras

Interactions of the Vicaría and the Client

There are several ways in which the buyers influenced the arpilleras. Firstly, they influenced the arpilleras as a result of the orders they gave the Vicaría. Some customers ordered some scenes more than others, causing the Vicaría to notice which were particularly appreciated and to order only those from the women. Andy, selling arpilleras through Amnesty International and the Chile Committee for Human Rights in London, for example, made specific orders for arpilleras with political themes. Secondly, customers gave the Vicaría feedback about the arpilleras, telling it, for example, that they

did not like yellow, and the Vicaría passed these instructions on to the women. The changes that came about as a result of such contact, therefore, occur as a result close cross-cultural relationships between entrepreneurial people of both groups, Winnie Lira at the Chilean end and intermediary buyers abroad.

The Vicaría was willing to follow the specifications of the clients or its sense of what they wanted because, in the early days, it paid the women before it sold the arpilleras. At one stage it had a room full of arpilleras which had not yet been sold. To keep the groups functioning it had to sell, and to sell, it had to please the client. In later years it only ordered arpilleras for which it had already received an order.

The Vicaría also developed its own concepts of what was essential in an arpillera, based on feedback, and instructed the women on these matters. In some case the Vicaría was guessing what the clients wanted, but in others it became carried away with its own rules. This resulted in extremely specific and pernickety rules, so precise that the Vicaría appears to have lost a realistic sense of what the client would be bothered by. For example, it rejected a large arpillera of the Santa Adriana group which had taken hours to make, on the grounds that it had too much sky. The catalysts for change in the arpillera, therefore, are both foreign and local agents (the Vicaría, in the latter case), as Graburn (1976) suggests[6]. The Vicaría 's trying to control expressiveness and creativity to this degree is an ironic echo of the Pinochet government's control of expression. It resembles the strictures of totalitarian governments against art (for example, those of the Nazis against 'degenerate art').

Craft or art intermediaries like the Vicaría know what the foreign buyers' image of the exotic or 'ethnic' is, internalise this, and describe to the producers what to depict. They might then send the buyers samples, and those samples which are appreciated will receive orders. The intermediary orders more crafts of that sort, until they become standard. They might even appear in the buyers' catalogue, as was the case with some Peruvian arpilleras in Oxfam's catalogue. In this situation, the intermediaries have colluded with the buyers to produce artwork describing a fictitious reality which corresponds to the buyers' idea of the exotic. As Graburn (1976) suggests, change comes both from the tastes of the buyer and from the efforts of the producer and so control of the product is surrendered and it is the buyers' concept of 'authentic ethnic identity' that will be manufactured'.

Foreign buyers like not only the exotic but also the 'authentic'. Buyers like images of people's 'real lives as they live them'. The intermediary organisations often know this, without being given specific orders, but what the intermediary organisation asks the artists or crafts people to produce to satisfy this need is something which is just as remote from their existence as the exotic scenes. The Vicaría in the Nineties, for example, asked the arpilleristas to produce scenes of a countryside harvest, or scenes of fishing on the lakes of the South. For the shantytown women, this is a reality they only experience on television. In some cases the producers begin to believe that what they are depicting really is part of their lives. When I asked the arpilleristas of the Santa Adriana group why they made 'rondas' (children dancing in a circle) when you never see any

[6] Graburn states that innovation comes from inside or outside the Fourth World, as a result of artistic

rondas in real life, they told me that there were indeed rondas happening, in schools. I asked other friends if this were so and they denied it. The 'authentic' image becomes a copy of a mass-produced image, or an imaginary one.

The position of the foreign buyers in such interactions is the influence of a dominant, more powerful group in a hierarchical relationship with the Vicaría and the women. The situation is akin to that identified by Graburn (1976) as one in which a dominant culture modifies the traditional art forms of dominated groups. Yet the intermediaries are not powerless because they actively fabricate the images which sustain and even create the illusion the Europeans have, causing them to ask for more of this type of work. The system is a circular one.

Many art forms have evolved from a traditional form and original meaning to another form and meaning because of contact with foreign buyers, as Graburn (1976) has described. What is unusual about the Chilean case is that the art form was shaped and made according to the tastes of foreign buyers from its beginnings. The foreign buyer was not all-determining in this case; the Vicaría interacted with the buyer to create a certain kind of demand. The Vicaría also fabricated a set of rules which were relatively distantly related to what the client wanted. But directly or indirectly, the foreign buyers influenced the arpillera.

Interactions between the Vicaría and the women

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excitement, ethnic revitalization, or an economic response to the perceived desires of the consumer.

There were several ways in which the Vicaría made the women make what the client wanted (or what it thought the client wanted). The Vicaría told the women what to include or avoid in their arpilleras. It gave the arpilleristas instructions, fore example, telling the Agrupación group not to use too much yellow. It made specific orders for certain themes rather than take whatever the women produced. Finally, it put the arpillera through two rounds of quality control and only bought those that passed. The arpilleras, therefore, were not the raw expression of the women finding their voice, but rather the result of a series of constraints put on the arpilleristas by the buyers and the Vicaría.

Several characteristics of the arpilleristas made them willing to comply with the Vicaría's orders. The arpilleristas needed the income from the arpilleras to feed their families, and so had no choice but to make the changes the Vicaría demanded. In the later years of the dictatorship especially, if they did not follow these orders, the Vicaría management rejected their arpilleras and did not pay them.

> 'With the money from the arpilleras I pay the light and water bills, and buy the notebooks and pencils the children need for school. Sometimes there's something for food, too'
> (Las Arpilleristas de Chile, calendar produced by the Vicaría de la Solidaridad)

The arpilleristas' economic circumstances, therefore, led them to comply with the Vicaría's orders. Because this economic situation was a result of the economic policies of the regime, it can be said that the economy can affect the evolution of art forms.

The women's working-class status and the hierarchical class relationship which existed between them and the Vicaría (whose employees were middle-class) made it

easier for the Vicaría to control the content of the arpilleras. It was 'more permissible' for the Vicaría managers to be so precise in their dictations and so capricious when it came to rejecting arpilleras (infantilising the women), with working-class women than with, for example, upper-class women. Moreover, the working-class arpilleristas, for the most part, tolerated such behaviour, whereas it is likely that middle or upper-class women would not. Because of their class position and the habit of respecting and looking up to those of the upper-middle class, they were not outraged at the treatment they received, even if they were upset by it. Hierarchies of a class order made it easier for the Vicaría enforce changes.

Another feature of the arpilleristas which made it 'easier' for the Vicaría to shape their arpilleras, was the fact that they did not see themselves as artists (with the connotation of individual, original, inspired creator which the word carries) or have the expectations of freedom of expression, which an artist has. Even where they were being asked to copy standard arpilleras, the shantytown arpilleristas (as opposed to the Agrupación women) did not miss the chance to be creative; this was not something they valued in particular. Some even thought that their task had been made simpler now that they could simply copy a model. The women of the Místicas group, for example, reflected that their work was made easier, when the director of Prisma gave them standard images to copy for their arpilleras. Over time some arpilleristas become so used to making standardised arpilleras that they lost the habit of thinking up new themes. The women of the Santa Adriana group, for example, were at loss as to what to depict when I told them they could do whatever they liked for the exhibition I organised.

The women's circumstances of economic dependence, working-class status and lack of an expectation of creative expression, therefore, enabled the Vicaría to specify what they should produce very closely, through a system of orders and quality control.

Other influences on the arpillera

The Vicaría and its interpretation of what the buyers wanted was not the only influence on the arpillera; there were numerous others. Individuals who came into contact with the arpilleristas influenced the arpilleras. A friend of mine came to the Santa Adriana workshop and ordered a large quantity of arpilleras, specifying what she would like them to look like and even bringing photos. The arpilleristas' teachers influenced the arpilleras (this was particularly evident in the Peñiwén group, where the teacher was a strong influence and thought up the arpillera 'map', for example). The physical surroundings of the group were an influence, as witnessed by the very rural scenes in the arpilleras of groups near the coast outside Santiago, or the scenes of miners going to work in the desert North.

Rural scenes dominate the arpilleras of the groups outside Santiago

The concerns of the particular group influenced the arpilleras; the arpilleras of the Agrupación, for example, contain more disappearance themes than those of any other group. The personal interests of the arpillerista are an influence, as evidenced by the arpilleras depicting children, made by an independent arpillerista who was interested in children's popular culture. Finally, the structure of the institution which manages the group is an influence on the arpillera. The Místicas group, for example, produces religious arpilleras partly because Prisma has built a place for arpillera groups producing religious arpilleras into its organisational structure. Prisma employs a teacher to teach religious arpilleras specifically and cannot fire her without notice. It has several religious groups being trained at one time, as well as groups which have graduated and to which Prisma has a moral obligation to try and sell. And finally, the course is part of Prisma's tradition as, historically, it has always presented to the incoming women a choice of one of three types of handicraft course, of which the religious arpilleras ('Místicas') is one.

Creativity

The fact that the market and Vicaría have an influence on what the women produce implies that their creativity is constrained. Creativity is always limited when artists work within the context of an institution. From the beginning, the arpilleristas were told what to depict. Artists not attached to an institution are much freer to depict what they like. Individuals such as Hermosilla (a returned Chilean exile) made arpilleras of fantastic landscapes and children; he had no-one telling him what to do. He still had to make something acceptable to buyers but could choose what. The difference between his position and that of the arpilleristas attached to the Vicaría is akin to that of an entrepreneur versus the employee of a company. However, different degrees of creative freedom can exist amongst groups working within the same institutional framework. The Agrupación and shantytown groups, for example, both worked for the Vicaría for a period but the Agrupación arpilleristas were given a looser reign in terms of creative freedom.

This difference in the amount of creative freedom tolerated arose because of a series of factors. A number of the women in the group were exceptionally artistically talented and made arpilleras which were strikingly original, expressive and beautiful, and the managers of the Vicaría recognised this. It is the arpilleras of the Agrupación which the Vicaría keeps in a box in the basement, for show only to special visitors, and not for sale (they are a valued collection); it is their arpilleras which the Vicaría makes into cards

(consisting of photographs) and continues to sell. The group as a whole was of a slightly higher social class than the shantytown women. Although some of its members came from the shantytowns, some were also middle-class and lower middle-class. It was more difficult, in this case, for the Vicaría to tell them exactly what to do. Indeed, when the Vicaría tried, the women were indignant. This is one of the reasons they give for not working for the Vicaría any more. Thirdly, the Agrupación women had a problem which the Vicaría managers recognised as dominating of their lives. These managers refrained, therefore, from insisting on naive arpilleras. Institutions will tolerate artistic freedom of some groups on the basis of not only their artistic prowess, but a number of social factors.

A position of relative freedom of expression is achieved when the market learns to like the art work produced. This is the case with the arpilleras of the women of the Agrupación today. Violeta and Anita have not succumbed to the Vicaría's demands and instead continue to make arpilleras to denounce the problem of disappearance. The only two Agrupación arpilleristas who continue to make arpilleras today do not restrict themselves to making arpilleras on demand; often they make them first and hope a buyer will turn up. Anita, for example, sometimes sells to the students of an American anthropologist living in Santiago. However, both women do make arpilleras in answer to a specific order they receive, usually from Marjorie Agosin or another academic who collects their work and wants the type of theme these women make. These buyers have learned to appreciate the sort of arpillera the women make, and do not ask for any other kind, thus giving the women more room to focus on their concerns.

Some forms of marketing limit creative freedom more than others. A catalogue is particularly limiting. Once the Vicaría identified which arpilleras sold particularly well it put a photo of this arpillera into the catalogue which it developed in the early Nineties. A catalogue forces the producer to reproduce exactly what is in the photograph because customers do not expect variation[7]. As a crafts manager of Oxfam states:

> 'Well if we buy for our mail order catalogue we actually specify that we want fairly closely around a particular theme. You know, variations around. But we have to be careful that if we sell something by a picture then clearly customer expectations get that picture. ... in other words if it's a swimming pool or something like that then they don't expect to get something totally different.' (Interview with Ed Millard)

In general, when a work is put in a catalogue, it will not evolve over time by its makers experimenting with new colours or forms. However, in some cases certain leeway is tolerated, even with a catalogue. Andy, who had sold arpilleras through the Chile Committee for Human Rights and Amnesty, found that clients usually understood if they did not receive exactly what was in the photograph.

Even the existence of a catalogue does not mean that the producers have no outlet for expression, because it does not imply that producers will make nothing else. There are occasionally special orders which allow the arpilleristas to make something non-standard. In November 1995 the Peñalolén group, for example, was asked by the Vicaría (which usually sells only the images in its catalogue) to produce an arpillera depicting the imprisonment of Contreras[8] (a scene which was not in the catalogue). This was because it had a client with a specific request for this subject. The group created this arpillera using

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[7] In some cases NGOs impose a European image of Latin America on the artwork.

[8] Contreras was the head of the DINA or secret police.

a photo of the prison in the newspaper 'El Siglo' as a source of inspiration, with inputs from the members of the group.

The Vicaría catalogue did not completely kill creativity because some women caught the gist of what the Vicaría wanted and thought up arpilleras along those lines. The Vicaría institutionalised these creations. Ada of the Sta. Adriana group, for example, invented an arpillera of a man selling balloons in a park, and as the Vicaría liked her colourful and charming image, it took the risk of buying it. When it sold successfully numerous times, the Vicaría showed it to other groups so that they also learnt how to make it. Later it incorporated it into the catalogue. The presence of one of its arpilleras in the catalogue is a source of pride for a group. Ada showed me her arpillera in the catalogue with great pride, and the group from Melipilla proudly informed me that a number of their arpilleras were in the catalogue. In this way, creations of the women are possible and become part of the standard. The institutionalisation of a creative effort on the part of the arpillerista results in the creation of new values and sources of self-esteem in the women.

Finally, even the severest of constraints and the existence of a catalogue leave room for creativity in some areas of arpillera creation. The very constrained Sta. Adriana group, for example, did exercise creativity in its choice of shades of colour, and types of cloth (within the accepted kind). They succeeded in being creative where there was still space for them to be so.

Because the arpilleristas worked with the Vicaría, therefore, their creativity was somewhat constrained. However, it was never entirely stamped out and the women did learn to be creative within the constraints, and were also called on to be creative in some situations.

THE INFLUENCE OF THE ARPILLERA'S CONTENT ON ITS MAKERS

These numerous influences on the arpillera are also influences on the lives of their makers. What the arpillera is like influences what its makers observe carefully, what they think about, what materials they buy, where they buy their materials, how much they spend on materials, and consequently how much they have to spend on other things.

What an arpillera depicts will influence what its makers observe and pay particularly close attention to in their daily lives. The Macul group makes five kinds of arpillera: the 'typical characters' of Chile (the balloon salesperson, the candyfloss man, the photographer and the drum player or 'chinchinero'); local buildings of Macul (the church or local government building); the typical Chilean landscape (the lakes of the South, the island of Chiloe with its houses on stilts by the water's edge, and the hills of Valparaiso with their multi-coloured houses); the Christian ritual arpillera (the Nativity arpillera, for example) and the scene of people at leisure (children in the park, people in boats, weddings). In nearly all the embroideries of the Macul group one sees the mountains and some trees.

Embroidery of Macul group showing women
washing and hanging up clothes to dry

Making such scenes has resulted in the members of the group becoming particularly observant when it comes to natural phenomena. Raquel says that she walks around observing the trees. Nancy looks carefully at the mountains (and one of her embroideries had the mountains in purple and beige as a result of her having noticed that at times they are indeed purple.)

Leonor has observed this typical city character (selling a local drink) very carefully for her embroidery

What an arpillera depicts influences what the arpillerista thinks about. If an arpillera has as its theme the disappearances, in those hours during which she is making it and those hours during which she is not, the arpillerista will analyse the problem. Similarly, if a group makes arpilleras depicting poverty in the shantytowns, it will continue to look out for signs of poverty to include in its arpilleras and will think intensely about the problem. If, however, the group switches from making scenes of poverty and repression to scenes of markets, bread ovens and harvests, it will think far less about the problems of the *población*. The women will become depoliticised, as we see in Chapter 6. What they depict influences the women's thinking; hence the market, in

the Northern hemisphere, gives the women ideas by telling them what to make pictures about.

What the arpilleras are about influences women's behaviours both within and outside the workshop, as the Místicas group shows. The women began to buy illustrated Bibles and to accept the books which Jehovah's Witnesses offered them when they came to the door. They also began to talk and think about Bible stories and to pray more. One told me that she prays all the time, including on the bus. During part of my stay, half way through class they would stand up, hold hands in a circle and the teacher would thank God for an aspect of their situation and all would say 'Amen'. Even a group which makes arpilleras without much emotional or spiritual meaning is likely to be influenced by its creations. The Peñiwén group members collect magazine pictures or postcards of landscapes which might serve as a source of inspiration. Their art work affects relations at home, even. While the group was developing the 'map arpilleras', one of the women's husbands complained about all the little pieces of paper and material stuck to all the furniture. He also complained that he felt sexually frustrated and that the house is a mess, now that his wife is so involved in her arpillera-making. The arpilleras influence both the women and their family's behaviour.

Themes the Vicaría requests can affect to what degree the arpilleristas interact with other groups. Usually the orders the women receive do not require that they interact with other groups. However, on one occasion the Sta. Adriana group was asked by the Vicaría to make large arpilleras of a kind they had never made before. For this they used a picture from a magazine article about arpilleras. As other groups were involved in

making the same arpillera Ada made a colour photocopy of the magazine and gave it or the original to another group. They used the model in particular to copy elements with which they were not familiar, such as a horse and cart. The Vicaría's order involved them communicating with another group and sharing materials.

The content and form of the arpilleras also influence the interactions of the women. Because they have to include certain elements in the arpillera, they interact with each other in a certain way. For example, because the arpilleras of the Sta. Adriana group have set numbers of figures and set locations for objects, the women ask each other's advice on placement and numbers, when the can't remember. Also, because they have to produce arpilleras of a standard size, they have bought and made tools which they share, to do so: a block of wood to serve as a template, and a tape measure. What the arpillera looks like influences the behaviour of the women on a micro-interactional level.

Making an arpillera according to the Vicaría's specifications influences what tasks the women perform and the order in which they perform them. They have developed procedures which they follow, and these procedures stem from the different elements which exist in an arpillera. The first activity in the series of procedures is the cutting of cloth. The women first cut out the blue and beige cloth, using a small wooden board which is cut to size for measuring the cloth (only for the smallest arpillera size). After cutting the material, the next step is sewing the blue cloth of the sky to the beige of the background. Following this comes the cutting out of the mountains, the roofs of the houses, the walls, the windows and door, tree trunks and foliage. The next stage in arpillera-making is sticking the pieces of material onto the arpillera base with glue stick.

They stick the mountains onto the arpillera, leaving a little sky above them. Then they stick the parts of the houses and trees together and paste the whole units onto beige background. They do the same with any other elements which are specific to a theme.

The elements in the arpillera are stuck onto the background before being sewn

This sticking and placing of the units onto the background is called 'plasmar' (akin to designing). This activity, then, has influenced the women's workshop behaviour and speech in that it has led the women to develop and use words they would not usually use.

What follows is called 'bordar' or 'sewing' (literally 'embroidering'). The arpilleristas sew the houses, mountains and trees which are already stuck on (using the cross stitch) and, in any empty spaces, fill in with grass, fences and flowers. The colour of the thread has to be very close to the colour of the object it is fixing onto the arpillera.

Next, the arpillerista cuts out the sun and sews its rays in the chain stitch. The *monos* come on last, and are sewn onto the arpillera where there is an empty space or where they are needed (e.g. behind a market stall). Usually they have already been made by the time it is time to sew them onto the arpillera. The final stage in the making of an arpillera is to sew the white cloth backing onto the back of the arpillera. The arpillera then makes a border around the edge of the arpillera with the blanket stitch and the arpillera is finished.

Juana (right) makes *monos* whist Sara sews an arpillera edge

Juana at work on the *monos* (detail)

The existence of *monos* in the arpillera has created a 'profession' within the arpillerista profession: that of *'monera'* or *mono*-maker. Usually every member of the group makes her own, but in the Sta. Adriana group Sara often makes them for Ada and sells them to her. She also makes them for another group in the area. Certain elements within the arpillera, therefore, have created a category of activity in the arpilleristas' minds, to which they devote a certain amount of time.

The arpilleras influence the women's conversation. Very frequently during the process the arpillerista will comment on the part of the arpillera on which she is working. She might comment on the stiffness of the background cloth, the bluntness of her needle, or her lack of the right colour material. All the arpilleristas make jokes about the *monos*,

talking about them as if they were real people with their own character. For example, Juana did not have enough black wool for the hair of one *mono* and said that this one 'would be a bald man'. Sara dropped a *mono* under the table one day and described it as 'naked' (without clothes), causing much laughter. One *mono* lacked a leg and caused a joke about one-legged *monos*.

The nature of the arpillera influences, therefore, the activities, roles and interaction of the women in the workshop. It also influences the behaviour of the women beyond the workshop. Because the Vicaría insists that the arpilleras be made with new material, the arpilleristas have to buy their material in a shop. Today the arpilleristas of the Sta. Adriana go to a material shop in the *población*, ten small blocks away from Juanita's house. It is a small (25 m2) shop with two cashiers and rolls of different material. The women go only occasionally, buying a substantial amount at a time because the colours they need are not always there. The sky blue, in particular, is scarce, as is the right beige. Sometimes one will buy for the others. Sara, for example, asked Ada to buy some sky blue when she had run out and knew Ada was going. They buy the wool, thread, needle and threader in the local street market when they run out. The arpilleras, therefore, influence where women spend time outside the workshop, and also how much money they spend.

CONCLUSION

The arpillera evolved dramatically in its content, over time, largely as a result of the Vicaría's attempts to shape it. The demands of the Vicaría were an attempt to meet the needs of buyers. Whilst the buyers were victims of the regime and foreigners who wanted to show solidarity for the regime's victims, the arpilleras of the shantytown women denounced poverty and political repression, with scenes which included unemployment, soup kitchens, and shantytown raids. As the dictatorship drew to a close, and the new arpillera buyers were interested in the decorative aspects of the arpilleras, the arpilleras became more naive and jolly, depicting markets, fruit-picking and other innocuous activities. They also became standardised and appeared in a number of shapes and sizes. If the different players (the Vicaría, buyers and arpilleristas) make up an art world, it is clear, as Becker (1988) suggests, that a change in one of the aspects of this art world (e.g. the buyers) causes a change in the art itself.

The arpilleras of the Agrupación started in a similar way. Initially, they were denunciatory and focused on the arpilleristas' personal disappearance story and search. Over time the denunciations were less about women's personal experiences and more general and conceptual, focusing instead on human rights. Later still, they focused on the demands of the Agrupación in the Nineties: truth and justice. Unlike the shantytown arpilleras, they never became naive. Within the same institution, the extent of the constraints placed on different groups differs.

The Vicaría's instructions (based on the buyers' demands) and system of quality control are in large part responsible for the shape the arpillera took initially, as well as its change over time. The influence of both buyers and intermediaries' marketing strategies

has been noted in other Third World crafts. Stromberg-Pelizzi (1993: 86) provides an example in her study of the Taxco silver industry in Mexico. However, whilst many Third World traditional art forms only succumb to the influence of foreign buyers after they have existed in their traditional form for a considerable period of time, in the arpillera case the influence was present almost from the start. Although the arpilleristas' creativity was constrained, it has not been entirely stamped out because the women learnt to be creative within the constraints, and were also called on to create new arpilleras on occasion.

The arpillera, because it was produced within the context of an institution which had power over its distribution, was not the raw expression of people finding their voice or merely a reflection of political circumstances. Rather, it was the product of a wide variety of constraints, influences and circumstances, the most significant of which was the market and the intermediary institution's sense of what the market wanted.

The Vicaría and buyers' influence on the arpillera is also an influence on the lives of the arpilleristas. What the arpillera is like influences what its makers observe carefully, what they think about, what materials they buy, where they buy their materials, how much they spend on materials, and consequently how much they have to spend on other things. The behaviours and interactions of the arpilleristas were shaped by the content and form of the arpilleras.

CHAPTER 6: THE DEVELOPMENT OF A POLITICAL AWARENESS

'Men do not usually define the troubles they endure in terms of historical change and institutional contradiction... They do not possess the quality of mind essential to grasp the interplay of man and society, of biography and history...'.
C. Wright Mills (1959: 3) The Sociological Imagination

Participation in the arpillera workshops influenced the women's behaviour inside and outside the workshop, as we saw in Chapter 5. It also affected them in other ways: they developed a political awareness and became politically active. When personal and socio-political circumstances changed, however, the women became less active politically. These developments suggest that political consciousness and activity do not arise from repressive conditions of life alone but rather through certain kinds of contact with others. Moreover, contrary to the findings of much research, the arpillerista case reveals that a political consciousness and activity, once aroused, cannot be trusted to continue alone. Instead, it can be lost with time.

The first part of the chapter describes the ways in which the shantytown arpilleristas connected with the Vicaría became political when they joined the workshops. The second part analyses what caused these developments to occur. The third part examines how the women changed when political and economic circumstances changed.

BECOMING POLITICAL

Most shantytown women had not worked or been active in organisations after they had had their first child. Their lives revolved around the home and family and many rarely left their neighbourhood. If they left their houses it was only to visit a relative, shop and take the children to school. The government's ideology, as well as the culture of 'machismo' supported their exclusion from public life (see Chapter 7). Some of them had admired Allende. But for the most part, they did not understand how the government affected their daily lives, or engage in political acts. With the economic crises of 1975 and 1982 many men were fired and their wives, in desperation, began to search for employment so as to feed their hungry families (see Chapter 2). Joining an arpillera workshop was one way of earning an income.

Engaging in political activity

Joining the arpillera workshops immediately involved the shantytown women in political activity, in several ways. The fact of grouping together was an act of defiance (as grouping together was illegal) and a statement of the government's failure to provide employment for men, thus forcing women to go out and work. The making of arpilleras was also a political act because the arpilleras contained anti-government messages and alternative ways of viewing the world. With their images of disappearances, shantytown raids and hunger, they redefined the Chilean reality not as 'order' (Pinochet talked of bringing 'order' to Chile) but rather as chaos, suffering and terror. If a discourse is 'a relatively bounded set of arguments organized around a specific diagnosis of and solution to some social problem' (Ellingson 1995: 107), the arpilleras presented a

discourse contrary to the official one. In depicting such scenes the women were, in effect, overturning dominant codes: 'If, in information societies, power is exercised in the control of codes, antagonism lies in the ability to resist and even more so, to overturn dominant codes. Antagonism lies in the ability to give a different name to space and time by developing new languages that change or replace words used by the social order to organise our daily experience' (Melucci 1994: 123). The arpilleras subverted Pinochet's definition of the situation.

Joining the workshop involved the women in protest and other resistance activities:

Margarita:	We would go out around here and you know what we did.
Jacqueline	What were you doing?
Margarita	Sticking up posters against the president. The truth is that we were against the president.
Jacqueline	Of course.
Margarita	We went out to make barricades, we went out to do lots of things, to hang up large banners. There were 15 or 20 of us in the little group[1], we used to have meetings about this so as to plan things, how we would do things and who would do them, because you could not just go out any old how, and all that. The conversations were like this: 'you will do this with her, you will do that with her' and in this way we came to an agreement, that was our work. Ideals are ideals because they are not work. And can you believe that I am still working against the governments which exist? It is my ideal and no one is going to take it away from me. (Interview with Margarita Ahumada)

It was usually the case, as in this example, that the arpilleristas participated in political acts as a group. However, they also began to participate in such acts alone:

Jacqueline	Did you participate in protests a lot before, or not?
Woman 1	Well, in the worst periods it was more sort of individual, we would always meet each other, we would be more than just one. But everybody, now and then when it was organised by workshop, we would all participate.
Jacqueline	And what would you do, for example, what sort of things did you organise?
Woman 1	Well, as a workshop we always had to do what the deanery or the area [area office] did.
Woman 2	For example, for International women's Day, the 8th of March, there were activities in which we participated.
Woman 3	For Labour Day
Woman 4	For the meetings which went on... almost all of us always participated in marches in the centre. (Villa Sur group)

In some instances the women became involved in such resistance acts because the Vicaría made it mandatory or because their friends and neighbours were doing so. When they joined the workshops, therefore, the women were being subversive in grouping together, making arpilleras, and participating in protests and other resistance activities.

Political without deliberation

The arpilleristas were not engaging in political acts because they wanted to subvert the regime. Indeed, some did not initially recognise these activities as political at all (even though the leaders of the groups usually did):

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[1] It is not clear whether Margarita was referring to the arpillera workshop or a group which formed for the occasion and consisted of members of the arpillera workshop and outsiders.

> 'Many are terrified of the word politics... without knowing that we are acting politically every day merely in organising, in realising our needs, in complaining about the situation and looking for solutions'.
> (The leader of an arpillera group, quoted in Angelo, 1987, p. 61)

What Pires de Rio Caldeira (1990) found in Brazil also applies in Chile: women defined politics as a male activity which involved struggling for power, whilst their own activities were a struggle for the good of family and community and therefore not 'political'. Shantytown women saw men (and not other women) as political actors. 'For the majority of *pobladoras*, politics was what the trade unions and political parties did and by definition, what men did. Organisations such as homeless committees, which carried out more militant actions such as land seizures, or unemployed groups and debtors' clubs which dealt directly with the authorities in attempts to renegotiate rent and public services arrears, were seen as more political and men dominated these organisations, particularly in the leadership' (Fisher 1993: 31-32). Most of the women also kept away from political parties[2].

Their initial motive in joining a workshop was to feed their families. As it is the woman's responsibility to feed the family in Chile, they felt obliged to look for a source of income when the husband was unable to bring home money. The arpillera workshops provided the women with both money and food[3]: 'Joining a workshop often entailed immediate, tangible benefits for those in a desperate economic situation. Not only did new members receive materials and technical expertise, they also

[2] The reasons were numerous: they thought that parties manipulated them; they had traditionally been marginalised from and within parties; they doubted the efficiency of politics; and they were afraid (Valdes 1988).
[3] In the early years the Vicaría distributed food occasionally and in small quantities, in the workshops. The funding for this came in part from foreign or international aid agencies such as Caritas.

received a package of foodstuffs from the Vicariate' (Schild 1994: 62). In the words of an arpillerista:

> 'In my case, a friend invited me [to join the workshop] because my husband was without work. There was a workshop where I could work, and earn a bit of money so as to survive'
> (Arpillerista in Villa Sur group interview)

The arpillera groups were convenient as a means of feeding the family, because they took place in the neighbourhood with which the women were familiar. Their proximity and all-female membership made the arpillera workshops more acceptable to the women's husbands than work in a factory, for example. The political acts in which the women became involved, therefore, were part and parcel of their efforts to fulfil their traditional role as mothers. As Chuchryk (1989: 159) points out: 'some women, politically active for the first time, justify their participation in terms of being good wives and mothers'. Women were behaving in a non-traditional way so as to perform their traditional roles.

Although they knew their families were hungry, the arpilleristas did not understand the causes of their economic hardship or political repression for quite some time:

> Jacqueline Was there a process with the women in the workshops?
>
> Marta Of course, because they came from their houses without knowing anything, without even understanding what was happening to them, what was happening in society.
> (Interview with Marta Alvarez)

They did not initially connect their individual situation with government policies.

The Growth of a Political consciousness

After a time in the workshops all the arpilleristas in the Vicaría groups developed a left-wing political consciousness. For the most part they were similar in their ideas, even if some were more left wing than others. There were no centre-right or right wing individuals. A member of the Villa Sur group described: 'Because we all think more or less along the same lines, and politicians use you'. In the same interview, another said: 'Yes, because we were all in the opposition and none of us had a party'. Specifically this new consciousness involved them realising that they were experiencing an inordinate amount of political repression, that human rights were being violated and that their economic problems could be traced to the neo-liberal economic policies of the regime[4]. Furthermore, they came to an understanding of the discrepancies between this and the vision of reality portrayed by the government.

They developed a collective identity or 'shared definition of a group that derives from members' common interests and solidarity' (Taylor and Whittier 1991: 1). They identified themselves as part of the group of 'arpilleristas', but also as members of 'the poor' and 'the left'[5], and as victims of the regime (in the sense of being economically

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[4] The human rights abuses of which they were becoming aware were the arbitrary imprisonment and prolonged detention without trial of political people, torture, execution, and firing from jobs for political reasons, principally.

[5] Part of the reason why this particular identity rather than, for example, ethnic identity emerged, is the surrounding political climate. As Nagel (1995) shows in the context of American Indian ethnic identity, the climate and policies of other movements in the country (in her case the civil rights movement) will sensitise groups to certain identities. In Chile there was particular sensitivity to class and political leaning (in terms of right or left wing) because of the very marked class hierarchies and the recent communist government. Whilst ethnicity had always been an issue in Chile, it was not as prominent an issue at the time as class or politics.

marginalised, politically repressed and living under an authoritarian system. Ada of the Santa Adriana group, for example, frequently referred to herself as one of 'the poor'.

They came to see that their own actions were in fact political acts of resistance (a change described by Walker (1986: 55) as 'consciousness in action' to 'consciousness in discourse'). After a period of time in the workshops they realised that politics was not just what people did in obvious political arenas:

> 'Whether you are in a party or outside a party, you see the necessity of everything and you go right into battle, just the same, into battle... You were fighting and were in whatever group. You do not have to be a member of a party to do such things'.
> (Member of Sta. Adriana workshop- group interview)

The interviewee had a clear conception of her acts as political, even though they were not carried out in the context of a party. The arpilleristas came to redefine politics to include their own activities, in a way similar to that described by Chuchryk (1989: 175): 'the shift in the locus of political activity away from the workplace and to the home and neighborhood has also entailed a new conception of *lo politico,* that is, those areas of human life and social organization which are considered "political"'. By the late Eighties, women did see themselves as practising politics when the word was understood to mean the obtaining of spaces of power and when it was practised on familiar territory (Valdes 1988). However, there are exceptions. Some still do not associate their actions with politics, because they still associate politics with party politics. When asked whether they are political or interested in politics, many of these women still reply that they are not, even when they were involved in political acts in the past. As Sara, who was involved in making political arpilleras and participating in protests, said :

Jacqueline	Were you in a party?
Sara	No.
Jacqueline	Why, don't you like politics?
Sara	No because I have never liked politics, no one does in this house.

'Politics', for a number of women, still means party politics.

As this was happening, they came to develop an ideal of what the political and economic situation should be like in the country:

> 'Because in the organisations, the group discovers first what is around them, discovering through the process of discovering the things they share. So, from that they begin to define what they want: 'OK, there is this problem of unemployment. We, first, must get work for ourselves but then we have to fight against what produces this unemployment. Right, and what do we want? We want work, in what way?' And from that, then, the group finds itself discussing and defining what the rules of the game are, and they are usually different from what they see around them'. (Interview with Veronica Salas, ex-Vicaría employee and trainer of arpilleristas)

The women developed an ideal and wanted to change the situation to fit it more closely.

An image of the ideal: ‘Democracy Now’

Detail of ‘Democracy Now’

Together with wanting to change the situation came the realisation that they could be agents in a change (rather than passive receivers of the consequences of the decisions of others). By the time the of the 1989 plebiscite and presidential elections they went so far as to make demands of Patricio Aylwin during his election campaign:

Interviewee	We asked for recognition of women.
Jacqueline	Of women in general?
Interviewee	Of women in general, not just of women arpilleristas. Recognition, we asked for a retirement pensions for the housewife, because not all of us can work,

> there are many housewives who work more than those of us who go out to work sometimes, because they have a lot to do in their homes. So, we also asked for this. We asked for places to sell at. But nothing was given to us, and these are the various requests we made of him but none was granted. (Interview with Peñalolén group)

Although most arpilleristas were not as forthright, they did realise they could actively contribute to making their ideal a reality. Some (though a minority) of women went so far as to join political parties, thus continuing to try to shape their situation:

> '... later we met with leaders of political parties, women who were born in these workshops' (Interview with Marta Alvarez, a health group organiser in contact with arpillera groups)

Women became aware of the fact that they could effect change and began to do so both within and outside of political parties.

The women, therefore, came out of the home to the workshops, developed an understanding of the political situation, conceived of an alternative system, became aware that they could effect change, and tried to do so. Although there are some exceptions[6] to process of development described here, the majority of women experienced the growth of an awareness as described above.

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[6] A small number of arpilleristas had been active in a community organisation and many shantytowns were very "organised" before the Coup, particularly if the shantytown had come into being because of a land seizure. However, the women had only participated in land seizures (if at all) when they were too young fully to realise the implications of such acts. As one describes: 'There, in José María Caro... My mother took a site, in those days they raided sites... I was about eight months old when we went there, and we have always lived there'. Many shantytowns were not the products of land seizures at all, but rather of a government programme. During the dictatorship there were other foci of organisation in the shantytowns: some arpilleristas had been in Church and Mothers' Centres. However, the Mothers' Centres were usually run by 'patronas', upper middle class women who taught handicraft skills but did not prepare women for participation in organisations: 'In the Centros de Madres, the "asesores" [women who came in as advisors] often do not allow leadership to develop or only to a certain level' (Chaney 1979: 96). According to Mattelart (1980) the centres reinforced a conservative ideology and, under the guise of participation, removed women from any action or political allegiance contrary to the system. Most arpilleristas had been participants neither in land seizures nor in Mothers' Centres, however.

THE FACTORS CAUSING THE WOMEN TO BECOME MORE POLITICALLY AWARE

A constellation of factors caused the women to become politically aware: the experience of repression and economic hardship, the teachings of the highly politicised Vicaría employees, the functioning of the workshop as a model for democracy, the directed production of arpilleras, the breaking out of isolation and meeting and talking with other women, contact with arpillera groups from other parts of Santiago, contact with highly politicised women, access to unofficial written information about the situation, participation in other survival organisations and finally contact with other ideological NGOs and clandestine groups.

The Direct Experience of Repression

Direct experiences of repression and economic hardship undoubtedly encouraged women to reflect on the nature of the government. As Fisher (1993:11) states: 'Many women had their first real contact with the outside world of politics when the army burst into their homes and seized family members or when husbands were sacked for political or union activity. The repression of political parties and unions brought political life to the community where it was more accessible to women'. Some arpilleristas had experienced violence on a personal basis. Sara, for example, had her son taken away by soldiers:

> '... once they took one of my children away... one who is in Melipilla, they took him out of here but this was a wrong address which they had been given'.
> (Interview with Sara Mena).

Such direct attacks inevitably provoked anti-government feelings. However, the experience of repression does not automatically give rise to an understanding of its causes. Other factors are necessary for the growth of a political consciousness. It was joining arpillera groups which was the crucial factor which caused these changes in the women, because it took them out of their isolation and exposed them to a wide range of new experiences and ideas.

The Teachings of the Vicaría

One of the most important features of the workshops in fostering a political consciousness in the women was the teachings of the left-wing Vicaría employees. Vicaría employees held courses and gave talks in the workshops. Firstly, they taught the women about the political and economic situation in Chile. The topics included democracy, poverty, unemployment, repression and human rights abuses[7]. Gloria Torres (a Vicaría employee during the dictatorship), for example, states:

> 'So I had the mission of consciousness-raising [with the women] and so I would speak. About democracy.'
> (Interview with Gloria Torres)

[7] Surprisingly, the Vicaría as an institution did not have a clear indoctrination strategy, nor was its main aim to indoctrinate or organise politically. Instead, its main concern was helping people survive the human rights abuses and economic crisis. The Vicaría personnel frequently disagreed about whether there should be an element of political indoctrination in contact with the women.

Usually, a Vicaría employee talked to the women about a topic and directed discussion, encouraging the women to think about the situation they were experiencing.

The Vicaría employees also gave classes on issues not directly connected with the government, including 'women's rights', authoritarianism in the household and domestic violence.[8] Gloria Torres describes such teaching:

> 'I remember, for example, when we were talking about freedom, well, one of the projects I worked on involved my teaching them the rights of women, so... these women were sublime, you realised that the rights which exist have nothing to do with their rights. So, for example, we would tell them to write down what they considered to be their most important rights. Never... those rights rarely coincided with the rights we have. For example, one would say to you 'the right to sleep peacefully', 'the right to drink water', but other rights were great like, for example, the right to have fun, the right to go out, for example, the right not to be hit on the head...'. (Interview with Gloria Torres)

Although these issues were not directly about the political situation, they did include concepts of relevance to it, such as human rights, democracy and freedom. Moreover, in condemning the authoritarianism of husbands, for example, the Vicaría teachers were suggesting that the women demand changes in their homes. In so doing, they were changing women's attitudes from acceptance to non-acceptance and from submission to the desire to confront authoritarianism. These changes in attitude were a reinforcement of the attitudes women were encouraged to adopt in the political arena.

The Workshop as a model

[8] Other courses included guitar, first aid, culture, newsletter production, and drug addiction.

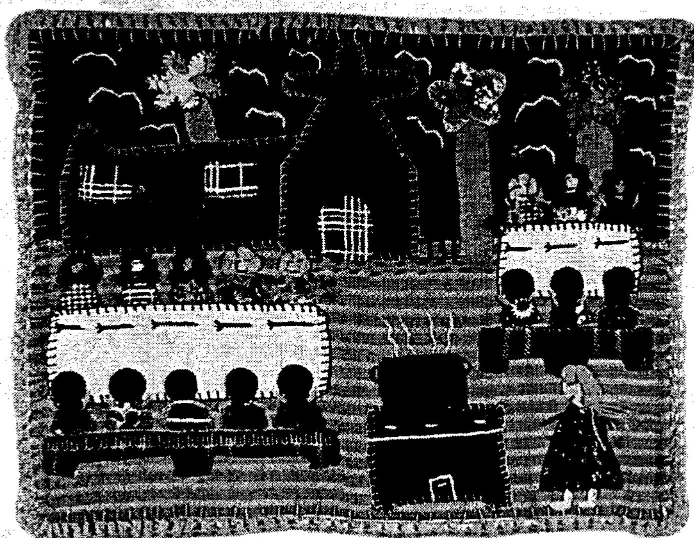
The Vicaría employees tried to make the workshop a model for the wider society, as a way of teaching about democracy.

> 'in the workshop we would analyse all the organisational issues, for example we suggest the model and at that time we had the authoritarian model of the dictatorship and people tend to reproduce it you see, so there was a lot of work to do so that people learnt what it meant to make decisions democratically'.
> (Interview with Veronica Salas)

Women learnt about democracy by putting it into practice in the workshop.

Directed Arpillera Production

Another factor leading to the development of a political consciousness was the Vicaría's directing of the arpillera-making. Most of the women, when they began learning how to make arpilleras, did not know what to depict. The Vicaría teachers told them to depict 'the reality around them', suggesting which elements of that reality they should show, namely, the popular kitchens, water shortages, military raids on shantytowns, stealing of electricity from public lines, lack of jobs, and acts of resistance.



This early shantytown group arpillera depicts a soup kitchen

Because they had come to the workshops primarily to earn money, they were willing to depict the political themes the Vicaría (their source of income) instructed. One arpillerista, for example, states:

> '... and when we participated in protests we made arpilleras showing protests'.
> (Interview with Sara Mena)

These aspects of 'the reality' are not, of course, neutral. The water and electricity cuts, and popular kitchens, for example, were connected with a wider political and economic context in that they were consequences of the economic crisis. All the above emphasise economic deprivation and political repression.

The emphasis in the arpilleras on deprivation and repression increased the women's awareness of these problems because to render them convincingly the women had to observe them carefully:

> 'Then the arpillera began to develop many things, the women began to take on the role of historians. They began to discover each theme they chose, they had to discover it. If they were going to do an arpillera about a strike, they had to see all that happened at that strike, to put themselves in the complexity of it, as it were. They became motivated to discover that and they were discovering it, they were getting to know it with the responsibility of telling the story later, through their arpillera. In that sense it was, I think, very significant. Like it established a very strong bond with reality'.
> (Interview with Veronica Salas)

Moreover, the teachers encouraged discussion about the theme on which the women were working and sometimes gave information about these problems.

Thinking about the problems of shantytown life led the women to analyse the wider political and economic circumstances:

> 'They began to tell more of the reality of the story so there something very interesting happened and that was the development of a fantastic ability to observe reality, because as they had to make the arpilleras and tell this story which was happening in the country, this reality, they went about analysing the reality'.
> (Interview with Veronica Salas)

The arpilleristas' own descriptions of the situation suggest a process of analysis:

> 'Then you begin to talk about what you've drawn. For example, one woman says, 'I did this because they cut my electricity and I have to connect to the cables', and the other women hear and realise they're not alone with their problems. Someone else does a hospital with long queues and says 'I did this because I had to get up at five in the morning and I waited until midday, when they told us there was not doctor available', and then there's a discussion- why are there no doctors? Do you think it's the same for rich people?, and so on'.
> (Arpillerista quoted in Fisher, 1993: 38)[9]

In making arpilleras, the women were analysing the economic and political situation.

Pollner and Stein refer to stories told by a group of people about themselves as 'narrative maps' (Pollner and Stein 1996: 220). They suggest: 'Narrative maps are not

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[9] The same questioning occurred in other survival organisations. A shantytown arpillerista states: 'around the soup pot [of the communal kitchen] people ask why they are in this'. (Quoted in Angelo, 1987: 73).

only "about" or "within" a social world, but part of the work of "worlding" (Pollner and Stein 1996: 220), that is, of creating the very sense of a world... Thus, mapping is not merely a conduit for transmitting established features of a social world, but self-referential work through which that world and its presumptive parameters are discursively constituted and "talked into being"'. As they made arpilleras the women were making narrative maps, observing and analysing happenings around them, but also defining these happenings in their own terms:

> 'And when we began to see within the workshops that a person came from her house and had never participated before [been in a grassroots organisation or party] and she could not do a theme [a coherent composition]. She would do dispersed figures and with time, as she talked with the other workshops, as she became integrated into the workshop, she began to be able to do a theme. And so we began to realise that the state of isolation between people was such that they had lost the ability to express themselves, they did not know how to express themselves. So they managed to acquire this expression with time as they became integrated into the group, began to talk, began to think, began to live the world in which they were living, and so this world was so important that logically it was the central theme of the arpillera'.
> (Interview with Veronica Salas)

As Riano (1994: 4) suggests: 'Women's participation in communication initiatives constitutes a tool of struggle and a meaningful space in which to develop women's own discourses'. In their making of arpilleras the women were defining and putting a name to the world they lived in.

The making of arpilleras contributed to the development of their understanding of themselves. As Myerhoff (1986: 261-262) suggests: 'One of the most persistent but elusive ways that people make sense of themselves is to show themselves to themselves... by telling themselves stories... More than merely self-recognition, self-definition is made possible by such showings, for their content may state not only what

people think they are, but what they should have been or may yet be'. They became aware of themselves as economically deprived and politically repressed.

Breaking out of isolation

A further factor in the development of a political consciousness was coming into contact with other women in the same plight. The arpillera groups ended women's isolation in the home. For the first time in years, the workshop members were talking at length to women other than immediate family members and direct neighbours. They could compare notes and experiences with each other and build on knowledge. This was highly significant in leading to the development of a political consciousness, because through these discussions the women formed a sense of their problems as collective rather than individual. Before joining the workshops, for example, many women attributed their husbands' unemployment to laziness. On discovering that many women's husbands were unemployed, they realised that the causes of their problems might be structural.

> 'During all that period in which the husbands were unemployed the women had the idea that their husbands were unemployed because they were lazy, but when they came to the organisation and all the husbands or 80% of the husbands were unemployed they began to realise that... maybe it was not that and they began to discover that there was something over and above this, which created these conditions. So at that point a sort of process of confrontation began, bringing them to affirm what it was they wanted'.
> (Interview with Veronica Salas)

Topics of discussion

The arpilleristas talked about a range of topics. Personal problems was frequently the subject of conversation:

> 'Yes, because you realise that all the problems you have compared with other people's were nothing, because there were lots of people who had relatives in prison, others who did not hear about their relatives, so many things, children they did not find... That, compared with what you were living through- it was nothing almost. That is what made me a bit angry, not having found out before, and not having begun before and having lost so much time going around in circles'. (Interview with Ada Ocaranza)

Some talk about family problems was indirectly political because the repression impinged so strongly on the lives of shantytown inhabitants:

Jacqueline	What did you talk about in the workshop?
Sara	Some people talked about their problems, for example there was a lady with eighteen children, the Lucas family, and she always came with dramas about her children, about this and that, that the police came and took them out of the house, all the time she would come and there we would begin to talk, and people always came with problems in their homes, there we would talk about them. But in the time of the UP it was another matter... They talked about how they would raid the houses, all that, the soldiers came goodness knows how many times to raid and see if they found any weapons. (Interview with Sara Mena).

Sometimes the conversation was overtly political:

Jacqueline	And what did you talk about in the workshop?
Margarita:	What we talked about most was the president we had... (Interview with Margarita Ahumada).

In the mid-Eighties, conversation centred around 'everyday problems of getting by in conditions of near total unemployment, about the latest populist gesture by the military government which most know to be phoney, about their plans and fears for the next monthly day of national protest.' (Brett 1986: 29). Conversation in the workshops,

therefore, centred around the family, events in daily lives and politics, and sometimes the intersection of the three.

Contact with other arpillera groups

The Vicaría also influenced the women politically by bringing them into contact with other arpillera groups from different parts of Santiago. It organised discussion days, theatrical productions and events to celebrate certain days of the year. Ada of the Sta. Adriana group describes these get-togethers:

> 'sometimes there were competitions against other workshops, because there was a day which they celebrated, they would celebrate the day of the organisation, then the 8th of March, they celebrated several things and they would meet in part of the church, other workshops came together, organisations of workshops, there were competitions, first they made you think up ideas, what you understood about society, if you liked the workshop, how you felt in the workshop, what we wanted, and then there was recreation, there were groups which sang, dance, it was fun, you had fun and you learnt other things'.
> (Interview with Ada Ocaranza)

In meeting other arpillera groups, the women became aware of the problems of other households, the situation in other shantytowns and the policies of the government. At one such meeting (just after the dictatorship had ended) the latter was an explicit goal: 'A third goal is that the workshops learn about the policies and programmes of the new government' (Final Report, Sixth Encounter of Workshops, 8th and 9th May 1990').

Contact with Highly Politicised Groups

The workshop increased political awareness because it brought them into contact with groups of highly politicised people, such as the mothers of the disappeared, groups of unemployed people, and young, clandestine activists. Contact with such groups was through teaching (the Agrupación arpilleristas, for example, taught some shantytown groups), shared meeting spaces in the Vicaría's local offices, and get-togethers organised by the Vicaría specifically for the purpose of bringing these different groups together.

Contact with clandestine political activists was not organised by the Vicaría, but was a consequence of the women's being organised into a unit of activity. Some young, clandestine, left-wing activists such as Hector helped the arpilleristas with their work:

> 'we, the activists, when we went about the streets, there were many of us, we came to the arpillera because were part of that, because if we arrived home there was an old lady who was an activist and she would take us in, we would help her, it was born as a necessity, this thing'.
> (Interview with Hector Ungay)

In some cases the militant groups taught the arpilleristas their view of the political situation. Hector continues:

> 'we would come and help, with the arpillera, we would buy things with the arpilleras we sold, we participated, the popular ovens, they went from being need-oriented to being political, in all the shantytowns, then we saw that it was a good organisation and we began to teach things'.

Through such meetings, the shantytown arpilleristas accessed a wide spectrum of information about events in Chile and were exposed to the virulently anti-Pinochet stance of these other groups.

The shantytown arpilleristas also had contact with a wide variety of politicised, anti-Pinochet groups in protests. If they joined the Agrupación in a protest, for example, they would be protesting alongside other *población* inhabitants, human rights groups, and political groups (Vicaría de la Solidaridad 1983: 67). Being in an arpillera group involved them in meeting a variety of resistance groups, of whose movement they became a part.

Access to Written Information

Another contributor to the development of a political consciousness was access, through the workshop, to written information about the political and economic situation. Because they were grouped together in an identifiable unit of activity, and because they were known to be associated with the left-wing Vicaría, they attracted leaflets and newsletters published secretly and on a very low budget, by resistance groups, NGOs and the Church. A newsletter called 'La Hoja', for example, contained information about how to cope with the economic crisis (how to use as little gas as possible in cooking, for example), facts and figures about survival organisations, and information on human rights abuses. The women also received the Vicaría's news bulletin 'Solidaridad', which contained news about human rights abuses and Church events. With such publications they were able to access information which was censored out of the official newspapers.

Participation in other survival organisations

The arpilleristas' participation in the workshops led them to seek out contact with other survival organisations such as health groups or food-oriented groups:

Woman 1	Children's summer camps... as a workshop we always participated, helping in the kitchen, preparing the milk. We were the ones who served the children, distributed...
Woman 2	Others [organisations] too, soup kitchens too. (Villa Sur group)

The effects of participation in an arpillera workshop were multiplied by participation in other survival organisations. In these other groups the women asked similar questions and had similar discussions.

Other Institutions, Groups or Individuals which Influenced the Arpilleristas

Joining an arpillera group and having contact with the Vicaría created a political consciousness in the women in all the above ways. However, other institutions and individuals also worked with the women and were influential in developing their political awareness. 'Tierra Nuestra', for example, was an NGO which provided services for shantytown women and worked with arpillera groups, organising theatrical productions which brought a large number of them together. Veronica Salas left the Vicaría and created a new NGO called 'Taller de Acción Cultural', organising arpilleristas in the East of Santiago. Another NGO, MOMUPO, worked with the arpilleristas of the North of Santiago, running workshops on parenting skills, sexuality, women's legal rights, women's history and political self-education (Chuchryk 1989:

164).[10] All these NGOs encouraged the women to discuss the political and economic situation as they were making arpilleras or carrying out other productive activities.

Although most of these NGOs were not overtly political, some were. A number used handicraft teaching as bait to attract women who were afraid of politics, intending to introduce political ideas gradually. A MOMUPO organiser (quoted in Fisher 1993: 182) states:

> 'even today when a group tries to organise it has to have these activities to attract women, something practical and then later they may learn that other things are important, too'.

They were careful about not appearing too political, as the following passage by a MOMUPO employee suggests:

> 'imagine if I went to my group and said 'today we're going to learn how to build a barricade' - the old dears would have taken me by the arms and thrown me out! We had to be very careful about what to take part in and to respect their level of politicisation'.
> (Quoted in Fisher, 1993: 185)

For such institutions, the chance to earn an income by making arpilleras was essentially a bait. These institutions aimed to politicise the women, but they also wanted to work with them because this enabled them to put statistics in their reports, and it gave their politicised employees people to teach. The women, meanwhile, were happy to receive instruction[11].

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[10] Many of these organisations also ran workshops on mental health, unemployment and the disintegration of the family. (Fisher 1993: 182).

[11] The Vicaría, however, did not use the arpillera simply as a way of politicising the women. It had a policy of helping the poor, in accordance with the dictates of Liberation Theology (see Chapter 3).

Whilst contact with the above institutions undoubtedly affected the women's political thinking, the Vicaría was probably the most influential institution because it had organised and worked with more groups and bought more arpilleras than any other (see Chapter 3). This increased buying power is due to the fact that the Vicaría had the most developed network of distribution outlets. The arpillera groups' interaction with the Vicaría was more frequent and long-term than interaction with any other institution.

The confluence of all the above circumstances, therefore, caused the women to develop a political consciousness.

OTHER GROUPS

Comparison with a group in different circumstances reveals to what extent the circumstances mentioned above were important. The Místicas group was similar to the Vicaría groups in that it consisted of shantytown women making handicrafts, coming out of isolation and meeting other women like themselves. However, unlike the Vicaría groups, Las Místicas did not exist during a time of political repression, was not operating within a political institution, did not receive political teachings, was not involved in making political arpilleras, did not have access to unofficial information about the political situation, did not participate in survival organisations, and did not have contact with ideological groups and institutions. Its members, not surprisingly, did not have a developed political consciousness or become involved in political acts. They had views

about Pinochet (as did almost everyone in Chile), but did not think deeply about what was happening. As one woman stated:

Jacqueline	As far as politics is concerned, where do you place yourself?
Cecilia	Nowhere, because for me, politics has never done anything. If I don't work, my husband doesn't work, politics doesn't do anything for us. You always have to work to have something. We don't like politics.
Jacqueline	And during the Pinochet period, how did you see things, you were content?
Cecilia	No, look, content, no. I wasn't content because of all the things that had happened, really ugly things, very inhuman, you could say they were very inhuman. I am someone who feels close to God, I don't accept such things at all. But content on the other hand, yes, because at least all the young people, amongst young people there was no drug- addiction, during the Pinochet government there were no drugs, and now there is so much drug addiction, so, so much drug stuff, and in that sense, my son did not have that, as he lived all his life under Pinochet... I mean we were never involved in anything, neither with Pinochet, nor Allende, nor anybody.

Cecilia's ambivalent attitude is more a function of practical safety than ideology. Another arpillerista of the group simply did not understand politics:

Elena	I don't understand anything about politics. My parents always taught us that way. They never got into anything.
Jacqueline	Do you feel more drawn towards the left or the right?
Elena	The right. My father was in the Liberal Party. I don't understand politics. (Interview with Elena)

Most did not engage in any political activity:

Jacqueline	Were you involved in anything at the time of Pinochet?
Amalia	No, never. I never got into anything at all. Because, I say- 'why get into stuff?'

On the whole, the women of the Místicas group had never been and still are not involved or knowledgeable about politics. Moreover, almost none participated in protests or other political activities. Of course, some women became political without the ever being

involved with the Vicaría. Although most were apolitical, a small number of women of the Peñiwén group had a developed political consciousness and had been politically active before ever joining an arpillera group:

Marianela	I participated in protests. Yes, I participated.
Jacqueline	What type of protests?
Marianela	Look. Well, I hardly went out. We didn't go out because the protests were so ugly at that time, I mean, it was very dangerous, so no. But... when the time to vote came, when we had the plebiscites, then I participated in marches, not in protests, but in marches. I would go with my husband, and the family thought it was OK, they all had the same idea. Yes, I participated. We went to a lot of marches, all of us.
Jacqueline	And barricades, things like that?
Marianela	No, that sort of thing never.
Jacqueline	Why?
Marianela	Because it was dangerous, because the police would go shooting right and left, And you never knew who would get hit. Yes, there were a lot of deaths of guys who went out protesting, sometimes just the people standing and watching would get hit. No, I never got into that.

The constellation of factors in which the Vicaría shantytown women operated were not, therefore, the only ones which awoke a political consciousness in lower-income women.

A CHANGE OF CIRCUMSTANCES CAUSING A CHANGE IN THE WOMEN

When the political circumstances changed with the return to democracy, the nature of workshop activity changed and caused the women to change. The vast majority of shantytown arpilleristas are no longer politically active. Although they watch the news and remain interested in political events, they do not protest or participate in political acts of any sort.

Jacqueline	And do you still do things like that? [as they used to- protests and marches, celebrating International Women's Day Dan Labour Day]
Woman 1	No, as a workshop we don't. We don't want to know anything about politics or politicians, we never hooked up with any political parties.
Jacqueline	Why?
Woman 1	Because we all think more or less along the same lines, and politicians use you.
Woman 2	Yes, once they played a dirty trick on us as a workshop. They came to invite us, we had to go- you remember?- and when we got there- they had told us it was a *población* thing we were going to, and the leaders of the workshops had to go. When we got there it turned out that it was a political protest of a party. So at that point we said 'Right, we are not helping out with this sort of thing any more'.
Jacqueline	They tricked you.
Woman 3	Yes, because we were all in the opposition and none of us had a party, at least I don't identify with any political party, so most of us are in that situation.
Woman 4	That's what I was explaining to you about the all the workshops, in general.
Woman 3	And so those who had a political party, did not fit, here. If there was one or two who were in a party, it was separate from the workshop. (Villa Sur group)

There are several reasons for this. Political circumstances have changed. Despite the return to democracy the arpilleristas feel there is plenty to protest about, but there are no protests occurring in the shantytowns. The resistance movement in its highly visible form has died away, and politics has moved to the official, party realm. Many of the clandestine political groups turned their attention away from survival organisations and towards the political parties. Most survival organisations closed down, so the arpilleristas no longer participate in them:

Jacqueline	What sort of survival organisations do you participate in?
Woman 1	Well, in fact, there aren't many now.
Woman 2	We work in the urban summer camps.
Jacqueline	What are they?

Woman 2 Summer camps for children, recreation for children. (Villa Sur group)

The survival organisations for the most part closed down. Unofficial and alternative news documents were no longer being circulated on the same scale. Many of the NGOs which had worked with the women ceased to receive funds from aid agencies for running their programmes. The groups of highly politicised women ceased to visit the workshops. The women, therefore, are no longer in contact with the stimuli which encouraged them to be political in the first place. Also, as the Vicaría has closed down its politically motivated employees are now working in a number of other institutions and companies and are no longer in contact with the women to motivate and inform them politically, or train them in other matters. The new Fundación has purely commercial interests.

Furthermore, the arpillerista network has disintegrated, so that the women almost never meet today. In part this disintegration is caused by the drop in demand for arpilleras, forcing the women to look for work elsewhere:

Alicia Then those women [who left the workshops] started to work as *'temporeras'*

Jacqueline What is that?

Alicia That they work in bean-harvesting, fruit harvesting, in refrigeration, in all that.

Another reason for dropping out of the workshops was tiredness:

Alicia Yes because at that time, also, the women start to sort of, most of them, get tired of all this, going to classes, then coming home, then work, then taking the children to school, then one thing and another. They were very busy years with a lot of commitments. And a lot of people coped with it well. But a lot didn't, what they wanted was just to work.

Ada Yes, they didn't want any courses.

Alicia	Yes. So at those times, as I say, there is a...
Ada	A sort of 'relax'
Alicia	All this training has stopped

Because so many women dropped out, many groups shut down. At the same time, the different groups stopped meeting. This means that the arpilleristas are no longer in contact with a wide range of ideas about the political situation. The contact between arpillera groups today is limited to (in Ada's group's case) the annual FESOL market and occasions when group leaders go to hand in arpilleras to the person who co-ordinates the work of all the groups in an area.

The women no longer had people for whom to express solidarity, and people no longer expressed it towards them; the resistance movement and 'Second Chile' disintegrated. With these dramatically changed circumstances, the women became relatively apolitical in relation to what they had been before; they still had a political consciousness, but they were far less politically active. Changed political circumstances impacted the arpillera world which, in turn, impacted the women's levels of activism.

Although the women are not politically active, they do still retain a political consciousness; some think and talk about political goings-on. In 1995 the arpilleristas in the Peñalolén shantytown group talked about the imprisonment of Contreras, for example. They had views on the government, complaining that it was not a real democracy, that the president spends too much time travelling, that the gap between rich and poor was widening, and that shantytowns had numerous problems, including the lack

of infrastructure, poverty, and unemployment. Most feel that their situation has not improved since the return to democracy:

Woman 1	Here we are not recognised, even though ours were some of the arpilleras which went abroad, all of them. The things that were happening, we would relate, helping the democracy. And now, even though there is democracy, we are not recognised, we are more recognised abroad. We are in a rut, worse off than before.
Jacqueline	In Chile, I mean economically, you are all worse off than before?
Woman 2	We are all worse off than before, economically we are in a really bad state. There is a lot of injustice in this country, you will never be able to understand, there is a lot of injustice, because if before you didn't have to pay for education, nowadays you have to pay for it. These are things which we have lost instead of gained. And the poverty which exists in this county- it exists to an extreme. People want to hide it, but there is a lot of poverty. If you have a house of bricks, you are categorised at another level[12]... yes, brick my dear, it is a house measuring 30m2.
Jacqueline	You mean, they see you as rich because it is made of brick.
Woman 2	Yes, because it is another level, another status. And even though there is a lot of poverty and people don't show it, or they confuse, for example, cleanliness and wealth and all that. You don't have to go around dirty or all ragged or uncombed, for there to be poverty in your house. (Peñalolén group)

Other groups feel the same way:

Jacqueline	But do you think there have been many changes in people's situation, or not?
Woman 1	Economically, no. Here, the rich will get richer, and the poor will always stay the same. It a relative change. It's sort of like, the economy of the country grows, but it doesn't reach us. (Villa Sur group)

The women feel bitter that they are as poor as before, and neglected by the government.

Not only are they aware of poverty in their neighbourhoods, they are aware of the government's economic policies:

Jacqueline	And do you see a way out, that things will get better, or not?
Magdalena	I have a very black view of the future, very black. Right now I think they want to go into Mercosur, even though there is so much poverty. They are giving priority to foreigners to work in this country and what happens to the Chilean? They don't give opportunities to the Chilean, they are cutting down the forests, we are losing a huge number of trees, and all for damn money.
Jacqueline	There is a huge social cost, still.
Magdalena	The artisan fisherman can't fish in peace, because he has a limited area to fish in. Faced with this injustice... that's why I tell you, at the moment I am totally against the government and I see that things are very bad. The poor are sinking deeper and deeper into poverty and the rich are getting richer at the poor's expense, there are no opportunities, there is no way to get out of it.

Most retain a strong identity as 'de izquierda' or 'left wing' and members of the poor.

Many arpilleristas identify the present-day culture in Chile as being highly individualistic and long for the union and *esprit de corps* of the Pinochet years; they identify this individualism as the main cause of the disintegration of unity amongst the oppressed, saying that in the past they fought the dictator together and helped each other, but now everyone thinks of themselves first. To two potential buyers who came to visit the workshop, Ada said that they half wished Pinochet was back because they used to be unified against a common enemy.

Despite their political consciousness, the arpilleras they make for the Vicaría today usually carry no hint of political subject matter (see Chapter 5). Most of the arpilleras they produced for Chilean-British Institute exhibition (see Appendix 3), for which they could depict whatever they wanted, were decorative rather than political. Only the leader of the Santa Adriana group made two arpilleras which denounced the

[12] People who are poor but live in a brick house rather than a wooden one, do not have the benefit of the

problems of the shantytowns. One said 'We want doctors', and another said 'No more pollution'. Also, she told me on one occasion that if she could depict whatever she liked in an arpillera, she would show the amount of dust and mud in the unpaved streets of her *población*. The other two women in the workshop made arpilleras showing scenes of the countryside and circus. In general, the leaders of the arpillera groups make political arpilleras more than do the other members. This might be because they continue to meet with other leaders in the *coordinadora*, and are generally more politically aware.

Some groups depict in their arpilleras political issues which are not so closely connected with the dictatorship. The Puente Alto group, for example, makes Mapuche scenes because it believes in the rights of the Mapuche:

Magdalena	...the rights of the Mapuches, and I also do the Chilote [from the island of Chiloe, in the South of Chile] theme, houses on stilts...
Jacqueline	I see.
Magdalena	And also the theme of the North with llamas and all the little Northern-style houses, and also Valparaiso. So, for example, when we started this month- I said the Araucaria had to do certain themes, we want X number of houses on stilts, we want the Mapuche theme- or there will be an exhibition in such and such a country, we need a Mapuche mural...
...	
Jacqueline	How did you come to do those themes in particular? How did you decide to do those themes?
Magdalena	Well, the truth is, all the things that came together there, stemmed from an idea, it's all the same cause.
Jacqueline	Yes...
Magdalena	I mean, left wing.
Jacqueline	Yes...
Magdalena	So that's where it all came from.

help of the state with some economic problems.

Jacqueline	Yes...
Magdalena	Starting with fighting for the rights of the indigenous people, the Mapuche
Jacqueline	Yes...
Magdalena	To make them recognise their territory, emphasise the ecology, no to the cutting down of forests.
Jacqueline	Yes...
Magdalena	We started to create all these subjects. As I say, there are so few of us now, really almost no one, but I at least, I don't want it to die out, you see, I don't want it to die out. (Interview with Magdalena Osorio, leader of Puente Alto group)

Some arpilleristas, therefore, have continued to think up political themes in the post-dictatorship era.

Changing circumstances, therefore, brought about the change in the women, so that by 1996 they were still interested in politics and had a political identity but they were not politically active.

The Agrupación

The women of the Agrupación had undergone a similar political development to the shantytown arpilleristas, but their different circumstances caused them to continue to be politically active when the shantytown women were not. The repression of the Pinochet years continued for them in that they were still looking for their loved ones, and were still, unlike the shantytown women, in contact with highly politicised institutions- the Agrupación, other human rights associations and parties. The Agrupación members

still identify with either the Communist party, the Socialist party or the MIR (even though most MIR supporters are now in the splinter group, 'Agrupación 119').

The Nature of Political Involvement during Pinochet

The women of the Agrupación had not been interested in politics before the disappearance of their relative, for the most part (See Chapter 3). However, often a family member (other than the disappeared relative) had been politically active. Doris' uncles, for example, were always arguing over politics. In general, they, like the shantytown women, had very little understanding of politics and the government, but when their relative disappeared immediately became 'anti-Pinochet'.

They developed an understanding of the situation through their contact with the Vicaría. This contact was very similar in nature to that which the shantytown groups had with the Vicaría. However, they also had close links with the Agrupación, which became like a second family for them when their neighbours and relatives rejected them. Membership in the Agrupación implied that they were very frequently in contact with women who felt as strongly about the regime as they did. The Agrupación women were amongst the first in Chile to protest, beginning as early as the mid-Seventies with hunger strikes, marches, oral testimonies, chaining to the fences of the Congress building and a wide variety of other forms of expression. These protests increasingly involved other

groups, be they clandestine party members or other Agrupaciones[13], and thus brought the arpilleristas into contact with highly politicised people. Unlike the shantytown women, therefore, the women of the Agrupación continued to be in contact with highly politicised individuals and other victims of human rights violations.

Many of the Agrupación arpilleristas were active in organising these protests as well as running the Agrupación as a whole. Toya was in charge of communications, developing two books about the disappearances and creating archives and information boards with information about human rights matters. Violeta Morales was in charge of co-ordinating the activities of the various branches of the Agrupación throughout Chile. Alicia was active in organising in the Eastern Vicaría office. And nearly all the women went to teach shantytown groups how to make arpilleras. The women were not only members of the Agrupación, they became heavily involved, even running it.

The Song Group (of which many of the arpilleristas were a part) enabled the women to tour Chile and Canada, performing their protest songs. It was a source of contact with other political groups and individuals who frequently invited them to play. Their performance was usually part of a series of performances or acts by other politicised groups. Some of these acts, particularly at the end of the regime (e.g. the act in the Caupolicán theatre), were massive in scale, involving thousands of spectators and dozens of anti-dictatorship groups of different kinds. The arpilleristas of the Agrupación, therefore, were active in several kinds of denunciation at the same time.

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[13] There were a number of these, for example the Association of Political Prisoners, of the Executed for

As well as being active in the Agrupación's activities, many of the women were active in other groups or individually. Doris, for example, gave her testimony to shantytown groups whenever she was called on to do so. Inelia distributed handkerchiefs and photocopied sheets of paper describing her son's disappearance, in her local market, on the anniversary of his kidnapping. Violeta Morales was one of the founders of the Sebastián Acevedo Movement Against Torture which protested against human rights abuses. Several of the Agrupación arpilleristas were involved in political parties. Toya, for example, was a Communist party militant. Violeta was a member of a clandestine political group.

The arpilleristas of the Agrupación, therefore, were very active politically in many different ways, during the years of the dictatorship.

The arpilleras of the Agrupación express delight at the victory of the 'No' Campaign. 'Ciao Dictatorship', 'Happiness has arrived', 'The No Won', 'Bye General', and 'No more'

Political involvement after the Pinochet regime

Nearly all the women of the Agrupación retained their political consciousness to a greater degree than the shantytown women. The arpilleristas of the Agrupación are interested in details of political goings-on. They follow closely news about laws passed and attitudes of the government to human rights issues. Many read the daily compilation of articles about human rights which the Agrupación subscribes to and keeps in its main meeting room for anyone to consult. They are all still very concerned about the issue of disappearance, particularly as their relatives have not been found, so that they feel that 'the wound is still open' (Violeta Morales, personal conversation). As Anita stated:

> 'Now it's been more than 20 years looking for my son, but I am going to go on looking for him until I know. They have to tell me where he is, where they buried him, why they killed him and who killed him. I want to know who the swine was who behaved so mercilessly in this. Because he was in Villa Grimaldi[14]. They had him tied up in chains and that's how they tortured him'. (Interview with Anita Rojas)

They want, vehemently, 'truth and justice' and view the government as treacherously glossing over their problem with its 'Ley de Punto Final' ('clean slate law') and talk of 'Reconciliation'.

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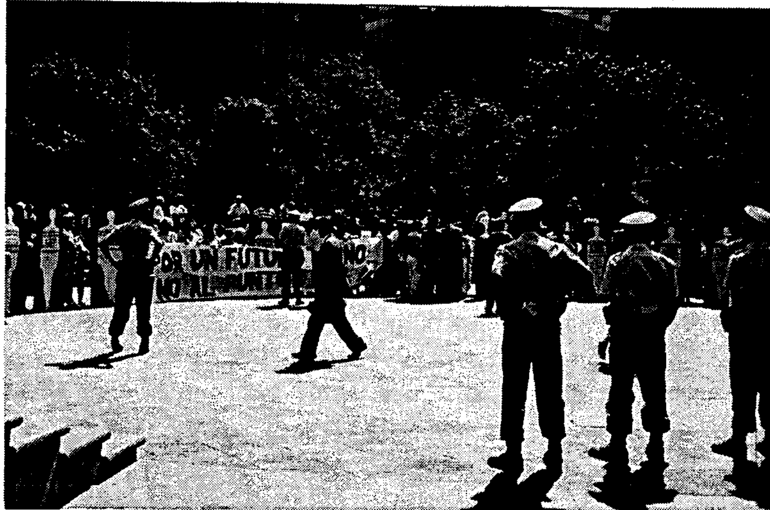
[14] Villa Grimaldi was a prison and notorious torture centre.

Recent arpillera shows continued interest in political matters: 'No to impunity'

About a third of the arpilleristas of the Agrupación, unlike most shantytown arpilleristas, remain politically active. Most of these go to the weekly Agrupación meetings at which recent political events and acts are discussed. They also, providing their health permits, participate in the acts of the Agrupación. Inelia and Anita, for example, protested by standing with banners demanding 'Verdad y Justicia' in front of the presidential palace, most weeks in the summer of 1996.



An Agrupación protest against the clean slate law, in 1996

Close-up of clean slate law protest

Inelia and Anita, in the front line, wear photos of their disappeared sons and display written documents about the disappearance

A number attend ceremonies in the General Cemetery and participate in marches (some of which are organised by other left-wing groups):

> 'Now, on 9th November, there is going to be a very big march organised by CUT[15], and there the CUT supports the Truth and Justice with pickets. From Plaza Italia to Los Heroes, we are going to march. So I am waiting for Frei to do something and give us an answer of some sort. We have done a lot to learn about our relatives and- nothing'.
> (Interview with Inelia)

A number of the arpilleristas of the Agrupación continue to participate in acts. Moreover, the two women who still make arpilleras continue to make them with political themes, focusing on the problem of disappearances (see Chapter 5). Their arpilleras often say 'Dónde Están?' ('where are they?').

Like the shantytown women, most arpilleristas were not members of a party in 1996, even if they had been previously. (The exception was Anita who joined the

socialist party so as to 'continue [her] son's work']. Most were disillusioned with party politics:

> 'I used to go and work there, in the party [PPD[16]], it was a struggle for human rights, I tell you, I went and worked in the party every week, and to the meetings. And so it was also a means of escape, to have left the Agrupación and to be in something different, where there were men and women, you would hear different opinions. the struggle went on, we won, the triumph, all that, but I have also become disillusioned, because as a party we really defended the issue of human rights and then you realise that along comes the law and all the parties get involved and they are in favour of not touching the military, that you have to do something to them in secret, so that no-one must know who they are. So you start to feel pain again, how is it possible, that if we are in a certain regime, then let's not talk about a democratic regime, because this means that we are still under pressure or feeling this constant fear. So I, really I, since last year, distanced myself.' (Interview with Edita Salvatore, ex-arpillerista)

They separated their form of doing politics from party politics. In many cases they felt disillusioned with the party's inability to deliver what they wanted:

> 'I don't have much faith in the [Communist] party because until now it has not behaved as it should, it has not kept its promise of justice, truth and justice. That is why we continue to work'. (Interview with Gala Torres)

Most women, therefore, have distanced themselves from political parties but continue to be politically active within the context of the Agrupación. A small number of arpilleristas of the Agrupación now want nothing to do with either party politics or political acts of the Agrupación, either for their mental health or because they feel worn out.

The women of the Agrupación, therefore, developed a political consciousness in the same way as did the shantytown arpilleristas. However, unlike their shantytown counterparts, they remained in contact with highly politicised individuals after democracy

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[15] Centro Unitario de Trabajadores, an organisations grouping together numerous trade unions.
[16] Party for democracy.

returned. Most retained a political consciousness and remained politically active. If they had ever been in parties, most abandoned them, disillusioned.

CONCLUSION

As a result of coming together to make arpilleras, the arpilleristas became involved in politics. Although they lived in a situation in which economic problems and political violence impinged on their lives in a very marked fashion, these conditions were not sufficient to give rise to a consciousness and political action. The development of a political consciousness required, rather, that the women participate in a collective activity with other, similar women. Joining the arpillera workshops exposed them to the teachings of the politically engaged staff of the Vicaría de la Solidaridad, brought them into contact with politicised shantytown women, involved them in creating self-reflexive images, fostered contact with other politicised groups and other arpilleristas, and provided access to written information. Their participation in the workshops brought about in the women a political awareness that human rights were being violated, and that the economic problems they faced were not personal but shared by many, and caused by the neo-liberal economic policies of the regime. They adopted a left-wing ideology, became opposed to the regime and carried out political acts.

When the political and economic circumstances changed, the Vicaría closed down and the character of the workshops changed, causing the women to change. Most shantytown arpilleristas are still politically aware but no longer politically active. The

depoliticisation of the women is similar to the diminishing importance of 'race' in people's lives over time, observed by Blauner (1989) in his study of how the lives of and attitudes towards African American's have changed over time. Just as white Americans became less aware of race, and African Americans less combative about it, so the arpilleristas, over the years, became less aware of politics and began to participate less in demonstrations. The Agrupación women, on the other hand, continue to be very active, in part because of their different circumstances.

Social movement research and its relevance to the arpillera case

Much research on social movements mirrors the findings of the arpillera case. Joining the arpillera groups caused the women to develop a political consciousness and to become politically active. Their political consciousness and activity did not arise from repression and economic hardship alone. This finding is similar to that of research in other cultural contexts. Research on social movements in Toledo (US) (Stoeker 1995: 124) found, along the same lines, that 'Those contradictions and incursions [of the state into personal life] are experienced at the community level as jobs are lost, housing deteriorates, stores close, crime increases, and service infrastructures are stressed. But those structurally induced strains do not automatically generate social movements. Individuals at the community level must frame those strains in ways that support movement formation. It is the job of the SMO[17] to facilitate that interpretative process'. Zuo and Benford (1995: 138), in their study of the 1989 student revolt in China, have

[17] Social Movement Organisation

similar conclusions: 'in order for potentially favorable macro- and mesostructures and processes to be translated into mass mobilization, individuals must be inspired to act collectively toward correcting an 'injustice' and achieving perceived shared interests'. Problems in the community do not automatically give rise to political action; a shared perception of the problem is necessary.

The arpilleristas' political consciousness developed when they came out of isolation and joined the workshops, partly but not wholly because this led to contact with the Vicaría. Research in other contexts also suggests that coming out of isolation and joining a group is a basic condition for the formation of a political consciousness. Guthrie (1995: 442) found in his research on the Chinese students' movement that organisations are necessary as a forum in which groups learn to interpret political opportunities correctly and subsequently mobilise. On the other hand, the work of McAdam (1982), McCarthy and Zald (1977), Snow et al. (1980) and Piven and Cloward (1979), suggests that social networks existed previous to mobilisation and that these (together with indigenous organisations) were important in generating and sustaining collective action. A release from social isolation (either in the form of previously existing social networks or in the joining of an organisation) are necessary pre-conditions for mobilisation.

Exposure to the teaching of organisers (the Vicaría employees) was crucial in fostering a political consciousness and activity in the women. The Vicaría taught in part by encouraging the women to make arpilleras about the poverty and repression they faced. In other settings also, organisers teach by focusing on the difficulties people experience in their own lives. Stoeker (1995: 125) found that social movement

organisations interpret real material threats and opportunities people experience (as opposed to abstract concepts). Similarly, Zuo and Benford (1995: 146) found, in their study of the Chinese democracy movement, that activists' claims mobilise people especially effectively when they '[resonate] with the observations, experiences and cultural narrations of the masses'. Translating the lived experiences of their audiences, therefore, is a method social movement organisations use to mobilise.

The Vicaría's fostering of contact amongst people in the same plight, and its bringing of the women into contact with more politicised people, was another factor causing the development of a political consciousness and action. Marx stated that urbanisation and industrialisation concentrated the proletariat around factories (so that they were no longer living in isolation, in rural areas), and this helped them realise their common interests as a class. The coming together of different arpillera groups fostered consciousness in a similar way. Such coming together through an organisation has been described by Melucci as a submerged network: 'the submerged network is a system of exchange in which persons and information circulate freely within the network. These networks act as 'cultural laboratories' submerged within civil society' (Melucci 1989: 60). In bringing these different groups together the Vicaría was behaving like many SMOs which, according to McCarthy and Zald (1977: 1228) try to create links between their 'isolated constituents'. The Vicaría also behaved like SMOs which, as Barkan, Cohn and Whitaker (1995: 120) point out, create links with the central organisation by forming 'federated' structures involving many local chapters that meet regularly so that postrecruitment friendships develop. Social movement organisations, therefore, tend to consist of a network of small groups which organisers bring together.

One of the results of this contact which the Vicaría fostered, was a collective identity. The arpillera case suggests that a collective identity develops through a process of interaction with various individuals. Melucci (1985: 793) speaks of cultural laboratories in which new collective identities are constructed through the interactions of individuals experimenting with new cultural codes and alternative perceptions of the world. Collective identity, in his view, is 'nothing else than a shared definition of the field of opportunities and constraints offered to collective action: 'shared' means constructed and negotiated through a repeated process of 'activation' of social relationships connecting the actors'. Goodwin (1997: 55) also stresses the interactional factor in identity production: 'group identities and solidarities are never established once and for all; the formal rites and everyday interactions of group members strengthen their shared identity and maintain or expand their emotional energy.' Identity grows in a dynamic way through group interaction.

The operating of the workshop as a model for democracy was an important factor in causing the women to become politicised. The phenomenon of a model has been observed in other settings. Guthrie (1995: 442) in his study of the 1989 student democracy movement in China stated: 'Organizations can also served the function of presenting a *model for change*'. Melucci (1989: 12) found that collective action 'is a form whose models of organization and solidarity deliver a message to the rest of society'. Social movement organisations or units within the organisation can function as a model for what the movement advocates.

Access through the group to unofficial news was another factor bringing about the politicisation of the women. Access to unofficial news was important in fostering politicisation in other settings. In their study of the 1989 student revolt in China Zuo and Benford (1995: 137) found that students used their own broadcast station, street posters and leaflets printed in dorms to disseminate information. Grouping together, therefore, attracts alternative and unofficial information about what is happening.

Other Issues on which the Arpillera case throws light

Using motherhood to justify political activity

Many women, like the arpilleristas, operate in a context in which politics is something men, not women, do. The coal miners' wives in a movement in England studied by Beckwith (1996: 1061), for example, were political in an environment which did not consider women to be legitimate political actors; consequently, they had to justify their activities. In such cases women often engage in this non-traditional gender behaviour because of the calling of the role which their social environment does recognise as proper to them: that of mother. Neuhouser (1989: 696) found that women of the *favelas* in Recife, NE Brazil, mobilised as mothers. Krauss (1993: 252) found the same motive for mobilisation in working class women concerned about toxic waste issues in the US. Often the social environment dictates that politics is an activity for men, not

women. In such environments women will go against social pressures and mobilise to fulfil a role which the environment does judge appropriate for them.

Differential rates of participation

The arpillerista case also reveals that some, but not all, members of a resistance group are active in protests. Different studies have tried to explain differential rates of participation in political activity. Barkan, Cohn and Whitaker (1995: 118), in their study of an anti-hunger organisation, for example, give as factors causing participation (or, by implication non-participation): 'interest in, and agreement with, SMO ideologies', the degree to which they feel politically efficacious, pre-or post- recruitment ties of friendship, degree of involvement in organisational networks, 'biographical availability' (age and family situation), perceptions of the SMO, degree of communication with organisational leaders, income or education. A factor often unmentioned in the research is fear, particularly significant in a repressive political regime such as the Chilean one.

Action versus consciousness

The arpillera case reveals that political consciousness and action do not arise contemporaneously although they do co-exist.

Consciousness follows action

Many individuals, like the arpilleristas, do not understand that their problems are linked to features of the society in which they live rather than personal traits, as suggested in C.Wright Mills quotation at the beginning of the chapter. Where awareness does develop, as we saw in the arpilleristas' case, it often does so after people have already begun to engage in political acts. This was also a finding of Krauss' (1993: 254) study of working class women's mobilisation over toxic waste issues in the US. These women discovered the 'injustice of the government' as a result of their activism. Political action can precede an understanding of the political situation.

Political but unaware of the fact

Realising that one's acts are political involves forming a political identity. Political identity and political consciousness are linked, as individuals, in coming to understand a political situation, situate themselves within it. Sometimes those engaging in political acts do not realise that their actions are political, as the Chilean case suggests. This is akin to what Kim and Bearman (1997: 72) found in their study of the 1989 Chinese students' revolt: 'individuals often discover that they are movement activists after extensive involvement in activist networks'. Fantasia (1988) found in his study of workers movements in the US that activism preceded identity and reshaped conceptions of both personal and collective identity. Nagel (1995: 957) found in her study of ethnic renewal among the American Indian population that activism changes identity, inspiring ethnic pride and raising ethnic consciousness, provoking action. The realisation that one

is part of a political group, therefore, often comes after one has already been politically active within the group.

However, some research suggests that individuals have a political identity before they engage in activism (see McAdam 1988 and Tarrow 1992 for a review of this literature). Johnston (1994: 276), for example, states that an emergent 'injustice frame' is the vehicle by which previously unconnected individuals can come together to act collectively. This implies that the frame or consciousness precedes the action. People often, although not always, perform political acts before they have an understanding of themselves as political actors.

The developments towards political activity, consciousness, and identity, therefore, are similar but also different from processes in other situations of collective action. A unique feature of the arpilleristas, however, was the fact that they were not grouping together for explicitly political reasons; rather, their overt motive for coming together was economic. Another unique feature is the fact that the arpilleristas were engaged in a creative activity, and moreover one which was self-reflexive. Having to depict their own neighbourhoods and lives forced the arpilleristas to think about their situation in ways which other productive activities (such as bread-baking, which also took place in the shantytowns) did not. The need to reproduce what they saw (in particular acts of repression) made them particularly observant when such acts occurred, and even to seek out news of such acts. This observation and the analysis which accompanied it in the workshops, was a directed rather than a neutral observation. The Vicaría's training in what to depict and how to render it, biased the attention of the

arpilleristas towards these features of their lives, rather than other features such as the interiors of their kitchens, or the school lives of their children, for example. However, the Vicaría did not only encourage observation of the economic and political consequences of the regime; it also encouraged reflection about gender oppression, as the next chapter details.

CHAPTER 7: THE DEVELOPMENT OF AN AWARENESS OF GENDER INEQUALITY

For most of the women, joining the workshops was the first time since having children that they had participated in an institution outside the home. As we saw in the previous chapter, one of the ways the women changed as a result, was to develop a political consciousness. Another important change in the women was that they developed an awareness of gender inequality, and began to rebel against their traditional gender role in the home. The women's husbands and children also changed; they learned to accept (where they had previously resisted) the women's leaving the home to participate in workshops, and they began to take on some household responsibilities. Various aspects of workshop life induced these changes: the attending of courses, participation in women-focused events, contact with other women, contact with feminists, adopting management roles, earning an income, and receiving recognition for their work. The changes were not permanent, however. When the above factors no longer existed to catalyse the changes, the women and their families returned to their old behaviours.

The first part of the chapter outlines the attitudes and behaviours of the women before joining the arpillera groups. The second examines attitudes, of husbands, families, and the government, towards women. The third part outlines the women's strategies for countering barriers to participation in the workshops. The fourth treats the changes in the women as a result of participation. The fifth analyses the factors

contributing to the changes. The sixth explores the changes in the men and families. The seventh analyses the women today. The eighth shows that similar changes occur when women join other sorts of groups.

The arpillerista case suggests that in a society which is repressive for women, women in isolation do not seriously question the hierarchies that exist, or their roles. When they join groups, however, they face a new constellation of circumstances which results in their questioning their roles and the behaviours of those around them. When these circumstances no longer exist, the different players revert to their old roles and even lose some of their awareness of the issues.

THE BEHAVIOUR AND ATTITUDES OF WOMEN BEFORE JOINING THE GROUPS

Motherhood and Household Responsibilities

The majority of arpilleristas were married and had two or more children. The patriarchal family was the dominant mode of family life (Chaney 1979: 34). The socially acceptable behaviour for women (at the time of their joining the workshops) was to stay at home and look after the house and children. In most cases, the arpilleristas had not worked outside the home before joining the arpillera groups. A minority had worked (in a factory, as domestic servants, or doing ironing, typically), usually before having their first or second child. The women felt that the responsibility

for care of the household lay entirely with them, and consequently, to be a 'good mother' and 'good wife', they had to be at home as much as possible.

Children were a central part of the women's lives. Whilst their children were small they did not usually go out to work. Even when they were older, the women also thought and worried about them a great deal. One woman, for example, was deeply upset when she first joined the arpillera group because her son had made a girl pregnant. Being a mother was so much part of their identity that having children was part of their fulfilment as individuals:

> 'On the other hand I have borne better fruits than [my neighbours] have, because [my son] is an engineer and he came top of his year at university'.
> (Interview with Adriana)

In most cases, their childcare responsibilities did not end with their own children. Many women were also (and still are) responsible for looking after their grandchildren. Some (a minority) had also been bringing up children since they were children themselves, if their mothers went out to work. Childcare responsibilities dominated much of their lives.

Housework, like childcare, was also the women's responsibility. It included a wide variety of tasks, as the following extract suggests:

> 'Before, they would arrive, and lunch would be ready. I had to serve it, to have all the clothes ironed, and so on and so forth, mother washed the dishes, all that' (Interview with Cecilia)

Valdes (1988) found in her study of *poblaciones* in Santiago that a woman's responsibilities included the preparation of food, organisation of the family budget,

cleaning of the house and children, care for the husband, care and raising of children, paperwork and other activities such as sewing, weaving and looking after the garden. Usually the women carried out these tasks alone, with no help from their husbands and children.

As well as housework and childcare, women were supposed to give their husbands considerable amounts of attention, and do as he ordered. The expression *'atender al marido'* or 'seeing to one's husband' is widely used. A woman in the Místicas group always left the class early, explaining to me once 'You have to see to your husband, isn't that so?' Wives had to ask permission to leave the house and respect their husbands if they forbade it. Refusing to obey led to fights in one woman's case. The women had very little freedom. However, despite this lack of independence, they did wield a small amount of power within the household sphere. They could decide about food acquisition and consumption (Neuhouser 1989: 692), and where children were to go to school (Chaney 1979: 47).

Their responsibilities produced a number of consequences. They experienced considerable stress:

> 'I am extremely fussy about doing the cleaning, I fight with the children because they are untidy, in the end one gets sick with nerves'. (Interview with Maria Eugenia)

They were financially dependent on their husbands (most had never had money of their own). Finally, they led relatively isolated lives, as the frequently used expression *'encerrada dentro de las cuatro paredes'* or 'shut between the four walls' suggests:

Magdalena	The truth is that I was isolated, the truth is that my world was the space between the four walls and my children and I did not go out because I didn't even know how to shop.
Jacqueline	No?
Magdalena	He [my husband] did the shopping, or my children.

This isolation was exacerbated by the fact that the women rarely chatted to neighbours in the street as this was looked down upon. Moreover, most of the neighbours stayed in their houses most of the time, making social contact difficult.

Participation in local groups

A way out of the isolation of the home was to join neighbourhood groups and organisations. Schild (1994: 62), in her study of workshops similar to mine, found: 'For some women, joining a handicraft workshop was a first step out of homebound life. For others it was a link with the past, not a sudden break. Many older women had been active in mothers' centers, neighborhood councils, and other church-based or party-based local initiatives since the 1960s. Younger ones had been active in youth initiatives begun during the Popular Unity government and in the local cells of leftist parties.' My research revealed that although most of the arpilleristas had not been members of groups or organisations before joining the workshops, a small number had:

> 'I have always been active in the schools, I have been treasurer, president, I have always been doing something, with a baby, without a baby, and with the children. I was in a community, in a parish' (Interview with Cecilia)

There were not many spaces open to working class women: schools, the parish, the gymnasium, craft workshops, women's centres and the neighbourhood councils (Interview with Maria Antonieta Saa).

There were several barriers to participation in such groups, primary amongst which were household and childcare:

> Jacqueline What other obstacles were there?
>
> Maria The children when they were small. Not to leave them alone.
> (Maria Muñoz)

Many women felt that the house and children would automatically suffer if they spent too much time with the groups. Some women felt guilty, imagining they were bad mothers if they left the house and children alone:

> 'The thing is that you feel a very heavy burden [of guilt] when you leave the house when you are not used to it, you feel you are a bad mother'
> (Interview with Manola)

Grandchildren, as well as children, constitute an obstacle to participation or getting work done, but women are more likely to insist that care of grandchildren (as opposed to their own children) be shared with other members of the family.

A further disincentive for participation was neighbours' disapproval of a woman's leaving the home. One woman said that she was criticised by neighbours for going out so much. Additionally, many of the women were afraid their neighbours might find out about their problems, if they joined a local group. One described

participating in a local group as shouting out your personal affairs through a loud speaker, so that whole *población* heard.

Many women refrained from joining groups because they lacked self-confidence. Some were shy about meeting with other women, or felt ignorant:

Jacqueline	How did you feel in the workshop
Ada	At first I had a bit of a complex, because I would have liked to have known all that before, I lost a lot of time.
Jacqueline	Know what before?
Ada	What was happening [politically], the work which they were doing

Others thought they would not be capable of learning if they joined a workshop. Even once they had joined, they wondered whether they could continue.

Another barrier to participation was the need to ask permission to go out, knowing that their husbands might or might not grant it.

> 'In the beginning, to go to the meetings, I had to say- 'umm'- to practically get down on my knees just like a little girl... and then to say 'umm, you know, I have a meeting at such and such a time, can I go?' Asking permission, just like little kids, you see, and sometimes they [my husband] would swear at you and say no, and that is when it hurt' (Interview with Magdalena)

Husbands were often reluctant and possessive:

Alicia	And there women began to prepare themselves because in the beginning it was very hard for them to leave the house
Jacqueline	Why?
Alicia	The husbands' 'machismo', the husbands would get angry, they could say anything to them, they could say that maybe they liked the priest, and that was why they were going to the church. (Interview with Alicia Salazar)

Having to ask permission of reluctant husbands was an obstacle to participation. Women, therefore, faced many barriers if they wanted to join groups.

ATTITUDES TOWARDS WOMEN

Husbands

The context in which the women were operating was one in which men, the family and the culture had expectations of them and behaviours towards them which discouraged their participation. Men's expectations of women were characteristic of those of a culture of 'machismo'. 'Machismo' is the system whereby, whilst the children are small, women do not earn an income outside the home and have husbands who take pride in being able to support them. Within the system of machismo: 'not only do men control the public activities of economics and government but also it is 'good' that they do so, since by nature they are more 'fit' to perform these functions', as Neuhouser (1989: 690) notes on the basis of his research in the shantytowns of Brazil. Coexisting with machismo is the system of marianismo. 'Women in Latin America are recognized and valued only as mothers. Catholicism presents the Virgin Mother as a superior being who embodies simultaneously the ideal of nurturance/motherhood and chastity. Because Latin American women pattern their role after this sublime model they perceive themselves as morally and spiritually stronger than men. Herein lies their source of power which they readily wield at home as

guardians of the moral order in family and society' (Bunster 1984: 64). The two systems of machismo and marianismo operate simultaneously. 'Women have an important stake in maintaining the status quo since machismo and traditional role differentiations are functional for both women and men. 'Male' immorality is basic to female legitimacy and influence' (Jaquette 1989: 5).

Because of the role assigned to women, the husbands of the arpilleristas expected their wives to perform all household tasks and to stay at home and look after the children. A tiny minority might, for example, heat up their own (already prepared) food. Typically, when women began to participate in the arpillera group, husbands resented their leaving the home:

Woman 1 — In several cases, when they began in the workshop, the husbands would start, would not let them out, would not let them do this and that, and if they were a little late they got upset.

Woman 2 — And it was because they did not know what we were participating in. (Interview with Members of Villa Sur group)

One woman explained the husbands' resentment in terms of thinking that the women were just going to meet to gossip and stir up trouble; another in terms of suspicion that they were going to meet with a man. Whatever the explanation, the men often reacted violently to the women's going out:

> 'When I went out, he would lock the door, he would kick me, he would create a scandal and every one would know.'
> (Interview with member of Peñalolén group)

However, some husbands only resisted women leaving the home to participate in groups if they thought the household management was going to suffer:

Jacqueline	What was his reaction when you joined?
Maria Eugenia	'But goodness', he said, 'what about the house!' And I said 'look, don't you worry about that because you know that if I don't get home when you do you just wait for me to serve tea, if you don't want to serve yourself'. So, as the girl is there, she serves him. But if he has to do it alone he does it. He does not forbid me to go out. He says 'she knows what she is letting herself in for'. (Interview with Maria Eugenia)

In some rare cases, husbands did not oppose the women's desire to participate in groups at all, or lay down any conditions. One woman's husband even lent the group money to start up the workshop.

Husbands were usually unhappy if their wives went out to work for an income. Chaney (1979: 34) notes that men as well as some women believed that a married woman should not work if she did not need to, and that women could work only if there was real economic need. However, my findings reveal that although this is generally true, some husbands did not mind their wives working, as long as they worked at home.

> 'My husband was 'machista'. I could do things, as long as I did them at home'.
> (Interview with Juana Bagyinka)

Some husbands actually wanted their wives to work. Eli's husband, for example, did not at first want her to work, but then, when she began to study, said he preferred that she worked.

Husbands expected their wives to obey and respect them; if they did not, or if they irritated them in any way, many thought it reasonable to beat or verbally abuse their wives.

> 'I lived many years of pain in which my children saw the problems there were in the house because in the end there was no respect, not even for the children, because when a man is bad he doesn't respect the children either; he'd arrive and the children would see the spectacle, the show, and they [husbands] hit you and swear at you and they humiliate you as much as possible for no reason'.
> (Interview with Magdalena)

Husbands exercised control over the household in other ways. They usually took the decisions, without expecting any assistance from their wives:

> 'So I said, 'why does he have to take most of the decisions, why don't I take them?' It must have been that I had a very strict mother. And I married very young, and I went from one strict system to another. So I never did anything without asking permission'.
> (Interview with Maria Muñoz)

As Chaney (1979: 38) states, 'The man is the decision maker in family finances'.

Finally, husbands expected their wives to be faithful, even though they themselves could have a lover (in such cases their wives were expected to tolerate the situation).

Women, therefore, met with a barrage of resistance to their participation. Their husbands, as well as the demands of their role, and what was considered proper behaviour, prevented them from having the freedom to go out as they liked. This finding is similar to what Schild (1994: 73) observed in similar neighbourhoods: 'Most women have been prevented from becoming significantly engaged in collective activities by structural limitations embedded in many of their day-to-day social relations. These social relations, shaped by a sex/gender system or gender subtext that legitimates sexual inequality, are limiting and actively exclude most women from the political process'.

Children and siblings

The children usually took the work the women did in the home for granted.

Cecilia	There is a change. As a person, I feel more appreciated.
Jacqueline	In what way?
Cecilia	In that they are aware of the things [household tasks] I do. Because before they weren't. You did things and it was like normal. And now, it's not, it's like it's difficult to do things.

When the women started to leave the home to work or participate in the arpillera group, the children did not usually raise as much opposition as the husbands:

Jacqueline	What did your family say when you said you were going to go there?
Manola	'Fine', now I have somewhere to go, they were surprised that I did this, that I went out so often, but they all like it that I go.

One arpillerista who was not married and lived with their brothers and sisters, had to consult her siblings if she wished to leave the home; they gave their approval easily. The family, therefore, expected the women to stay at home, and did not appreciate her work there, but did not resist her going out as much as the husbands.

The Government

The Pinochet government promoted women's return to family life, emphasising their role as mothers. Women were portrayed as responsible for educating children for

the fatherland (Valenzuela 1991: 162). 'Through their self-sacrifice and self-abnegation, through their suffering, through their dedication to the family, and through their unwavering loyalty to the Patria, women- in Pinochet's plan- will ensure that Chile's sons and daughters grow up to be patriotic citizens, which means pro-government and non-political' (Chuchryk 1989: 160). As centres of family life, women were also, according to Pinochet's scheme, the pillars of security of the nation:

> 'The family was, in [Pinochet's] terms, women and children, the mother the moral centre both of the family and of the 'sleeping conscience' of the nation. In the sinking ship that Chile in 1973 has so often been depicted as, women were to be its saviours. The manipulation and evocation of the family for calculated political gain is the conscious manipulation of the social truth that the family is at the core of public stability, that the certainty of the easy continuity of the external rests on the security of the domestic unit. And its very core, in this scheme, is woman, the mother, the final, the strong, the central axis of society... they are also in a uniquely powerful position when the home is consciously set up as the last bastion of a secure social order'. (Boyle: 1993: 164)

The Junta, therefore, discouraged women's participation in the work force and government, even though local politics was seen as appropriate for married women (Chaney 1979: 111), and the constitution that the Junta presented on the day following the Coup was to have assured women representation in the 'parliament' alongside corporations, the armed forces, youth and the political parties.

STRATEGIES FOR OVERCOMING BARRIERS TO PARTICIPATION

The women developed strategies to overcome resistance to extra-household activity. They worked at home (as this was acceptable to their husbands), typically sewing or washing clothes for other people. Sometimes they ran informal and irregularly operating businesses:

Raquel	Three months before having my son I stopped working. My husband didn't want me to continue. From then on, we've managed on his salary, but I have never been dependent on his salary. Because before, I used to, with a machine, make bread bags, aprons, and I sold them. It's not an established business but I have always had my own income, all my life.
Jacqueline	A sewing machine?
Raquel	A sewing machine. I bought chinaware, I sold chinaware, I sold cutlery, I sold tights. Now I don't sell anything because the little time I have I spend embroidering. But before, before the embroidering, I spent all my time on my income-earning activities. I didn't earn much money, but it was mine. I am always bringing in money for something.

They women left the house secretly:

'when I started to do it, I didn't tell my husband what I was going to do, I was at about my fifth class and I still had not told him, as he always looked down on me, but then I told him. Now he likes it'. (Interview with Manola).

They took their children to the workshops.

Magdalena	And sometimes, so as to be able to go out, you had to take two or three kids and go out with them to avoid problems, because the first thing men think is that you are going to meet up with someone.
Jacqueline	With whom?
Magdalena	They think you are going to meet up with a man. So to avoid that kind of problem I would take my youngest kids with me.

However, this was not always possible; the leader of the Macul group, for example, objected to one member's children who accompanied her, and as a result the woman left the group.

They left their children at home knowing that an older daughter or relative would come and look after them. They also relied on children or relatives as a solution to the problem of not being around to serve their husbands dinner. As Valdes (1988)

suggests, women could participate in activities outside the home if they had a family network. In very few cases, friends who helped with childcare, freeing the women to attend meetings and workshops.

They organised themselves so they got all the housework done in the morning or the night before:

Jacqueline	How do you organise yourself to do the housework as well?
Catalina	If I have to go out I leave lunch ready the day before... or my husband, when I am out, prepares it, providing I leave everything ready he heats up the food and everything. I haven't had any problems. In the group there are other women who have had problems. They have to really dash around, sort of thing.

As a means of countering the guilt that often comes with involvement in activities outside the home, the women reasoned that their husband was unfaithful, so they too had a right to commit a 'sin':

> 'So my husband says, of course, "I'll let you go out, but I am going to go out even later at night and I might not even come home". This is why the fights started, and that is the complaint he has, because I started to go to school and I did not stop going to school, because he also committed his sin, so it is not the same. If he did it, that's his problem. And that's why he gets angry now... but I don't pay any attention anyway, I go out when he is angry, and I arrive when he's out, because he is up there selling'. (Interview with Lucy)

The women, therefore, developed a number of self-justifications and strategies for becoming involved in activities outside the home.

CHANGES IN THE WOMEN AS A RESULT OF THE PARTICIPATION PROCESS

Participation in arpillera workshops wrought impressive changes in both men and women. One of the most important changes in the women's lives is the fact that they now leave the house:

Jacqueline	What do you think your biggest achievement has been?
Manola	Leaving the house is quite something, and knowing that you can do something, that you can fill up your time, maybe in the future I'll have my own money, have money which I can use, without anyone telling me what to do with it.

There are a number of other changes. The women learn to manage an organisation outside the home:

Jacqueline	Why did you decide to become a director [of the mothers' centre]?
Raquel	Because when you join the centre, you start to love it. When the time comes to choose the directors nobody wants to [become one]. Because they know what they are letting themselves in for: the time, the misunderstandings, the disagreements because you cannot please everyone. But in our case, Maria's and mine, it has not been like this because they don't want us to leave. And I say 'this year'. In my Centre I say that the president should not be re-elected, that all the directors have to change. One loves it so much- what you do for the Centre you do gladly. It's my second home. And sometimes my first.

The guilt that came with participating in groups outside the home disappears, even if, in some cases, the women still feel a little guilty:

> 'Yes, at first, the one thing you want is to arrive home quickly, and to see what has happened while you were out. Sometimes I still feel bad, sometimes I leave the room to phone, because the girl stays here, I still feel a bit anxious, but less now'. (Interview with Manola)

Some women have learnt to feel less worried about the tidiness of the house:

> 'If it [the house] is like that [messy], let it stay like that. I have found it difficult, but I have managed a little. If the plimsolls are in the middle of the floor: they stay there, but I don't pick them up. They [the children] get used to depending on their mother a lot' (Maria Eugenia)

They sometimes call this 'freeing themselves from the house'.

Jacqueline	What do you feel you have achieved?
Amalia	The ability to speak better. Because when you are in the house you sort of shut yourself up. And I have sort of freed myself. I have freed myself more in my house. The horoscope says: 'You must not leave your house much'. It makes me laugh.
Jacqueline	What do you mean when you say you have freed yourself?
Amalia	That you go out into the street, like you free yourself from the house. You get out of the house and you forget everything about it.

The women also changed in that they decided not to take any notice of their husbands' resistance, as the following statements attest:

'It has been difficult for me, yes. By now, you sort of say, "I couldn't care less, whether he likes it or not", but it has been hard.'
(Arpillerista from Villa Sur group)

Rather than ask permission to go out, they now announce the fact:

Jacqueline	Has your image of yourself changed?
Raquel	I think so because I have given myself another sense of worth. I married in the style that I had to ask my husband his permission if I was going to go to just around the corner, for example. And now, no. I say 'Hey Granddad [nickname for her husband] , I am going to such and such a place'. And do you know how I used to begin before? 'Um, you know...'. Just like a little kid. 'Do you want me to go?' And now, no: now it's 'I am going to go'. I have changed totally in this. This has made me grow. What the Mothers' Centre didn't do the embroidery did because I go to the Bustamante market [to sell the embroideries], I go four days in a row... And my husband is one of those who can't serve himself a cup of tea... I got him into the habit. And I'm not going to change him now.

Eli of the Místicas group, described how last year she came home late at night from a Prisma event, very fearful of a scolding from her husband, whereas this year she was not afraid at all. The women have become increasingly aware of their right to enjoy themselves, and their right to self-development. Schild (1994), however, found that not

all women freed themselves from their husbands' control when they did not want them to work outside the home; it was often a matter of luck.

Furthermore, many women began to express their opinions more at home, and to insist that they be respected:

> 'Because now I tell them 'I am a person. I am not a piece of furniture, I am not something you can make run around left and right, no, no, no... It has made me grow. It has made me realise that I am a person and that I have to value myself, to make myself respected. That more than anything. When I got married I made the mistake of being like a piece of furniture. But not now. I assert myself and say 'no'. And before, when would I say 'no'? No, you just had to be there, standing to attention, all the time'. (Interview with Raquel)

Some women force family members to cope on their own. Even though some women still try to be at home as much as possible to *'atender al marido'* ('serve the husband'), participation in workshops has made the women less submissive. Over time, they began to realise that they should not put up with verbal and physical abuse, and began to take a stronger stance against this in the home.

As a result of this new assertiveness, some relationships fell apart; whilst others achieved better communication and succeeded.:

Jacqueline	And have you seen what happened with the other women in your Puente Alto group, who also went?
Magdalena	Yes, at least some marriages worked things out, they were on the point of separating, but thank goodness they sorted things out and now things are working out beautifully, they get along as a couple.
Jacqueline	And the husband?
Magdalena	He started to adapt himself to ['acomplementarse con'] the woman more, to understand her better. That is what you want.

Some of the marital problems were also caused by the chronic unemployment and role reversal in the home, which left many of the men demoralised.

Despite their new-found assertiveness, the women have a sense of going too far and are careful not to overstep what they perceive as the limits:

Raquel	Of course, don't think I take advantage of it either, of the, the liberation. No. My new awareness is tempered, that my family comes first, my house, and I also have my little bits of freedom but I don't take advantage of them either. I have all day to do anything I want. But when my husband comes home I am here. That is the vision I have given myself. He comes home, I see him coming, and I have his dinner served... but I think I have grown, that I have enriched myself, in many things.
Jacqueline	What other things?
Raquel	In things like going out, for example. In saying what I think. Because you didn't dare to do that either. And now, no, whatever I think, I say it, I am not hurting anyone, I just say it.

Despite all the above developments, most women do not free themselves of their household responsibilities, and other family members only participate to a very limited extent in housework:

Jacqueline	Has there been a change in the house since Prisma, or not?
Maria Eugenia	My husband doesn't do anything. He comes home early two days a week. All he does is make the bed.

Childcare remains the women's responsibility.

Participating in a workshop improved the women's self-esteem; as one woman from the Peñalolén group put it: 'We are not slaves'. They began to realise that they were capable of more than cooking and cleaning.

Jacqueline	Why was it important to you to make arpilleras?
Ada	Because it was to make myself feel useful, that I was good for something else, not just for washing saucepans, making food. It was like discovering a new me, that was important, like it makes you feel more important, to say 'I can do something different'. I liked it a lot, because before, all of them [the arpilleristas] helped each other.

Such manifestations of increased self-esteem have been also been found by Freeman (no date, p. 3) based on her experience of community arts projects in Britain: 'evidence suggests [the quilts]... enhanced self-respect and the consciousness of individual worth in their makers.' Some women became less shy about speaking up in a group.

> 'I feel good. And my personality has developed. Before I was more silly, more quiet, less intelligent, and now no, I am not afraid to talk.'
> (Interview with Catalina)

They began to worry less about what other people thought of them. Some women began to feel indifferent to neighbourhood gossip and the disapproval of relatives, for example. The women developed a much more positive image of themselves than compared with that they had held previously:

> 'Yes, we have had talks, several talks, and I attended them a lot. For me it was quite useful to have got into the arpilleras, because I for example was the scapegoat of the house, the woman-object, the piece of furniture. If I didn't like something, they would slap me. I had a really difficult life because I, you see, am grateful for having got organised and having come to value myself as a person, because I when I started to work as an arpillerista, I began to value myself as a person. I am myself and I am worth so much, there is no reason why I should let them run me down or treat me badly with no reason. Now I value myself a whole lot.
> (Interview with Magdalena)

Some women went as far as to assert that women could manage alone, that they didn't need men:

Jacqueline	Is there anything important about women that it has not occurred to me to ask?
Magdalena	The truth is that women should never be afraid of managing alone because of course they will manage alone, it is not necessary for her to have a man and

to have to put up with beatings... with your two hands you can, you are capable of it, you can manage. Now I prefer to be alone.

This indicates a new identity as capable, independent people.

The self-esteem is not limitless, however. Some women still doubted their ability to complete courses:

Jacqueline	Do you think you will have a workshop, once you finish?
Adriana	I think that when I finish- as there is still a year left to go, that year I will see, see if I am capable of going on the following year. If it is already a bit difficult, we shall have to see. I don't know if I'll pass this year.

As well as having increased self-esteem, some women developed fairly abstract conceptions of their subordination as women:

Adriana	Those are our silenced *malaises* [malestares silenciados]
Jacqueline	What is that?
Adriana	It's that we are always being insulted [*'recibiendo descargas'*]. For example, my husband got angry and right away they stay in your head. You can't let them out for fear of a fight, sometimes something strange happens. We are like a little saucepan. For example, when the husband says 'The meal is really nice', the little saucepan goes up, with self-esteem, but sometimes he complains, the saucepan begins to go down. Then you get criticism, either from neighbours, from people who have nothing to do with it, the saucepan begins to boil, so suddenly it explodes, and the whole nervous system explodes, and we as women always have to be silencing everything, putting up with everything, and in the end we get sick. If we are able to pick the right moment and say to our husband 'Look, you are wrong and things can't be this way, I don't like to fight but I can't accept this from you. Then you go back to being balanced mentally, because it is the world which gets you down. So that is what they taught us, in summary, in Mental Health.

This woman had also attended courses run by a feminist NGO.

Some women began to question their subjugated roles. As Chuchryk (1989: 162) notes: 'Military rule has led many women to question their marginalization in the public, political sphere and to reject their relegation to the private sphere where their roles are defined exclusively in terms of their reproductive potential'. Many arpilleristas began to think in terms of their rights:

Jacqueline	And that about women's rights, what was it that was important to you about that?
Cecilia	I liked to know what they were doing at the time with women, women's equality, that they don't take advantage of her... like at work, that they pay her the same as they pay a man, things like that.
Jacqueline	That they don't take advantage of her.
Cecilia	Yes. Not because you are a woman they should take advantage of you, say things to you, or do things which no-one should do to you. Because they are giving it to a man, you have to do the same, no, that's not it.

They also became critical of the way they were brought up (not having been given an education because they were girls) and wanted their daughters to receive one. Raquel, for example, criticised her parents' generation for not considering that girls needed an education, and said that she had been determined to give her daughter a good one.

The women began to think conceptually about *machismo* and its double standards:

> 'I could not understand why there was so much machismo, that men participated in sports, politics, whatever and not women and children. So women were always the ornament or the maid in the house'. (Interview with Violeta Morales)

A number became interested in feminism. However, many never accepted feminism, seeing feminists as extremists and rejecting 'feminist' as a self-description. As Chaney

(1979: 80) notes: 'Women feel feminist militancy is completely foreign to their tradition'. Schild (1994) notes that some women rejected feminism because they saw feminist ideas as relevant only to middle-class women, and that most *pobladoras* did not have a sense of sisterhood. In the Sta. Adriana arpillera group, only Ada declared an interest in women's movements.

Some women became very aware of the situation of oppression of women in their society and took action. In some cases the action was at home, in insisting on their rights, for example:

> 'If they [men] are educated, why shouldn't I be able to go on educating myself? And that has led me to where I am with you, talking, my words flow out' (Interview with Adriana)

They also insisted that family members participate in the housework:

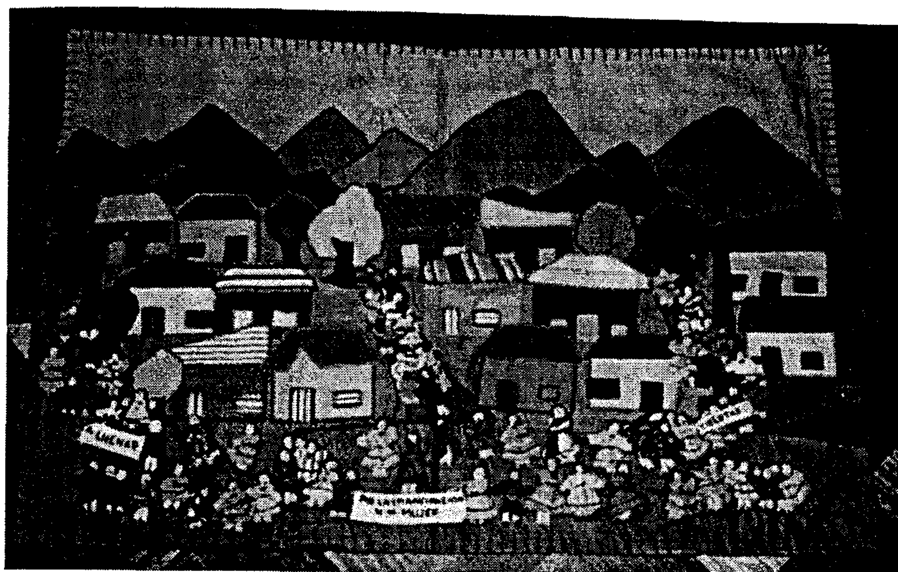
Cecilia	They had to wash, not their clothes, because I would wash the clothes, but the dishes. Mother was no longer there to serve them, the iced drink was no longer there, that sort of thing, the bed was not all well made, because they had to make their own beds, so then they began to realise how difficult it is to do these things.
Jacqueline	So really, all the family changed.
Cecilia	It also changed, it also changed, yes. Because I said to them, 'well, I am going out to work to please all of you.' Yes, because if a pair of trousers gets worn out, there will be no money to buy another pair, because mother doesn't work and there will not be enough money. So you also have to co-operate here in the house, you have to help.

Even single mothers left the house and forced the children to co-operate with housework. This is the case with Violeta who had to go out and search for her disappeared brother:

> 'I had to leave my children alone, I had to delegate, so that one did the cleaning, whether it was a girl or a boy, and the next day, if I didn't manage to cook, the other cooked- we took it in turns. So that I could go out all day and do the papers in the Comité Pro Paz, in Cuatro Alamos [a concentration camp]' (Interview with Violeta Morales)

In other cases, women took action by making demands beyond the household. Chuchryk (1989: 162), in her study of *pobladoras*, found that some women expressed the idea that housewives should receive a retirement pension, and they were well aware of the amount of work they do. My research supports her findings in that some arpilleristas made a formal request of President Aylwin (during his campaign) for a recognition of the work of women during the dictatorship (see Chapter 6). The women acquired a new sense of agency in the women.

The women began to participate in Women's Day acts and protests organised by feminists, just as they did in political protests (see Chapter 6). They began to depict scenes of women's protests in arpilleras, and to include in their arpilleras banners demanding freedom from oppression for women. As Chuchryk 1989: 168 finds, 'democratization for women has come to mean the democratization of daily life, self-determination, autonomy, and freedom from violence and oppression. A struggle for democracy must include a struggle for women's liberation or it will not eliminate authoritarianism'.



Women's protest. The central banner says 'For the emancipation of women'

Women, therefore, developed an awareness of gender inequality and took action against it. Although this is a big leap forward, it is limited. The changes were not institutionalised in wider society. As Rowe and Schelling (1993: 119) point out, 'there is no automatic translation of cultural resistance into political change'. Women did not begin to play major roles in bigger organisations, lose total responsibility for household management, or enter into full-time employment, for example. As Salman (1994: 18) suggests, their often-mentioned empowerment was mainly won within their still rather small every day universe, not in the world where men before 1973 had traditionally tried to earn an income that would allow their families to engage in middle-class consumption, let alone in the world of serious politics.' Some, such as the relatives of the disappeared, did engage in politics in a serious way, however (see Chapter 6).

FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO THE CHANGES IN THE WOMEN

The fundamental factor causing the above changes was the wider socio-political crisis. Because of the repressive nature of the regime and economic crisis, the Vicaría came into existence, and created the groups. Women joined because their husbands were unemployed and they needed to make arpilleras to feed the family. The Vicaría's running of arpillera groups created a number of circumstances which directly impacted on the women: the women escaped the isolation and constraints of the home, earned an income, in some cases becoming the principal breadwinner, received appreciation for their work, talked to other women who shared their gender oppression, and attended the talks given by Vicaría employees, about women's rights.

In joining the groups, the women came out of the isolation of the home and were able to exchange experiences and feelings with other women. In talking together over work and during the tea breaks, they came to realise that others were treated in the home as they were.

The women talk as they work

Discussion fostered an atmosphere of supportiveness.

Joining arpillera groups meant earning an income. This was a considerable source of pride:

> 'any little thing you have bought for the house is something about which you can say, 'This, I bought thanks to the arpilleras'. It was useful for me to say, 'well, I also work, I also bring money to the house, because that is also important, because in the house you are like a nobody, they think that because you are in the house you are not earning anything with that'.
> (Interview with Peñalolén arpillerista)

In very many cases, particularly during the Pinochet regime, the arpillerista became the principal family breadwinner.

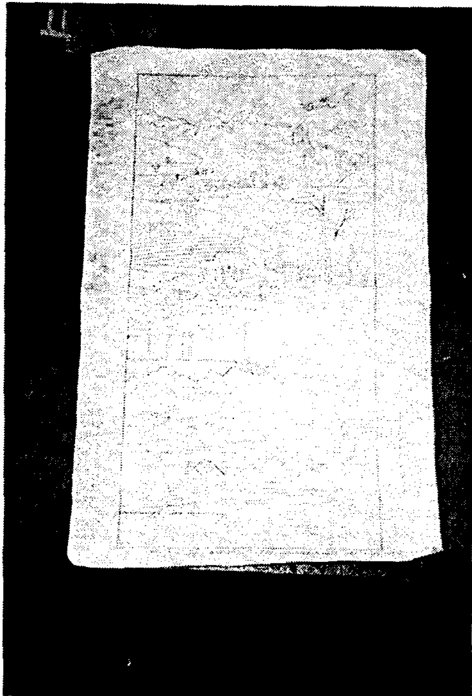
Joining a group led to people valuing and admiring the arpilleristas' work:

Jacqueline What do you feel you have achieved as a person?

Catalina — As a person I feel fulfilled, and I feel good because I have seen that people recognise what we are doing. What I do, in embroidery, and what I have done for groups and institutions, people know how to recognise it. Although they don't always know how to say so.

The fact that they sell abroad is also a source of self-esteem for the women, according to an ex- Vicaría employee.

The fact of finishing an arpillera made the women realise that they had skills. The director of Prisma emphasised that as long as they 'had their hands' they could earn a living. As Freeman (unpublished document, p. 5) found in her study of group art projects: 'By participating in a group of their peers people realise they each have things to contribute; ideas about design, the use of colour, management of texture, technical skills. The bonding that can occur in such a close-working group also helps to boost confidence generally'. In the following series of photographs, Prisma women chip in with the making of an arpillera.



The drawing on which the arpillera is based: an amalgamation of the drawings of four women

Piecing together the sections of the arpillera:
each section is the work of one or two woman

Flor puts the pieces together as the other women watch and comment

Together, Anita and Flor sew the pieces together

Flor finishes the details on the arpillera, as the other women give suggestions

Gustavo, the group's teacher, directs the
mounting of the arpillera onto a frame

The workshops offered the women the chance to hold leadership roles. This was also instrumental in developing the women's self-esteem:

'I have felt good. And I feel that I have done it well [running the Macul embroidery workshop], even though I might have made many mistakes, but I find that really I have done it well. Because when the workshop feels down, then you have to start to raise the morale, because sometimes people's morale sinks, and I think yes, I have done a good job'
(Interview with Catalina)

Catalina reading out news at the beginning of a Macul workshop session

Participation in women-focused events such as Women's Day, further contributed to the arpilleristas' becoming aware of gender issues, because at such events they discussed gender issues and met other women. The 'reflection days' or get-togethers of arpilleristas and other working-class women, served a similar function. At such days they would discuss women's new roles and rights, as well as the economic and political situation, and (in the later years) their expectations for democracy. The discussions were often guided by Vicaría and NGO employees.

Contact with other women made them realise that their problems were shared and increased their awareness of oppression at home:

Jacqueline	How is it that the arpillera, how did it make you rebel, what happened?
Magdalena	The fact that you were participating with other women, you start telling all your problems.
Jacqueline	To them?

Magdalena — No, not to them, I have been really secretive , but you listen to all your friends' comments, because me, telling my personal matters, no, I mean, I am not the sort who can tell about her life. The truth is that I was ashamed and everything. But you would find that your friends would tell you all their problems, all the problems they had in their houses, for example, there were friends, work mates who would tell me their things and you would try to advise them, you with your own problems at home.

Moreover, the women in the workshop supported each other's rebelliousness in the home. Most of the women in the Místicas group, for example, laughed and praised Cecilia when she told us she had taken off to the seaside for the week end, telling her family they would have to manage alone with the housework. Having nearly all their classes together fostered a friendship amongst the women to the extent that they would tell each other about their lives, becoming acquainted with each other's family situation, problems or frustrations. The groups were spaces of women's solidarity under a society which was repressive for women (See Chapter 3).

The workshops were a forum for talks and courses about gender issues. Course topics included women's rights, self-development, sexuality, domestic violence, and leadership skills. They were run both by Vicaría employees and feminist NGOs (even though the Vicaría resisted this after 1983). Attendance at the courses was mandatory for the Vicaría groups. As Salman (1994: 17) intuits: 'It is my conviction... that the discourse ... that was to form the foundation for greater self-awareness and positive self-identification did not entirely come from the bottom up. It was at least in part constructed by external actors'. The courses were instrumental in changing the women's view of themselves and the world:

'We started to incorporate gender issues [in the programme], and we had problems with the Church for this reason. And for this reason they kicked us out in the end: for political reasons and

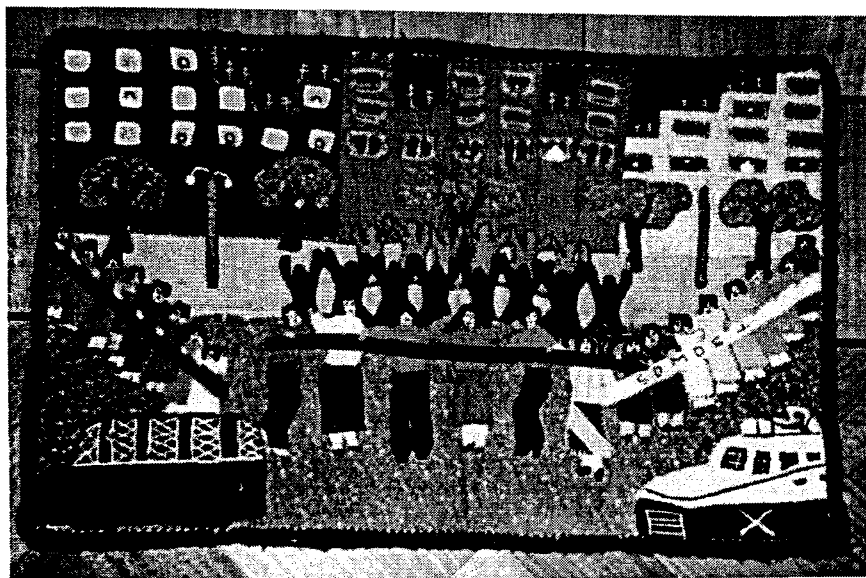
> because of this gender issue. At that time we did not define ourselves as feminists, but yes along those lines'.
> (Interview with Josefina, manager of one of the Vicaría 's solidarity teams)

In Prisma's case, the talks came in the context of the 'personal development' classes.

The speakers from NGOs tended to be both middle-class feminists (such as the feminists of the Casa de la Mujer La Morada, MUDECHI and CODEM), and feminists from groups in the *poblaciones* (e.g. MOMUPO). The professional women who taught the courses tended to be middle-class, left wing and working for feminist goals (Schild 1994: 66):

Alicia	We would go and meet with other women who were from feminist groups, but the good kind. You talked about really nice things, there. They were occasions, these meetings...
Jacqueline	What did you talk about, exactly?
Alicia	About sexuality, about how you can do it alone without a partner, I had never heard this and there you are, married and all. But things which we had never learnt, of relations between women.

The discourse of the feminist groups focused around 'democracy for women in the country and in the home'. As Boyle notes, 'It is the awareness of an enduring and unacknowledged authoritarianism within the home and family structure that informed the demands of the feminists of Chile' (Boyle 1993: 163).



The creator of this arpillera either participated in or watched a women's protest organised by feminists. The banners state: 'Somos Más' (there are more of us, i.e. against Pinochet)

Some groups, however, either did not engage with the women's movement or did not perceive themselves as having engaged with it:

Jacqueline	And before that, was there a women's movement in which you participated? No?
Voices	No. (Interview with Sta. Adriana Group)

Juana, a member of the Sta. Adriana group, mentioned on one occasion that 'Thanks be to God' she had never had to work outside the home (i.e. in regular, full-time employment). On the other hand, Ada, the group leader, was very interested in women's issues and feminism.

Finally, the desire to combat gender oppression and the attitude of defiance which came with it, is likely to have been encouraged by the general atmosphere of

defiance and opposition to the political order which reigned in the workshops (see Chapter 6). The factors which account for the changes in the women, therefore, include: escaping the isolation and constraints of the home, earning an income (in some cases becoming the principal breadwinner), talking to other women who shared their gender oppression, attending the talks given by Vicaría employees, NGOs and feminists about women's issues and rights, and soaking in an atmosphere of combativeness.

CHANGES IN THE MEN AND FAMILIES

The above factors led indirectly to changes in the men and children, so that gender relations were altered. Although the husbands were reluctant at first, gradually they became used to the idea of their wives going to a group:

> Jacqueline — Were there any obstacles to your participation?
>
> Maria — Before there was more of a problem because when men are young they prefer that their wives stay at home. When the children are smaller: 'No, don't go' and so on. But now he is one of those who makes you participate. Because he says 'You could do this', 'I am going to check the prices here and there'. That is always- either I made him, or he realised alone that really it was no bad thing.

Some husbands went so far as to encourage their wives to become very involved. Raquel's husband was annoyed that she did not apply to go to New York for the exhibition the Macul group had there.

Husbands have also come to understand their wives' motives for joining the groups:

> 'But I have achieved something important, that he understands me, that he likes what I am doing'. (Interview with Adriana)

They have begun to value the work the women do in the workshops as well:

> 'The problems I had in the beginning, when my husband didn't want me to go, now he is used to it, he has come to get me and he realises that we have appeared in the paper, it is not just any old thing, at least we attract attention and that gives us a feeling of some importance'. (Interview with Ada)

Some husbands have come to like the workshops:

> 'now I feel more important. Right here at home they realise that you can do things. My husband likes it that I go, that I participate. Before no, I would tell him that I wanted to do things, work, and he would reply 'what will you do, you don't know how to do anything'. Now when he sees the arpilleras, he loves to participate, he likes the atmosphere there is there.' (Interview with Manola)

Certain aspects of the women's work coaxed husbands into acceptance. Most (but not all) husbands were pleased, for example, that women were contributing to paying the household expenses. Meeting the workshop members also helped. The Villa Sur workshop invited all the husbands to a dinner and found that they resisted their participation far less after this event.

The arpilleristas' children, like the husbands, began to respect them more:

> 'My husband recognises it, my children are proud of me as a person'.
>
> (Interview with Adriana)

In some cases they are actively supportive. Catalina's family, for example, asks her how the workshop is progressing and gives her advice when she consults them about problems. Sometimes the children help their mother with her 'homework' for the workshop and like the fact that she can also help them with the new skills she has acquired. Maria Eugenia's children, for example, liked it that she could help them with schoolwork, from what she had learnt at Prisma.

The husbands' and children's attitudes to housework changed; some husbands became used to their wives' not being home to serve them their meals and learnt to cope alone:

> 'my husband was very machista, he still is, but he has become less so. So when he came home you had to have the table laid, you had to have the dinner ready, all that. So I started to go to the workshop and he began to get over it, to get over it, and now when he gets home, and I'm not home, it's OK'
> (Vilia Sur group member, during a group interview).

However, not all husbands have changed in these ways. As Schild (1994: 69) notes: 'Some women had been much more successful than others in negotiating time for their activities. For example, while the young and dynamic leader of one group present in the discussion announced that she had managed to negotiate house chores and child care with her husband, the others present reminded her that her situation was rather unusual. These women were still facing the double dilemma of negotiating household responsibilities and obtaining 'permission' from their husbands to participate in activities outside the home. Not everyone, as it turned out, was equally successful at exerting her rights, that is, at freeing herself from her husband's control. In fact, a number had done so at the price of physical violence'.

THE WOMEN TODAY

By 1996 the arpilleristas connected to the Vicaría had, for the most part, reverted to their old behaviours and attitudes. Most of the women no longer participate in political events, and most are no longer rebellious in the household. Many have lost contact with feminist ideas, even if they remain interested in feminism. Even if their families now accept their leaving the home, they are still the ones responsible for the housework and childcare. The situation is similar to that suggested by Salman (1994: 16): 'the new experiences were incapable of radically transforming their inherited, stable identities. Women's traditional discourses may have incorporated some new elements, their self-identifications may have been 'feminized', and their consciousness may have increased, and, indeed, these are empowerment processes... Although self-identifications may have changed under the influence of these experiences and the NGOs' discursive input, identities and habitus do not change so easily.'

Most women have dropped out of the workshops and either stay at home or work part time. Even those who remain in the workshops feel they are more often 'shut up in the home', and view their situation today as a step back from the progress they had made in terms of gender equality:

Woman 1	We are going back to that a little, where we are shutting ourselves up in the house once again, men are becoming machista again; we ourselves are encouraging men's machismo.

Woman 2 — When I went out, he would lock the door, he would kick me all over, he would create a scandal and everyone knew, and now that I am in the house, he says 'Are you going to go out?' and he pulls a long face, the *'caracho'* as we say. And before he would come home and I would just go out, he wouldn't say anything. And now he gets annoyed when I go out.

Woman 3 — So we are going back to what it was like before.
(Interview with Peñalolén group)

For the most part, they have returned to their earlier state of having total responsibility for domestic matters. Many men have become 'machista' once again, expecting the women to stay at home, as my fieldnotes reveal:

> 'Early on when just Patty and Gladys [members of the Peñalolén group] were there they said that Magda and Lucy were the ones who were going out to sell. I asked them why and they said 'porque están más disponibles' ['because they are freer to go']. I asked why, asking if it was 'porque no tienen niños chicos?' ['because they don't have small children?'] and they said 'no son los niños que son un problema, más bien los maridos'. ['it's not the children which are the problem, its the husbands']. i.e. the husbands don't let them go out'.
> (Field notes of observation of Peñalolén group, November 1995)

In 1996 Ada of the Sta. Adriana group went to a management course on the sly because although her husband has accepted her going to the workshop, he does not like her going out much.

Some women today feel guilty about having participated so much, as they believe that their children suffered from their not being at home all the time:

> 'I think that because of the Mothers' Centre I neglected my youngest [a problem case] a lot'.
> (Interview with Maria Muñoz)

They still see themselves primarily as wives and mothers. Nearly all the arpilleristas today define themselves as 'housewives' or *'dueña de casa'*:

Jacqueline — How do you define yourself?

Raquel	Just as a housewife. Because if I say like an embroiderer, I am not embroidering all day. It's a just something to fill the time, a top-up.
Jacqueline	Why?
Raquel	For that very reason, because you are not doing it all the time. Housewife on the other hand- from the moment you open your eyes you are a housewife. But I don't know, I don't know which would be the right one.
Jacqueline	How come not 'arpillerista'. Because of the time?
Raquel	Exactly. Because three quarters of the time you are a housewife. And only one quarter an artisan or whatever. ... Here you are housewife, washerwoman, cook, you do everything. So you can't say one day 'I am not going to do anything, anything, I am going to sew all day'. So housewife above all. Mother, wife, housewife. All that first. And then the other.

Catalina justifies her self-identification as 'housewife' by the fact that she spends more time at home than anywhere else. Yet she insists that the housewife works very hard, sometimes growing angry when people assume otherwise. Some women, such as Maria Duarte, however, define themselves as both housewife and arpillerista or embroiderer.

These changes are indirectly the result of the changing socio-political situation. Because Pinochet was ousted in the plebiscite, the human rights situation improved, and the Vicaría closed down. Chile was now, in the First World's eyes, a peaceful and relatively prosperous Third World nation. One consequence of this was that the amount of foreign aid dwindled and many of the NGOs which had worked with women closed down. This meant that the women were no longer able to attend talks on women's issues, or the political and economic situation. A second consequence of the return to democracy was foreign buyers' seeing Chile as having overcome its state of crisis, and turning their attention to more 'needy' countries. A third consequence of the change of government was the return of exiles. With these changes, the solidarity market all but disappeared, and the Vicaría could not order as many arpilleras from the women. As a result, the arpilleristas either dropped out of the workshops (there were fewer groups in

a *coordinadora*) or met less frequently and did not benefit from all the courses and festivals the Vicaría had offered but could no longer afford. They no longer had contact with other arpillera groups, let alone political activists and resistance groups.[1] The festivals for Women's Day no longer took place, and today there are almost no 'Reflection Days'. The women no longer earn the income they had earned in the past. Moreover, the economy did improve towards the end of the Pinochet regime and husbands often did find jobs again, giving them once again the role of principal breadwinner.

WOMEN IN OTHER GROUPS

The changes that came about in the women happened because they joined groups, not specifically arpillera groups. By joining a group, women generally gain in self-esteem. The Macul women who participated in a Mothers' Centre gained in self-confidence, partly as a result of having built up their Centre by themselves, brick by brick:

> 'So afterwards, when I joined the Mothers' Centre, no. It was as if I was opening up and developing a personality. That helped me a lot'.
> (Interview with Maria Muñoz)

Managing any group also makes women more self confident. Raquel says about being president of the Mothers' Centre:

[1] Courses on women's issues, such as domestic violence, still exist, but these take place in the Mothers'

Jacqueline	What effect did it have on you to be director?
Raquel	You grow because you have more contact with other people. The mayor, Culture, Sra. Carmen. I belong to the Municipal Union of Mothers' Centres in which I visit other Mothers' Centres. You see the quality of your own and you swell up with pride. You feel so good, it's incredible, the satisfaction you feel.

They also learn not let themselves be used by other groups, as a consequence of their participation. As a result of participation in the Mothers' Centre, for example, the women of Macul resisted CEMA Chile's attempt to take over their mothers' centre and meeting hall.

Some of the above factors causing change in the women, exist when women engage in any sort of work (not just arpillera work). Neuhouser (1989: 699) points out that the probability that poor women control family expenditures greatly increases if they are engaged in paid labour. Earned income increases women's independence since it diminishes their individual economic dependence on a spouse. The relationship with the husband becomes one of mutual dependence. Working outside the home gives women a relatively sophisticated knowledge of the urban environment (labour markets, bureaucracies and commerce). Finally, employed women have more extensive and complex networks that interlock less with those of their spouses. In the arpilleristas' case, part of the reason why participation in other groups gives similar results is that many of the features of the arpillera groups which caused changes in the women (e.g. the courses, the contact with feminists and talking with other women) also existed in these other groups. Adriana, for example, attended talks on women's rights and self-development through Memch83 (a feminist NGO). However, it is likely that making

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Centres and are organised by the government.

reflexive images and talking around a table, added to the development of an awareness in ways that bread-making, for example, could not.

CONCLUSION

So long as they were isolated, the arpilleristas did not seriously question their roles or the hierarchies in the home, even though their situation was one of dependence, inferiority and severely restricted freedom. Joining the arpillera groups made them more rebellious in terms of countering their family's wishes, more self-confident, and more aware of their rights and gender inequality. They began to question their roles and the behaviours of those around them. Participation in the arpillera groups brought about these changes because it gave the women the opportunity to enter into contact with others in an environment in which they could express ideas tentatively, and less so. Other factors bringing about changes in the women, include the attendance of courses and talks, income-earning, and appreciation of their work. The relations between the women and men changed, as well as the men's expectations concerning women, and their participation in housework, turning an oppressive situation into a less oppressive one. Similar changes in women in other groups suggest the group need not necessarily be arpillera groups for such transformations to take place, although the self-representation which occurred in the arpillera groups might have contributed to such changes in a unique way.

The radicalisation of the women was inseparable from the wider socio-political situation. It was heavily tied to the moment of political crisis which brought about the existence of the Vicaría and feminist NGOs, which in turn provided the conditions (classes on women's rights, income through arpillera-making, etc.) which led to the women's developing an awareness and rebelliousness around gender inequality. The socio-political situation continues to be important in the case of Prisma today, because it creates the conditions (economic hardship) in which women need to join workshops. It is particularly ironic that severely repressive political circumstances indirectly caused the relative 'liberation' of women, and conversely that the return of democracy ushered the return of a repressive situation for women. Repression in one arena gave rise to conditions (hunger and unemployment) which altered the distribution of power between people (in this case, the woman became more powerful than the husband, as she was the primary income earner). When the women found themselves in a powerful position, they tried to establish their position (by distributing housework, for example) not merely for convenience's sake, but also with the awareness that they should not have to deal with such extreme machismo as they had been facing. In this way, political repression indirectly and fostered a temporary relief from gender oppression.

When socio-political circumstances changed, the women regressed to relatively subjugated positions. They ceased to leave the home as much, became less involved in political and gender-oriented activities, and behaved in the home according to the family's old expectations of them. Meanwhile, husbands reverted to the position of primary breadwinner. The relative circularity of the process women underwent parallels the circularity of their processes of political consciousness (see Chapter 6): as

the women became politically active and aware, so they became aware of gender inequality and active in fighting exploitation in the home. As one process died down, so did the other. Coming together in groups and undergoing all the influences this implied, led the women to become ideologically involved (albeit to differing degrees) in two movements simultaneously: the resistance movement and the women's movement.

CONCLUSION

Art forms become what they are because they are made in a network of co-operating actors – an 'art world' (Becker 1982). The national and international political context is an 'actor' in the art world, impacting it in numerous ways. Conversely, art worlds impact national politics; the arpilleras played an important role in the resistance movement which ousted Pinochet eventually. Art worlds evolve over time, and this evolution affects the people who are in the 'artist's' role. The 'artists' can become radicalised and deradicalised as a result of changes in the art world.

THE ROLE OF COLLECTIVE ARTISTIC PRODUCTION AND REPRESSION IN THE CONFIGURATION OF A POLITICAL AND GENDER CONSCIOUSNESS

Repression, ironically, can provide the circumstances under which a political and gender consciousness develops. It was in a context of art-producing groups, during a time of extreme political repression that the arpilleristas developed an awareness of their repressed and marginalised situation, in political, economic and gender terms. Repression alone was not enough to make the women aware of their situation; the arpilleristas had experienced repression for some time before fully understanding its cause and their configuration within Chilean society in broad terms. Rather, repression led to series of conditions which favoured the development of the women's consciousness.

Primary among these conditions was the emergence of organisations (the Comité and Vicaría) possessing a strong ideological stance against the regime and committed to helping its victims. The 'helping' stance of these organisations was partly a product of the broader ideological currents in the institutions within which they operated, principally Liberation Theology of the Catholic Church (which swept through Latin America in the Seventies), according to which the Church must help the poor and needy. Part of this ideology was the ethic of solidarity, defined by the Vicaría's employees in broad terms as helping the oppressed. This ideology translated into the Comité and Vicaría's identifying political and economic victims and setting about working on solving their problems.

Another condition favouring the development of a consciousness was the family crisis in the shantytowns, brought about either because a member was imprisoned or 'disappeared', and/or because the primary bread winner was no longer able to work and support the family. This situation led other family members to seek employment, as well as legal and psychological aid. The women turned to their local parish church where the Vicaría had set up various workshops and a soup kitchen. Within these groups the women either worked for an income, or contributed to collective work involving feeding the family at low or no cost. The economic crisis and repression, therefore, forced previously housebound women out of the home and catapulted them from a dependent position within the household, to one of family breadwinner. Arpillera groups were, from the Vicaría's point of view, a means of helping the victims of the family crisis. They provided a means whereby the wives of the unemployed and disappeared could help their families economically, and help themselves psychologically. The women in the groups were unaware of the influence of Liberation Theology on their lives.

Although repression and the economic crisis were important, the key factor in the development of a political and gender consciousness was participation in arpillera workshops. In these workshops, the women underwent a series of influences which led to the development of a political consciousness. The workshops exposed them to the teachings of the politically engaged Comité and Vicaría staff, brought them into contact with politicised shantytown women, involved them in creating art which interpreted their situation, fostered contact with other politicised groups and other arpilleristas, and provided access to written information. The consciousness they developed was similar to the left-wing ideology of the Comité and Vicaría staff. Specifically, the women became aware that human rights were being violated, and that the economic problems they faced were not personal but shared by many, and a consequence of the neo-liberal economic policies of the regime. Previously apolitical women joining groups, therefore, came to adopt the ideology of the institution which organised the groups; they became anti-regime.

The act of creating images which reflected their situation was particularly propitious to the development of a consciousness. Because the women were encouraged by the Vicaría and Comité to depict instances of repression in the shantytowns, they began to observe them especially carefully. As the arpilleras were made in a group, the production process often sparked discussion and analysis. Furthermore, because the women were directed in what sorts of events to depict by ideologically engaged Vicaría staff, they focused on these events rather than more politically neutral images. The making of reflexive images, in a collectivity, caused the women to become more aware of

the structural causes behind their situation. As Borland (1991: 73) suggests, 'Personal narratives are tools for making sense of our lives'.

Participation in workshops was political. The women became active in protests and demonstrations. Whereas Dhamija (1975: 1), in her study of crafts groups in developing countries, suggests: 'Promoted by governments or public agencies and combined with appropriate facilities and training, handicrafts and rural industries represent the best method of providing gainful employment for women without disturbing the existing pattern of society', in the arpillera case the opposite is true. The production of arpilleras was also a political act, in that arpilleras contained anti-government statements. It was also political in that its making involved people grouping together, an act that was forbidden during the dictatorship. Coming together in groups was a challenge to the social order. Finally, the production of arpilleras was political because the very existence of groups in which women worked to support the family was a statement, in this cultural context, that the family was in crisis. As Rowe and Schelling (1993: 186) note, the arpillera is a 'new method of political resistance, entailing novel forms of organization and of cultural action'.

Inelia and Anita, members of the Agrupación, were uninterested in politics before joining the arpillera group. Now they protest outside the presidential palace, demanding an end to the clean-slate law.

Not only did the women become aware of the political situation, in joining the workshops they also became aware of gender inequality. The arpillera groups were conducive to the development of this awareness because they enabled the women to come out of the isolation of the home and provided a forum in which they could discuss their treatment at home, learn about the experience of other women, and listen to the talks of Vicaría employees and feminists working in NGOs. They also provided opportunities for earning an income, receiving recognition of one's work, taking on management roles, gaining the knowledge of having managed well, and participating in women-centred events such as Women's Day festivals. Together with the consciousness came an increase in self-esteem:

> 'Those workshops you participate in, for example, sometimes women live very shut up within the four walls of the house, the man is *machista*. But as you get into a group of women you begin to free yourself, you begin to free yourself a bit, like you come to value yourself more, you get to

> become a person, you feel like a person, you take up your rights' (Interview with member of Peñalolén group)

The arpilleristas, through joining groups, became aware of their rights and worth. As Rowe and Schelling (1993: 188) point out, 'Paradoxically, then, the politicization of daily life in resistance to military rule led to a realization of the need for a broader concept of democracy, encompassing both gender and cultural politics'.

The women's new insistence on their right to free time, to respect within the household, and to education represents a move towards the exercising of their rights as citizens. They gained a space for themselves, to act as they had previously been prohibited from doing. This was radical because it involved challenging the widely accepted notions of what femininity entailed. As Schild (1994: 64) states: 'these groups are spaces in which many women acquire the elements of a gender-specific culture of citizenship. This form of political learning involves challenging pre-established boundaries of appropriate feminine behavior and is lived by women as learning to experience themselves as confident, competent beings and acting accordingly.' The women were re-defining what it was to be a woman.

This newly-acquired gender consciousness brought about changes in the relations between the sexes. Whereas initially, most husbands treated their wives as Magdalena's treated her: 'I did not go out because to begin with, my partner was a *machista*, one of those *machistas* of the very, very worst kind', after a time, they came to accept their wives' going to the workshops, and some began to encourage them to participate in groups. Both the children and husbands began to respect the women more.

Also, the husbands' and the children's attitude to housework changed; they began to appreciate what was involved and co-operated more. The joining of arpillera groups led the women to change their relationships, and their own and their partners' way of thinking.

As time passed and the conditions of political repression and economic crisis lessened, the women became less active in combating political and gender oppression, less interested in the issues involved, and reverted to their traditional roles. Although they still consider themselves 'left-wing' and understand that they are marginalised, they do not participate in political parties, events or demonstrations, for the most part. Similarly, although they are still aware of *machismo*, they do little to fight it. For the most part, by the end of my study, they have returned to their earlier state of having total responsibility for domestic matters, seeing themselves primarily as wives and mothers, and describing themselves as housewives. Many men have become *machista* once again, expecting the women to stay at home and opposing their going out. A consciousness, once acquired, therefore, cannot be relied on to continue alone. In real terms the women have returned to a position of considerable subordination.

These changes were caused by a series of factors, including the breakdown of the arpillera network, the diminished frequency of meetings (because of the sharp fall in demand for arpilleras), the reduction in the amount of foreign aid to Chile, and the fact that the festivals, acts and courses ceased to take place. The radicalisation of the women, therefore, was inseparable from the wider socio-political situation; it was heavily tied to

the moment of political crisis which brought about the existence of the Vicaría and feminist NGOs. Repression, ironically, led to a degree of gender emancipation.

The arpillerista case suggests that in a society which is repressive for women, women in isolation do not seriously question the hierarchies that exist, or their roles. When they join groups, however, they face a new constellation of circumstances which results in their questioning their roles and the behaviours of those around them. When these circumstances no longer exist, the different players revert to their old roles and even lose some of their awareness of the issues.

Political repression is not indispensable in the configuration of a gender consciousness, however. In groups which did not suffer repression, a gender consciousness still emerged. The women of the Prisma groups, for example, developed an awareness of and attitude of rebelliousness towards gender inequality, despite the fact that they had first came together as a group during the period of democracy. They did, however, suffer from 'gender oppression', having *machista* husbands in the home, for example. Under these conditions, exposure to many of the same influences as the Vicaría women (talks, coming together as a group, discussing problems, earning an income and being praised for work) led to self-esteem, awareness, and the desire to resist gender inequality. Coming together in a group, in a situation of repression of some sort (gender or political), therefore, can, under certain conditions, lead to the development of different forms of consciousness (gender or political).

THE ROLE OF POLITICAL REPRESSION IN ARTISTIC EXPRESSION

The situation of political repression in Chile gave rise to the existence of the arpillera, a new art form. The employees of the Comité wanted to create and sell something so as to provide the women with an income and means of expression. The object sold had to draw on skills the women already possessed, materials which were cheap (as, because of the repression and economic crisis, most of the women were very poor), and it had to be easily transportable (so the women could work at home). The arpilleristas took pre-existing art forms (the arpilleras of Violeta Parra and Isla Negra, and possibly the molas of Panama and American quilts) as their starting point, and adapted their form and meaning.

The iconography of the arpilleras had to respond to the needs of the buyers as well as the makers. As long as the buyers were individuals who were opposed to the Pinochet regime and wanted to express solidarity for its victims, it was appropriate to make arpilleras depicting images which would resonate with them: scenes of disappearances occurring, the search, hunger, shantytown raids, and protests. The Vicaría made sure that the women provided this sort of arpillera:

> 'There was a time when the commercialisation was oriented more towards denouncing the repression. So often, [the Vicaría] did not accept arpillera themes which were not obviously oriented towards direct repression'.
> (Interview with Ana Maria Medioli)

The arpilleras, in most cases, represented experiences lived by the women, but they were also an expression of the Vicaría's understanding of what buyers wanted to see. They were directed visions of a reality and not spontaneous expressions of lived experience.

For the arpilleras to be produced and bought, the artists had to be trained and organised, and the art works had to be bought. The Comité and Vicaría had to set up a system to train the women, provide some of the raw materials, organise the groups, check the finished arpilleras for quality, send the arpilleras out of the country, and motivate end buyers to buy. Political repression and economic deprivation, therefore, led indirectly to the development of a web of relations (an 'art world') organised to make possible the production of arpilleras.

This arpillera world changed over time. This change came about in part because of changes in the national and international political contexts. The original buyers had bought arpilleras because they provided information about events in Chile, indicated membership within a group of people who were opposed to the dictatorship, symbolised pain and hope, and provided a means for expressing solidarity. When repression lessened, and other crisis countries began to dominate the news, these buyers lost interest in Chile (which they no longer saw as a crisis country), and turned their attention to the crises elsewhere (e.g. Yugoslavia). The international human rights agenda moved and Chile moved out of the limelight. Chilean buyers (mainly exiles), for their part, returned home and concentrated on adapting to the new society. As a result of these changes in the buyers' outlook and situation, the very political arpilleras were no longer relevant. Slowly, the Vicaría phased them out. Political repression, therefore, awoke certain needs in the consumers of arpilleras, but when the conditions of repression (and the international context) changed, the buyers' needs changed and the arpilleras adapted accordingly.

New buyers, more interested in the decorative quality of the arpillera, replaced the old buyers. The Vicaría reacted by ensuring that the arpillera displayed attractive and colourful scenes which were not offensive or gloomy in a living-room or children's bedroom. Harvests, bread-baking, school-children, and markets were the themes of the new arpilleras. The women began to apply the arpillera technique to functional objects: bags, purses and waist-coats. New materials were introduced, so as to increase the 'quality' of the arpilleras. The Vicaría enforced these changes by giving the women precise orders about the arpillera's 'look' and setting up a system of quality control which only tolerated arpilleras which coincided with its new demands. Changing circumstances of repression, therefore, not only fostered the creation of a new art world, but also influenced its evolution over time.

THE ROLE OF CREATIVE EXPRESSION IN RESISTANCE

Arpillera-making was a way in which marginalised women could express their disagreement with the state of affairs in their country. The arpilleras also enabled the women to inform others of the events they were living through. This was the first time they made statements to a wider public. Making arpilleras was a means by which previously 'voiceless' women found a voice. As Slim and Thompson (1993: 4) note: 'If being poor means having less of a voice, then being the poorest of the poor means being the most silent of all'. In Chile, in the early years of the dictatorship, the main voice that was heard was the official government rhetoric; nearly all others were stamped out. The

discourse of the dominant newspapers was full of the 'successes' of the regime, and ignored the traumatic events in the shantytowns. Making arpilleras enabled the women to tell another story, to speak up about what was ignored by the official media, but happening around them:

> 'Yes, it is like a newspaper, we showed the protests, the young people being beaten up, the disappeared, the soup kitchens, the children's soup kitchens, so many things that ... the shopping collectives, the people they would kick out of their homes, the prisoners, the arrested people, all that we would sew. When La Moneda was burning. Arpilleras have been made of those whose throats were cut, which also happened, of the barricades, of the towers blown up with dynamite, lots of things. When they burnt Carmen Gloria, when they killed the priest Pierre Jarlan, all that. We used to send out to the world with arpilleras, news of everything that was happening here'.
> (Interview with arpillerista of the Peñalolén group)

The arpilleras were like a collective autobiography of the marginalised: 'Autobiographies from the marginalised and powerless - those of a subordinate race, religion, sex and class - have not inevitably been a celebration of uniqueness, let alone public achievement, but a record of questions and of subversion' (Okely 1992: 7). In 'voicing', the arpilleristas were spreading 'subversive' information about the state of affairs in Chile.

The arpillera enabled these marginalised voices to be heard not only within their own neighbourhoods but also within a broad-based resistance community which spread beyond the Chilean border. As a member of the Villa Sur group stated, the arpilleristas became 'international pamphleteers'. For substantial numbers of people (the members of the resistance movement both within and beyond Chile, and foreign sympathisers), the arpillera was very present, acting as an alternative medium of communication to the traditional and official ones. It would be simplistic, however, to suggest that the

arpilleristas became a widely heard 'alternative voice' within Chile. Most middle and upper-class Chileans never set eyes on an arpillera.

That the women were able to become the producers of internationally attended messages was particularly radical given their gender. As Slim and Thompson note (1993: 4): 'A prejudice reduces what women speak about to "gossip" and elevates men's talk to the status of serious and constructive discussion'. Women and men have times and places in which it is socially acceptable for them to speak. In Chile, it was not normally appropriate for women to have a public voice; the system of *machismo* deemed it is socially acceptable for men to speak in public, community settings, and women in the home or backstage. Consequently, it was nearly always men's voices, not women's, which were heard. Arpillera-making turned this situation around, so that it was women's voices which were widely heard.

Arpillera-making brought women to the status of citizens within the resistance community or 'second Chile'. They acquired a voice, became members of a group of people who thought the same way, and became agents in changing the situation around them. The arpillera itself became a much-valued cultural object for the members of this 'second Chile':

> 'I think that in that sense the world of the arpilleras, or the organisations of arpilleras, were very important for the women. In the sense that for them, I think that they changed their lives. The simple fact that they knew that their arpilleras were being sold abroad, the fact that for each event which took place here, for the Day of Life, for the death of André Jarlan, for the closing of the Vicaría, always, the symbol was an arpillera. And the arpilleristas would be asked: 'please, make a mural'. I mean, they had a presence, I would say, in the world of resistance of the dictatorship, which was very relevant'.
> (Interview with Ana Maria Medioli, ex-manager of the Eastern Vicaría office)

The resistance community needed the arpilleristas. Because of this, the women acquired a certain status which lasted whilst the conditions of repression and economic hardship continued.

For members of the resistance movement the arpillera inspired the desire to fight oppression. The images of horror it portrayed were a striking assertion of the 'disorder' and violence (as opposed to the official discourse of 'order' and 'peace') resulting from the policies of the state. The poverty of the material of which it was made (second-hand clothes and even, occasionally, cuts from the arpilleristas' own hair), testified that there was poverty and suffering. These testimonies acted as fuel for the members of the resistance movement, as a flag or national anthem does in times of war. By fuelling the desire to resist the dictatorship, the arpilleras contributed to the return to democracy:

> 'We were one of the arpillera groups whose arpilleras all went abroad. We would relate the events which were happening, helping the democracy'
> (Interview with Magdalena Osorio)

The arpillera became a tool in the struggle for the end of repression.

The arpillera lost its role as carrier of voices of dissent and fuel for the resistance movement, when political circumstances changed. Most voices of dissent moved to the arena of traditional politics and more 'standard' media (e.g. the newspaper):

> We used to send out to the world with arpilleras, news of everything that was happening here. Now what we most do is the pruning of trees, and the pruning of trees is just about all the denouncing we do, and games. No, we don't do arpilleras any more because now they pick up the phone and talk directly to people there, about what is happening in Chile, now they no long ask for those themes'
> (Arpillerista of Peñalolén group)

Only in the context of repression, therefore, did the arpillera act as a vehicle for information and source of inspiration, for members of the resistance community. In the new political context the voices of dissent emerged in more traditional arenas. The arpillera became a decorative Third World craft.

CONTRIBUTIONS, AND DIRECTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

My dissertation draws on the literatures on women and politics in Latin America, social movements, the resistance movement in Chile, the anthropology and sociology of art, and methodology, making contributions to a number of these fields[1].

ART WORLDS REVISITED

The state is a major actor in art worlds. The state's policies and activities affect groups of people in different ways, one of which is to provoke them to create narratives about how the state interacts with them. In this way, the state can cause the birth of an art world. In Chile, the state impacted on the shantytown women by pauperising them and attacking their families. As a consequence the women started to produce art telling the story about the effects of the state's actions on their lives. The neo-liberal and anti-Marxist policies of the Junta, therefore, caused the birth of the arpillera world. Not only did the state cause the birth of an art world; it also affected this world once it was set up.

[1] For a summary of contributions to the literature on arpilleras, please see Appendix 4.

The state affected the arpillera world once it was set up. When the Pinochet regime became less repressive, the arpilleras became more bucolic and were distributed to different sorts of people, using a different rationale (market-oriented rather than solidarity-oriented). Becker (1982) points out that the state impacts on art through laws about property rights, censorship, and funding. These features of the state's functioning certainly influenced the arpilleras, where they were displayed, and who bought them. But it is also true that political and economic policies which are not directly about art, affect art forms and art worlds. Future research would do well to examine the impact of the state, and social structure (which results in part from the state's policies), on art worlds.

The international political context also impacts on art forms and their makers (indeed, the whole art world). When the war began in Yugoslavia and crises occurred in other countries, human rights activists who had bought arpilleras ceased to buy them, and turned their attention to these new crisis areas. So as to continue to attract buyers, the Vicaría encouraged the women to make decorative arpilleras, as we saw in chapter 4. The new buyers were more interested in decorating their homes, than in learning about political events in Chile. As they were no longer having to depict scenes of repression, the arpilleristas became less interested in political issues, less politically active, and less rebellious in their homes (chapter 7). In this way, the international political scene impacted on the art forms, the buyers of art, and the artists' thoughts and behaviours, down to the intimacy of the marriage relationship. The influence of international politics on vernacular (as opposed to high) artists has been little studied, even though the international political situation is an actor in such art worlds.

When one element in the art world changes, the art forms change as a result of a series of interactions, as Becker (1982) points out. The degree of change is a function of who the actors are. In the arpillera case, feedback from the market was passed on to the women, in the form of orders for work, and non-acceptance of work which did not conform to the specifications of these orders (see chapter 4). Class hierarchies and the intermediaries' perception of the artists, mediated the degree to which these intermediaries influenced the art works. A substantial amount of the anthropology and sociology of art literature (in particular the literature on tourist art) is about change in art forms. However, most research in the area does not deconstruct how exactly (the chain of interactions by which) the market influences art forms, or what determines the varying degrees to which intermediaries put pressure on producers to change their art forms. Clifford (1988), for example, is fascinating in his analysis of the art work as representing the fantasy of the tropical, but he does not detail the nature of the interactions between buyers, middlemen, and artists, which result in the art work containing the tropical elements its buyers wish to see. Graburn (1976) has shown that miniaturisation, simplification of form and decoration, and low unit cost, characterise art sold to tourists; this art must be cheap, portable, dustable, and understandable. He makes the interesting point that catalysts for change are foreign as well as local, but he does not show how this happens, on a micro-interactional level. Rowe and Schelling (1993) have shown that Peruvian 'retablos' have changed from religious to secular because of demand from tourists, but they do not give us insight into the interactions which cause this to happen. Future research would do well to describe and analyse the nature of the interactions which enable buyers to influence the forms art works take.

Not only the art form, but also the social organisation of art producing groups, changes as a result of the changing demands of a market (or changes in market composition). The arpillera groups ceased to meet as regularly with other groups, and ceased to be centres of grassroots education (becoming primarily units for commercial production), when the human rights activists and Chilean exiles in Europe and America began buying fewer arpilleras, and when the Vicaría began to target instead people interested in decorating their homes. Recent work in the anthropology of art has shown how the social organisation of art-producing groups has changed as a result of the changing demands of a market. Moeran (1997) for example, shows that the community which made Onta pottery in Japan ceased to engage in several forms of collective labour sharing and became more oriented towards exchanging labour for money, when the market for their pots changed from local to national and international. Future research on art worlds could focus further on the market as a creative actor in an art world, and how it influences the social organisation of art-producing groups.

The way the arpillera world changed over time contradicts some of Becker's (1982) points about how art worlds change over time. Art worlds do not necessarily evolve from local to national and international (as Becker suggests). In the Chilean case, the art forms were always intended for an international audience. Secondly, not all art worlds, at an advanced stage in their growth, need to convince the world that what they cooperate to produce, is art. Some art world actors (such as the arpillera world) never demand the status of 'art' of the art works of that world. Thirdly, not only is it true that (as Becker suggests) only changes in the art form that secure markets, survive, but it is also true that actors in the art world sometimes bring about changes so as to secure

markets for the art. The Vicaría encouraged the women to produce bucolic arpilleras so as to continue to sell arpilleras (and this change did indeed secure the relevant markets). More research one how art worlds change over time is needed.

ART AND ITS MEANINGS

Art works can hold different meanings simultaneously, for the different audiences and producers of art. Recent studies in the anthropology and sociology of art have examined the meaning of the artwork for its audiences, and how this meaning changes over time. Canclini (1988), for example, explores how art objects which have one meaning for their makers, acquire a different meaning as they travel to the boutique or the tourist art stall (he suggests that the art works are 'losing' their meaning). Zolberg (1990) points out that meaning changes under different circumstances. Bennett (1980) shows that art is only as meaningful as a group makes it. Clifford (1988) is illuminating in that he shows that over time, art objects change from grotesqueries to masterpieces. Stromberg-Pelizzi (1993) shows effectively that Mexican art is sometimes craft, and sometimes contemporary art. Although illuminating, much of this literature does not explore the concept that art works can hold different meanings simultaneously (rather than sequentially). Nor does the literature take into account the fact that some art works are made with the purpose of conveying a specific meaning for an external audience and do not, therefore, 'lose their meaning' as they enter their audience's hands. Further

studies of how and why art forms can simultaneously hold different meanings would be a useful addition to the field.

The status of the art work is a function of who the artist is. Art becomes excluded from the status of 'high art', the canon, and the world art system, more because of who its makers are, than because of what it is like. In the arpillera case, the arpilleras were never classed as high art in Chile, because they were made by women who were marginalised both economically and politically (see chapter 4). Numerous feminist sociologists of art (e.g. Parker and Pollock 1981) have found that women's art is largely absent from the canon, history books, or world art system because it is made by women, and therefore disregarded or labelled a 'minor genre'. A number of artists with origins in the Third World (e.g. Araeen 1987) have pointed out that their work gets pigeon-holed as 'ethnic art' when it enters the world art system. The arpillera case adds further evidence that adoption by the canon or mainstream areas of the high art world depends on who the artists are, more than on the art itself.

ART AS EXPRESSING, BUT ALSO IMPACTING, POWER RELATIONS

Art expresses power relations. The arpilleras express the marginalisation (both political and economic) of their makers. Johnson (1991), drawing on Bourdieu (1984) makes the point that the study of culture is inseparable from the question of power, and that social identities in any society, articulated through the culture, must also express

power relations. Mahan (1991) makes a very similar point by suggesting that cultural products express social relations; they contain universal meanings and socially and historically-specific representations of given societies at given moments. The arpilleras are a particularly clear case of art expressing power relations. My study goes further than to state that art expresses power relations; it shows how this expression comes about and evolves (see chapters 4 and 5). It shows how cultural products can express power relations without their makers being aware, entirely, of these relations, and that it is in the process of expressing that the creators begin to understand the power relations. Future research would do well to examine these processes in detail.

The art object can serve as a vehicle for the ideas of subjugated groups. Art worlds can be a space in which the subaltern speak, albeit subject to pressures of various sorts. One arpillera depicts arpilleristas at work and contains the text: 'medio de expresión popular' or 'means of expression of the working class'. Trigo (1991) has shown that canto popular in Uruguay was a way of reconstructing the collective memory, and through this, the national identity of a people in a situation of violence. Art objects can be a vehicle for marginalised voices.

Art does not merely express power relations; it (and the art world built up around it) impacts them. The arpilleras impacted the state and social structure. By playing an important role in the resistance movement in Chile, the arpillera world contributed to the downfall of the authoritarian regime, the return of democracy, and (arguably) the lessening of marginalisation of the shantytown inhabitants. Rowe and Schelling (1993) suggest that culture is not derived from class but challenges or shapes social relationships

(such as class). Neither they, nor most students of art, detail how this happens. Future research would do well to examine how exactly art worlds impact social structure and the state.

COLLECTIVE ART-MAKING AS FUELLING MOVEMENTS

Art is an important but understudied part of political movements. Art can fuel a movement in various ways. As the arpillera case suggests, art fulfils several functions for members of a social movement. It can be a source of information for movement actors about the injustices against which they fight. It can be a marker of membership in a movement, providing a sense of belonging. It can be a symbol of pain and repression, arousing emotions in movement actors. Finally, it can be a vehicle for the expression of the ethic of the movement (solidarity in the arpillera case), conveying this ethic to different and sometimes disparate actors. The mainstream sociological studies of social movements do not focus on the role of art in the fuelling and 'gluing together' of a movement. Beckwith (1996) is an exception in that she mentions (somewhat incidentally) that the women in the anti-pit closure struggle in England asserted themselves as political actors by means of symbol (a banner they had sewn) and song. The role of art in social movements is something future research could focus on in more depth.

Art works can come to signify (in the Saussurean sense) a political group, in the same way that a French flag signifies the French nation. The arpillera came to signify the struggle of the oppressed in Chile. As the market for arpilleras changed, the arpillera no

longer signified the same thing (see chapter 4). A small number of anthropologists of art have shown how art works can become the sign for a nation. Vianna (1995), for example, analyses how the samba came to be a sign signifying 'Brazil'. He suggests that it is a coincidence of circumstances (certain people meeting together) which led to the samba (as opposed to any other dance) becoming the national dance. Much work has been done on how art can symbolise a nation or national ethic; little has been done on art as signifying dissenting groups within a nation.

Art can also fuel a movement because, in the context of political repression, the making of art in groups can foster a political consciousness in the artists[2]. Collective art-making can make people realise that they are part of broader political groups. Not only, like Finnegan's (1989) musicians, did the arpilleristas grow to feel part of a group of artists like themselves (all 'arpilleristas'); they also began to feel part of a political community ('de izquierda', or 'left wing'), a class community ('los pobres', or 'the poor'), and a victimised group (persecuted by the Junta). They also realised that there were links between their activities and those of other groups. Engaging in artistic activity, therefore, creates an awareness of being part of broader communities, and this has political implications. It is not only in Chile that art groups are the sites for the growth and dissemination of political ideas. The first talk on equal rights for women by Susan B. Anthony, for example, was given in a quilting bee (Hedges, E. 1980: 17). The fact that art producing groups may be fora in which consciousness is raised, is rarely pointed out in the literature on social movements in Latin America. Most such research focuses on more obvious sites of social movement activity, such as communal kitchens, or groups set up to

improve housing conditions. Chuchryk (1989), for example, points out that grassroots organisations in Chile provided women with a focus for political organising, self-education and self-empowerment, but she does not consider art groups as one such organisation.

Art-producing groups are unlike other social movement groups or grassroots organisations, because within them people can make reflexive images. It is these reflexive images which contribute in a unique way to the development of a political consciousness. In some ways the women's joining arpillera workshops was no different from the much discussed phenomenon in the literature on Latin American social movements (e.g. Jaquette 1989) of women joining any other type of grassroots workshop or unit of a social movement organisation, in the effort to satisfy their basic needs (e.g. housing, food, etc.) or identity (e.g. Neuhouser 1995). Many social movements in Latin America attract people with the promise of better material conditions of existence, and (as in the arpillera workshops) provide them with some tangible material benefits whilst exposing them to 'talks' about the political system. Several evangelical movements, for example, offer material help (Lehmann 1996), sometimes in the form of food or finding jobs. The difference between such organisations and the arpillera groups, is that in the arpillera case the women were representing themselves so as to earn enough money to satisfy their basic needs. The making of images about repression or poverty in one's own shantytown requires that the makers observe carefully and think about events in their neighbourhoods and family lives. It also fosters discussion amongst the women about the raids, kidnappings and experiences of repression. As the women are depicting such

[2] Here I am referring to what Brett terms vernacular artists, as opposed to members of the international art

scenes they might ask one another, for example, 'how many people were killed in the raid last night?'. In this way, the women observe, analyse, and discuss experience of repression, becoming more aware of them. Future research on social movements, both within and beyond Latin America, could examine more closely what it is about representing themselves, which makes people develop a political consciousness.

Like the Latin American social movements literature, the mainstream social movements literature ignores the effect of artistic activity on political consciousness. Melucci (1989) makes the point that resistance lies in the ability to resist dominant codes, developing new languages that change or replace words used by the social order. However, he, like other scholars in the field, treats these 'new languages' as discourses, ignoring their material expression. In the very rare instances in which the social movements literature does examine artistic expression, it usually focuses on the verbal (e.g. oral narratives) rather than the visual. Fine's (1995b) work on VOCAL, a movement of people who had been accused of abusing children, is one of the few pieces of research in the social movement literature which suggests that the telling of stories about oneself can contribute to radicalisation. Future work on social movements would do well to examine the creation by actors of reflexive images, especially where these images are visual.

The point that art which is self-representing fosters radicalisation, has not been made in mainstream works in the anthropology and sociology of art literature. Even though much research on African art links art with politics, the approach taken focuses on

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system or the local high art world.

art as supporting the powers that be, as Jewsiewicki (1989) suggests. A few works in the anthropology and sociology of art show how in making art, the artists have changed in the way they think of themselves. Freeman (no date) for example, suggests that the making of quilts enhances the self-respect of quilters. Curran (1996) has shown that drummers become who they are according to the type of drumming they do. However, ethnographies of artists rarely examine how artistic activity fosters a change in terms of political leanings. Future research in the anthropology and sociology of art would do well to consider such changes.

SELF-REPRESENTATION IN ART AS HELPING PEOPLE MAKE SENSE OF THEIR LIVES

Representing oneself in art is an important way in which people make sense of their lives, both politically, and in ways other than the political.

As we saw above, in the case of arpilleras, art groups are an arena in which to work through the problem of political identity. This supports Mahan's (1991) statement that cultural forms do not just reflect identity, they also express and create it. It also extends Vila's (1991) claim that immigrant innovations in the original gaucho tango expressed not just assimilation or appropriation, but the elaboration of a new cultural identity: something creole-cum-immigrant. In a similar vein, Pollner and Stein (1996) find that people producing narratives are engaged in a meaning-making process for

themselves, and Myerhoff (1986: 261) finds that: 'One of the most persistent but elusive ways that people make sense of themselves is to show themselves to themselves, through multiple forms'. The point that in making art people make sense of their lives, has been made before. However, rarely do the scholars who make these claims examine in detail what exactly it is about telling narratives (or making art) that can lead to a process of understanding one's world, as I have in chapters 6 and 7. Szombati-Fabian and Fabian (1976:3) are exceptions. They study in detail the popular art of the Shaba region of Zaire and make the point that it 'articulates and, in a sense, constitutes that reality [of urban experience]'; it suggests that the oppression of the period of Belgian colonisation exists today, in that bureaucratic structures make 'the little man' powerless. Whilst their analysis is illuminating, they focus more on the elements in the paintings, than on the interactions which produced them.

The arpilleras express and create not just one identity, but several: that of arpillerista, victim of the regime, left wing sympathiser, and member of the poor. Most research on artists stresses that the artists develop an identity as artist. Bennett (1980), for example, suggests that the playing of music confers upon the rock musician the identity of rock musician. The arpillera case shows that art-making can confer not one, but several identities. Future research would do well to test this finding in other art-making groups.

Art groups are also a way people bond together. Like the musical groups of Milton Keynes (Finnegan 1989), the arpillera groups were a way people came together. In them, people met regularly, worked in the same way, shared many of the same feelings, and took on many of the same behaviours. The arpillera groups, therefore, were

creators of community. The anthropology of art literature does not usually examine how art groups are a way people bond together (as they do in kinship networks or neighbourhoods). Finnegan (1989) is a notable exception with her notion of musical groups as sources of community and meaning in people's lives. Ergood (1991) observed carnival *blocos* (workshops) in Brazil and found that the activity of keeping a *bloco* functioning served to structure and re-create community relationships. Future research would do well to examine who people bond together, in the making of art.

WORKING CLASS WOMEN'S RADICALISATION

Working class women often join workshops which are part of a social movement, and in which they earn an income, so as to protect their families. The arpilleristas' main motive for joining the arpillera groups was so as to feed their hungry children. This is not a new finding; much of the social movement literature points out that working class women frame their protests in the traditions of motherhood and family. The working class women's toxic waste protests studied by Krauss (1993), for example, defined their protests as the work mothers do to protect their families. The women here used ideologies of motherhood to initiate and justify their resistance. Neuhouser (1995), likewise, found that women were mobilised by 'family welfare' issues. My work provides additional evidence for the theory that working class women use motherhood as a rationale for joining social movements.

When people join groups which have been organised by activists, they do not automatically become politically aware and active themselves. A number of interactions, situations, and activities within the groups cause the new recruits to become social movement actors. In the Chilean case, coming out of the home and talking with other women in the same plight, hearing talks by left wing activists, making reflexive images, attracting and reading informal publications, and using the workshop as a model for democracy, are the features of the arpillera groups which led the women to develop an awareness of political and gender repression. Research on the social movements of working class women outside Latin America has also shown that the women became politically aware only once they had already been involved in the social movement organisation for some time. Krauss (1993), for example, found that working class women protesting against toxic waste in America, discovered the injustice of their government and the constraints of the patriarchal family, in the course of protesting. Most research on social movements, both inside and outside Latin America (with the exception of Riano (1994) and Chuchryk (1989)), does not analyse what exactly goes on in a group (at a micro level) to make people politically aware and active, as Snow, Rochford, Worden, and Benford point out (1997: 239). Whilst Angelo (1987), for example, points out that women gain a sense of what democracy is, and come to realise that they are acting politically, she does not say how this happens in the workshops. Future studies would do well to analyse what occurs inside workshops or SMOs to turn people into activists.

When working class women begin to participate in the activities of groups organised by activists, they often do not at first see what they are doing as political, identifying politics as 'what men do'. The arpilleristas only gradually came to realise that

what they were engaging in was in fact political activity (see chapter 6)[3]. Many of the studies of Latin American women's social movements make this point. Pires de Rio Caldeira (1990) for example, shows how Brazilian working class women defined politics as a male activity, whilst their activities were for the family and therefore not 'political'. Fisher (1993) shows that initially the women in Chile saw politics as something men (and not women) did. Chuchryk (1989) and Valdes (1988) show that women had to redefine politics to include their own activities. The arpillera case provides additional evidence that working class women in Latin America do not immediately identify their political activity as political.

Participation in art groups can make people aware of their rights and motivate them to be active in fighting against the oppression they face, in the context of two social movements simultaneously. In the arpillera case, not only did women join in the resistance movement against Pinochet; they were also attracted to the women's movement. They became aware of 'women's rights' and resisted being a 'slave' in the household, after they joined the arpillera groups. Some research within the literature on women's social movements in Latin America shows that participation in grassroots organisations can bring about a rebelliousness against *machismo* (e.g. Fisher 1993, Schild 1994, Chuchryk 1989)[4]. Whilst these scholars have pointed out that women question their roles in the private sphere once they join resistance movements, my work takes this further by detailing the nature of the interactions which led them to do so (chapter 7).

[3] Walker (1986) makes the useful distinction between consciousness in action (acting politically) and consciousness in discourse (being aware that what one is doing is political).

Whilst participating in art groups can be empowering, a consciousness, once raised, cannot be relied on to continue alone. I show, unlike most students of Latin American social movements, why it is that social movement members can lose interest in being activists over a period of years (chapter 6 and 7). My study of shantytown women several years after they became interested in politics revealed that many of them (but not all) returned to a relatively 'homebound' lifestyle and ceased to participate in protests. Future research would do well to examine in more depth how and why activists evolve over time.

CHANGE IN ART WORLDS AS AFFECTING LEVELS OF ACTIVISM

Art worlds affect social movements, and vice versa. The change in art worlds affects the changes in political consciousness of the artists. The making of reflexive art work is different from the oral telling of narratives about oneself such as that described by Fine (1995), because the art works are made in an art world (with a network of people co-operating to gather raw materials, produce, distribute, and consume them) whereas oral narratives are not. Because change in one aspect of the art world affects the art works, it also affects the political consciousness and activism of the artists/social movement actors. In this way, changes in the art world impact the consciousness of artists. In the arpillera case, changes in the art world affected the women's thinking. The women were initially making arpilleras for a left wing, audience which was sympathetic to art. Because this audience approved of their work, the women continued to produce it.

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[4] However, my work supports the findings of Schild (1994), that not all women freed themselves from their

This meant that they continued to meet in workshops, to talk about political events, and to observe and analyse political events closely. When the market for their arpilleras changed the women began to produce more bucolic arpilleras. This meant that they were no longer having to observe and analyse shantytown raids and other scenes of oppression as closely. Nor were they likely to be talking about them as much as when they were all sewing these scenes together around the table. Consequently, they became less interested in activism. Whilst other aspects of their workshops changed (e.g. there were fewer courses taught by the Vicaría and NGOs) as detailed in chapters 6 and 7, the fact that the women were making bucolic rather than political arpilleras, played an important part in lessening their activism. Audience (and intermediary's) reactions, therefore, shape the nature of people's activism. The artists need a sympathetic audience who will buy their art; one whose political sympathies are aligned with theirs. A change in an art world which contains social movement actors, therefore, causes a change in the artists/social movement actors' interest and levels of activism. Future research would do well to focus on the interaction between changes in art worlds and levels of activism.

METHODOLOGY

Finally, the thesis contributes to the literature on fieldwork methodology. It challenges the widely-held notion that it is wise to reciprocate with subjects, and builds on R.F. Ellen (1984), Walcott (1995) and others by showing how reciprocity can cause

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husbands' control.

problems for the subjects and the research. Differences in power between the researcher and the researched, in knowledge, and in culture, cause these problems, as does the researcher's ever-changing membership status.

My work, therefore, knits together several literatures and areas of focus. Using a grounded theory approach, it integrates an analysis of the change in the art forms with the change in the market, the change in wider political landscapes, and the change in the political consciousness and behaviour of the artists.

Appendix 1

THE ARPILLERA LITERATURE

The arpillera has been very little studied. Marjorie Agosin has written more on the arpillera than has any other academic. In two books (1988 and 1996) she gives a lyrical and well-illustrated account of the 'rise and fall' of the Agrupación group, together with the economic and political circumstances. Her articles (e.g. 1985, 1986, and 1993) contain the same ideas as her books, in condensed form. She emphasises the radicalisation of the women and their use of the arpillera as a means of political struggle and resistance, as well as their use of motherhood as a weapon against the dictatorship. She also describes the origins of the arpillera as well as the arpilleras themselves, including superb illustrations in her latest book (1996). She focuses on the arpilleras of the Agrupación, rather than of the shantytown women, and talks exclusively about the arpilleras of the Seventies and Eighties).

Although she does describe the goings-on in the Agrupación workshop, Agosin does not analyse the organisation of arpillera production, or the distribution network, in any depth. She plays down the economic function of arpillera-making and concentrates rather on the denunciatory and therapeutic roles of this activity, stating that the arpilleristas are heroic messengers of truth. Her accounts are as denunciatory in tone rather than impartial.

Guy Brett has produced a number of articles on the arpilleras (e.g. 1977, 1978a, 1978b, and 1986); they saying the same things in slightly different form. He has also written introductions to exhibitions and other non-academic pieces. He connects the arpillera with the broad wave of cultural activity which existed in the ten years before the Coup (the New Song Movement, street theatre, mural-painting, popular educational books and magazines, new-style comics, and the revitalisation of handicrafts), seeing in all these forms of expression a movement of masses of people against the conditions of 'underdevelopment' (1977: 8). He views the arpilleras as part of this cultural movement, which has adapted and survived in a new form under Pinochet; the arpilleras, for Brett, carry indications of a popular, democratic art and attitude to life. He links the content of the arpilleras to the context of repression and poverty, emphasising the women's need to express their bitter experiences, but also the denunciatory and economic aspects of the work. He analyses some arpilleras thematically, pointing out the symbols, and suggesting that the apparent innocence contains coded messages. He draws out two styles: the religious explanation for circumstances in Chile, and the 'militant' (overtly denunciatory) style.

Kunzle in his article (1979) 'The Chilean Mural: Art of a Democratic "Revolution." The Chilean Arpillera: Art of Protest and Resistance' (rewritten in Spanish in 1982) emphasises that art both reflects and shapes political processes. He draws parallels between the mural, poster and comic book of the Allende regime (arenas for socialist ideas, and manifestations of a 'rich, original and manifold truly Chilean culture' in opposition to the US-influenced culture of the Frei[1] years), and the arpilleras. He views

[1] Frei was the president who preceded Allende.

the arpilleras as 'messengers of hope passed within Chile, to Chileans in exile, and to that international support community...'; they form the link between the resistance inside Chile and the solidarity outside. He insists that the arpilleras are, most importantly, a new form of political activity. They are chronicles of day-to-day reality and the will to survive, and a 'collective female diary' turned into a political weapon. Their political function is to inform and arouse buyers, acting as a fundraiser and political consciousness. Kunzle outlines the motivations for making arpilleras, some aspects of workshop activities (e.g. supply, etc., group discussions in the workshop, etc.), and the Vicaría's organisation of international distribution and selling. Finally, he analyses a number of arpilleras, suggesting that only a minority are very militant in accusing the Junta, and that most arpilleras depict poverty. He also describes briefly the origins of the arpillera (suggesting that the technique was used to decorate handbags and baskets) and the transformation of the arpillera into political currency.

Moya-Raggio, a Chilean academic writing in the US, has written articles about the arpilleristas. She views the arpilleras as part of a popular culture movement marked by the will to survive, fed by the struggle against the dictatorship, and born from the need to solve problems of daily subsistence. She includes in this movement testimonial literature, the mural, and testimonial songs of the late sixties and early seventies. She states that the movement emphasises and expresses 'the collective nature of artistic expression and the need to bear witness to the social and human context from which that creation springs' (1984: 277). The arpilleras, she points out, incorporate women as agents in the struggle, making them 'agents of change' and 'narrator[s] of the people's struggle' (1984: 278). The arpilleras are a cultural expression of the Chilean resistance, and yet

part of a handicraft tradition. Moya-Raggio briefly outlines the organisation of the workshops. Finally, she emphasises the collective nature of the work, and the women's coming to understand themselves (the arpilleras, she states, are a collective form of self-realisation.)

Rowe and Schelling (1993) devote a few pages of their monograph on Latin American popular art, to the arpilleras. Drawing their knowledge mainly from Agosin and Brett, they state (1993: 186): 'A particularly striking example of popular culture as resistance, expressed not only in the language of opposition but in an attempt to transform personal experiences of loss, separation and destitution into testimonies of political events, are the *arpilleras...*'. Rowe and Schelling link arpillera-making with other forms of protest by the women of the Agrupación (e.g. chainings to fences), pointing out that both forms use personal metaphors to counter the aggression of the state (187). The arpilleristas, they state (188), contributed to the development of a new concept of democracy and politics, and the arpilleras were a 'resistance against dehumanization' (186). Rowe and Schelling also usefully point out (taking Agosin's lead) that it is in their marginal position as women (within a society with a dominant male culture) that the arpilleristas articulated the hidden truth of the regime. The women, they state, used the marginalised language of the personal, and of grief (in a society that prizes the 'masculine qualities' of mastery and control). The seemingly 'feminine' and innocuous arpilleras bore witness to daily events, overcoming the censorship of expressions of dissent. Finally, Rowe and Schelling liken the arpilleristas to storytellers of oral poetry, who express their faith that other forms of human existence are possible.

Moreno Aliste (1984) examines the five major institutions which deal in urban 'handicrafts' (including arpilleras) in Santiago in 1984: the Fundación Missio, FASIC, the Vicaría, the Association of Artisans 'Lautaro' (a foundation which makes handicrafts but not arpilleras), and CEMA Chile. She describes their origins, policies, and the objects they produce. Her methods include participant observation and interviews. She gives a good description of the workshops: members, workshop organisation, training, the arpilleras themselves, and the process of arpillera-making. Her data are presented in raw form, and she does not examine the international distribution of the arpilleras, or the change in the women over time. In her short book she also examines prison art (including arpilleras), and markets in which urban crafts are sold. She suggests that art was a response to a situation of urgency and deprivation, helping people continue to live in a crisis situation. She also states that handicraft production was used by the regime to manipulate or enlist partisans, and identify individuals who are indifferent to the regime. Her main point is that with the new free-market policies of the regime (as well as an increasingly consumption-oriented culture), handicraft production had become commercialised, so that artisans were no longer expressing themselves as freely as they used to. She laments that handicrafts are now made mainly for sale to tourists, such that artisans have become mere producers of curiosities.

LaDuke (1985) dedicated a chapter of her book about women's folk art, to the arpilleras, briefly describing their origins, themes, destination, the arpillera-making process, and workshop organisation. She outlines the political and economic circumstances that inspired the women of the Agrupación to make arpilleras, as well as the artistic roots of the arpillera (which she identifies as the arpilleras of Isla Negra).

Several authors mention the arpilleras incidentally, within monographs or articles that focus on other subjects. Angelo (1987), for example, writes about shantytown women leaders. Her monograph (Pero ellas son imprescindibles) consists mainly of long extracts from interviews with *poblacíon* leaders, many of whom are arpilleristas. Within these quotations a number of women mention the fact that they make arpilleras. Valdes (1988) in Venid, Bendidas de mi Padre, describes the lives of *pobladoras*. The arpilleras come up only incidentally, in quotations of *pobladoras'* accounts of their lives. A small number of these *pobladoras* mention that they make arpilleras. Sepúlveda (1996) has published the testimonies of the women of the Agrupación, making very brief mention of the arpillera. Boyle (1993) mentions arpilleras in her discussion of the role of women in the resistance movement against Pinochet. She views the arpillera as a store for memory, and a means by which private experiences were elaborated for public consumption.

There are numerous unpublished academic works on the arpillera. Voionmaa Tanner (1987) wrote an MA Thesis for the Department of Aesthetics at the Catholic University of Chile. Her analysis is based on a group of shantytown women from the North of Santiago, and their arpilleras (sold to the Vicaría and Fundación Missio). She analyses the distribution of elements on the surface of the arpilleras, and the change over time from more 'expressive' arpilleras in the Seventies, to more standardised arpilleras in the Eighties. She points out that the arpillera questions the boundaries of the categories 'art' and 'handicraft'. She describes workshop and *coordinadora* organisation in considerable depth. Finally, she mentions briefly that women 'grow' as a result of being in the workshops. There are a handful of other theses, mostly about the Agrupación.

Adrienne Pilon (1997) in her MA thesis 'Chile: The Art of Mourning' examines testimonial art of different kinds (one of which is the arpillera) from the point of view of how it affects the mourning process. Her thesis about the arpillera is: 'Designed to record and accuse, the *arpilleras*, along with the *arpilleristas* themselves, function to keep the wound that is Chile open, to prolong memory, and with it, desire. Struggle and desire are the focus of the *arpilleristas*: desire for lost loved ones, desire for knowledge, desire for reparation and recognition. It is, above all, a desire that risks never being satisfied' (27). Peg Snook's MA thesis on the *cueca sola* of the Agrupación (A song, a dance, a needle and thread. (En)gendering resistance in Chile) treats the arpillera as resistance through folklore, but also therapy, and a 'counter-hegemonic **people's** version of their own history' (1992: 41). Another MA thesis, Vivien Linder and Jimena Soto's (1981) Les ateliers de fabrication d'arpilleras au Chili, consists essentially of a detailed description of the early Fundación Missio workshops in the North of Santiago.

Much of what has been written on the arpillera is not academic in style. Articles of this sort appeared in mainstream newspapers in Europe and North America, magazines of left-wing groups in Chile (e.g. the article 'Arte Poblacional: cuestión de coraje' in the Chilean magazine 'La Bicicleta, revista chilena de la actividad artística', and a couple of articles in the Vicaría's magazine, 'Solidaridad'), in the newsletters or documents of human rights' groups in Europe and North America, and in European and American exhibition catalogues. Although the writers of such articles are not, for the most part, social scientists, they do place the arpillera in its economic and political context, and describe a number. None of these writers write about the arpilleras of the Nineties, and most write more about the arpilleras of the Agrupación rather than those of

the other groups. Articles have also appeared in special interest journals, typically drawing heavily on Brett and Agosin. Examples include 'Appliqué of Protest' by Marie Staunten, and 'Scraps of Life- Arpilleras from Chile' by Clare Rose, both in 'Quilters' Review' (winter 1989). Some of the authors of such articles are human rights activists, others are academics (e.g. Agosin's (1994) 'Patchwork of Memory' in the NACLA Report on the Americas'). Two European human rights activists, Jacques and Camus (1977) produced a very well illustrated book about the arpilleras: Chili. Un peuple brode sa vie et ses luttes. It consists mainly of photographs of the arpilleras, with one-line or one-paragraph captions explaining the arpilleras, and quoting the arpilleristas' explanations about why they make arpilleras. Some of these captions are statistics about poverty, and malnutrition. The authors' aim is that the readers 'discover a bit about the Chilean reality through the arpilleras'.

The arpilleristas have written about themselves. The Taller de Arpilleras (arpillera workshop) of the Agrupación produced a booklet entitled Arpilleras. Otra forma de denuncia, telling the story of the disappearances and search, through the medium of arpilleras. Morales and Silva de Muller, two arpilleristas of the Agrupación, together with Torres who helped organise their workshop, wrote and article entitled 'Las Arpilleras. Recurso de Amparo ante la Comunidad', which appeared in Revista CONFLICTO, Vida y Derecho. It tells the story of the disappearances, struggles of the Agrupación, and arpilleras, viewing the arpilleras as amparo proceedings which were created because the legal system was not functioning normally. The arpilleristas of the East of Santiago together with the Taller de Acción Cultural (an NGO which exported their work)

produced a booklet in 1986 about their arpillera groups and arpilleras (La organización fue como nacer de nuevo).

Finally, the arpillera or arpilleristas' lives have been the subject of plays and stories. Dorros (1991) wrote a children's storybook containing excellent illustrations of Peruvian arpilleras (Dorros 1991). Benavente (1989) wrote, together with drama students of the Catholic University, a play about the arpilleristas (Tres Marías y una Rosa). The students participant observed the arpilleristas of the East of Santiago, so as to write this play.

Appendix 2

THE RESEARCHER'S INFLUENCE ON THE RESEARCH AND THE INFLUENCE OF THE RESEARCH ON THE RESEARCHER

The theoretical and substantive concerns I have focused on both during data collection and analysis are not so much the product of the data 'speaking' to me, but rather of who I am, influencing the data and analysis. As Scholte (1974: 438) points out: 'Fieldwork and subsequent analysis constitute a unified praxis... the ethnographic situation is defined not only by the native society in question, but also by the ethnological tradition 'in the head' of the ethnographer.' Just as the data are influenced by the researcher, so is the researcher influenced by the research. My relations with others in the field and my own behaviour and sense of well being were affected by what I studied. The first part of this appendix illustrates how my personality and background influenced the data. The second examines my relationships with people in the field. The third examines how I myself was affected by the research. The personal is such an important actor in the research that 'In the study of a human being by another human being (and what better medium is there?), the specificity and individuality of the observer are ever present and must therefore be acknowledged, explored and put to creative use' (Okely 1975: 172).

THE RESEARCHER AFFECTING THE RESEARCH

My view of the arpillera as an art form bringing about changes in its makers, itself changing in adaptation to different markets and serving as a thread binding together and creating a community of citizens, is a product of who I am rather than an objective truth about the arpillera itself. My personality, gender, circumstances, background and culture influenced the amount, quality and focus of the data I was able to gather. An ethnographer can never be a neutral observer recording scientific data in a machine-like fashion, as suggested in much classic ethnography. On the contrary, 'All ethnographers are positioned subjects and grasp certain phenomena better than others... The position is defined by age, gender and outsider's status, but is also refers to the ethnographer's lived experience which enables or inhibits particular kinds of insight' (Hastrup 1992: 119). The data they gather, therefore, is a function of this position: 'all facts are necessarily selected and interpreted from the moment we decide to count one thing and ignore another, or attend this ritual but not another, so that anthropological understanding is necessarily partial and is always hermeneutic' (Scheper-Hughes 1992: 23). More recent research (e.g. Clifford and Marcus 1986) has focused more closely on the ethnographer as far from machine-like, but rather a subjective and imperfect data gatherer. There are many aspects of such subjectivity which influenced my research.

The relationship the researcher has with the group studied (and in particular with the leader of the group) and the degree to which she has a thick skin can drastically affect the data she gathers. The first Vicaría group to which I gained access was the Villa Sur group from the South of Santiago. Mari, the leader of this group was the head of the

coordinadora of which the Sta. Adriana group was also a member. I joined the Sta. Adriana group after a few weeks with the Villa Sur group. A number of interactions, particularly with Mari, made me I feel unwanted in the group; I sensed very strongly a certain hostility from her and one other member, although not from the others. Twice I took the long underground and bus ride there and no one came to the meeting. After that I resolved to phone Mari before going. Two or three times she told me they were not meeting. I began to feel very uncomfortable about being there and began to dread the Monday afternoon meetings and finally resolved to leave the group. In taking this decision I was depriving myself of the opportunity to gather data about an extra group connected with the Vicaría. Had I been more thick-skinned I would probably have persevered with the group and have used this data. Personality affected the nature of the researcher's data.

The researcher's status as local or foreign will affect the data she collects. My being from Europe stood me in good stead as far as access to sites and interviews was concerned. My foreign-ness was visible because of my light hair, pale skin and accent. European foreigners are, in many ways, well treated and looked up to in Chile, for several reasons. Fundamentally, the respect of the Chilean for the European is a function of colonialism and Western hegemony[2]. On a personal level, there are several reasons for pleasant treatment of European researchers: a sense of hospitality; curiosity; feeling flattered that someone all the way from Europe is interested in hearing what they have to say; wanting to have the word spread far afield (this was the case with the women of the Agrupación, who wanted their story told) and the hope that the foreigner will help them

[2] African, Asian and Arab foreigners are not as well treated or looked up to.

export their products (as the Macul group told me a number of times). I am sure my interview with Pinochet's wife would not have been granted to a run-of-the-mill Chilean university student. My foreign-ness is also likely to have contributed to my gaining access to arpillera groups who were tired of being interviewed and resented people researching them. They would have said no to a local but were resentful but willing with a foreigner.

Whereas initially, some of my subjects referred to me affectionately as '*la gringa*' or '*la gringuita*', such references to my foreign-ness disappeared as time went on. Catalina, the leader of the Macul group, called me a *gringa* at the beginning, but at the end of my stay, when the word *gringa* slipped out, she was embarrassed. I had become a fully fleshed out person, and no longer a *gringa*. My foreign-ness affected my relationship with the researched, becoming less important as time wore on (a fact which is symptomatic of the ever-changing relationship between researched and researcher).

The researcher's social class influences who will talk to her and how they will behave[3]. Chileans immediately try and identify one's social class, sometimes asking you where you live, where you go for your summer holidays and what your last name is (in some case they ask about both last names[4]). Shantytown women do not react positively to high-class Chileans coming to study or train them. The manager of the Vicaría team in Eastern Santiago told me that the Peñalolén group rejected training by a young woman from Las Condes (a wealthy neighbourhood) who came to them in a car. (Shantytown

[3] This is especially true in very class-conscious societies such as Chile.
[4] In Chile the second last name is the mother's maiden name. It is widely used.

inhabitants rarely own cars which are a marker of wealth). Subsequently I met the very pleasant trainer who confirmed what I had been told.

Partly to avoid class becoming a barrier in my case, I did not tell the women my mother was Chilean (I was afraid the women would reject me as they had the young trainer if they knew my mother's last names and the neighbourhoods her family lived in). My mother's nationality slipped out with one group, however, when they wanted to know my second last name to write on a Christmas card envelope. They were surprised and immediately wanted to know where she was from and when she had left Chile (this was a marker of political-leaning as people who left in the Pinochet years were often left wing).

I also tried to hide the fact that I lived in Las Condes when, towards the end of my stay I moved to a room there because it was the only room on the market with central heating. However, when I told the women my telephone number was going to be different I could not avoid answering their questions on the subject. I felt embarrassed about living there and even more so when they asked me how much I was paying, because I was paying more than they could ever afford. Although I felt guilty about these hiding of truths, I reasoned that they were necessary to preserve the rapport and 'membership' in the group.

I adopted numerous other strategies for lessening the perceived economic gulf between the groups and myself. One was to dress down. (The dangerous nature of the some of the neighbourhoods where the women lived and met also prompted this). I wore a tracksuit or jeans and a T-shirt or several old sweaters and avoided jewellery. (Since

returning to the US, however, I have realised that most of the women dressed up to come to group meetings and that my dressing down might have offended them.) Another strategy was to avoid telling the groups that I escaped to Peru on holiday towards the end of my stay, telling them instead that I was going to see an aunt who had a house in the countryside outside Santiago. I suspect that all my strategies were to no avail because the mere fact of having enough money to take a plane and leave the country by the end of my stay was a marker of privilege. Moreover, in one case our differences in socio-economic status had very pleasant consequences. The Sta. Adriana group had, from the start, called me 'Señorita Jacqueline' (and I called them by their first name except for Ada). By the time I noticed the 'Señorita' and what it implied and asked them just to call me 'Jacqueline', it had become a habit for them. This became a joke between us; whenever they called me 'Señorita Jacqueline' I replied 'Señora', much to their amusement.

Class influences the research not only by creating distance between researcher and researched, but by drawing from informants certain topics of information. Ada, knowing that I was not one of 'los pobres' or 'the poor', took it upon herself during several workshop sessions to teach me about the poor. Had I been a *pobladora* myself, such information would probably have been less forthcoming. Her behaviour is further evidence towards Olson and Shopes' (1991: 197) observation that working-class people see their role in the interview as instructing about class differences, and that the interview relationship is triangular, consisting of the interviewee, researcher and wider society.

One's political leanings also determine the data to which one has access, particularly amongst such politically aware groups as those I studied. If they had thought

I was right wing they would probably not have let me study them. My foreign-ness brought with it a measure of political neutrality. With the Song Group and the Sta. Adriana group I did make it clear that I was against Pinochet and very aware of the human rights violations and other problems of the Pinochet regime. With the other, more politically diverse groups, however, I expressed no political opinion. Conversely, when I interviewed one of the leaders of the March of the Empty Pots movement (an upper class, right-wing woman) I mentioned my family connections. Perhaps because of this and because we were distantly related she was very forthcoming, open in her political views and kind. As well as emphasising my foreign-ness, I hesitated to tell my groups[5] that I had an interview with Pinochet's wife because I felt that they might take this as a betrayal or suspect me of being of the other camp. However, to my surprise they did not respond in this way. Ada of the Sta. Adriana group told her family and reported back that they 'all admired the way I looked for both sides of the story'. Most of the women were amused and very interested in how the interview went. (This might, however, be explained by the fact that my interview with Mrs. Pinochet came at the end of my stay, by which time they knew and trusted me.)

The culture the researcher comes from affects what she notices, because depending on where she is from, certain behaviours will be similar to those of the group observed whereas others will be radically different; she is more likely to pick up those which are radically different. For example, coming from North Western Europe, I was very struck by the fact that the women who were grandmothers felt an obligation to act as full-time nanny for their grandchildren, to the extent of sacrificing what they wanted to

[5] In the end I told all but the Agrupación.

do. One woman in the Peñiwén group, for example, was about to separate from her husband and take up a full-time job when her daughter became pregnant. She decided that she owed it to her daughter to look after the child and gave up her desire to separate, joining Prisma instead, as it was a partial commitment. I was also struck by the fact that several women in different groups hurried home before the end of the workshops or right afterwards to *'atender al marido'* or 'see to my husband'. Had I been Mexican or even Spanish, these behaviours might have seemed so normal that I would not have taken note of them. A researcher is likely to be particularly aware of behaviours which are new to her.

One of the disadvantages of being foreign is that the researcher does not fully understand the interactions taking place or know the way things are done (what is normal and what is not). My mother is Chilean, I had had a relationship with a Chilean for two years before beginning my research, and had lived there for a year (1991-1992), but there were still behaviours I did not understand. For example, I had to learn that Chileans do not like to say 'no' and will say 'later', rather than refuse an interview. There are many other indirect ways of communicating which my subjects used and which I learned to interpret. Not sharing the same points of reference or 'common knowledge' also meant that people or places were referred to in conversation and all but myself understood the references. Asking questions about such matters, on the other hand, might have helped rapport in that it took me off the pedestal on which the women might have placed me because of my education. It identified me as ignorant and needing help, perhaps leading the women to feel more comfortable around me.

The researcher's social skills and ability to establish rapport also affect the quality and amount of data and can be crucial to the success of the project. Where I did not have good rapport people did not volunteer much information or names of others to interview. Fortunately, however, I did manage to build up very good rapport in most cases and in such situations I found people very forthcoming with information. This willingness, like many other instances of co-operation, appeared to be offered not so much because the person had a favourable impression of my project but rather because they liked me. Whyte (1981) experience the same attitude when he explained his research to his informants in Cornerville. Because of my cultural background this logic was infuriating to me initially and seemed very subjective and arbitrary, even though it usually worked in my favour. Personality, therefore, was crucial.

One's gender also affects access to data. I found that men were especially gracious when it came to granting interviews, giving information and being charming during the interview. This was not, however, the case in Europe where I did not notice any significant difference between men and women. Being a woman also exposed me to conversations to which I would not have been exposed had I been a man, during observation sessions. Much of the joking, problem sharing and advice that was exchanged about husbands and men probably would not have taken place had I been a man. I also sensed from occasional comments of the Macul and Sta. Adriana groups that one of the reasons for their co-operation was that they were impressed by my goal of becoming a professor and wanted me to succeed in this.

The researcher's marital and motherhood- grandmotherhood status also affects what she picks up. I felt at a disadvantage not being a mother because I could not join in the conversations about children and how one should treat them. I did not fully understand the difficulty the women had with leaving home to join the group. Similarly, I did not understand Ada's reticence to join the management course because her daughter would be upset about it. Not being a mother also robbed me of a resource which would have been useful for establishing rapport with individuals in the group, creating as it does a common ground for conversation. Sometimes with the women in Las Místicas on a one-on-one basis, I was at loss as to what to say and they also did not always seem to know what to talk about. We were both aware that we came from very different worlds but shared motherhood would have been a bond. However, there were individuals with whom there was an easy and jokey rapport despite the differences.

The age of the researcher relative to the subjects affects rapport in the same way as does motherhood. Because most of the women I studied were over fifty, I felt there was a gulf between us, both in terms of our life experiences and our values. Juana of the Sta. Adriana group often discussed death and buying a tombstone, concerns which I did not share. On the other hand, the age difference caused many of the women to develop motherly feelings towards me, worrying when I arrived soaking wet and showing concern about my living situation. In these cases, the age gap made me less intimidating and facilitated rapport. As Hastrup (1992: 120) points out: 'the objectification of the ethnographer, or the particular position she is allotted in the local plot-space, is of primary significance for her coming to terms with life. She is not only a labelled (I) ethnographer but also a named (I) person to the people involved'.

The researcher's personal interests influence the data she gathers and, later, what she chooses to focus on in writing. Had I been a quilter or sewer I would have been very interested in the technical aspects of arpillera-making and embroidery. These topics did not interest me very much, however, and consequently I have very little mention of them in my fieldnotes. I am, however, interested in how 'gender roles' are worked out in the home and in how women and men grow aware of and react to 'gender inequality'. This is what prompted me to ask questions and pay closer attention to how the women learned to stand up for themselves, and gained self-confidence through the arpillera groups. (Gender might have played a part; as Nader (1986: 114) notes, women and men may take up different topics). My personal interest and affection for the Santa Adriana group and its history led me to focus on the experience of the Vicaría and its groups (of which the Santa Adriana group was a part) rather than Prisma de los Andes, for example.

The researcher's linguistic skills obviously affect the amount and quality of data she can gather. Had I not spoken French I would not have been able to interview the buyers in Switzerland and France. Had my Spanish been shaky, I would have missed many of the nuances during participant observation sessions and interviews. It would have been particularly difficult to pick up meaning in group conversations where people speak faster, interrupt each other and speak over each other. Knowledge of languages also enabled me to access written data and the literature in Spanish, Portuguese, Italian and French.

The character of each group may also affect the quality of the data gathered. With each of the groups I felt different. The Song Group had been studied before, both by my friend Peg of whom its members were very fond, and by numerous other academics as well as journalists who had interviewed them. The women were relatively comfortable with me from the start and expected to be asked for interviews. Moreover, most of them were willing to tell their story because they wanted it to be known all over the world. In this case, the group's familiarity with researchers afforded me the opportunity to collect data easily and broadly. Studying a much-studied group may, however, restrict the amount of data the researcher is able to collect, as the members will be frugal with their information. Such a group might be cynical and want to know what they can get out of it. The Peñalolén group, for example, was not at all welcoming, seeing me as just another researcher who was going to benefit at their expense. Several of the women did not grant me individual interviews.

The groups' acceptance or resistance of the researcher in particular, affects the data. With the Peñiwén group I always felt slight discomfort (this was the group which was most rebellious and made me feel least welcome). I felt uncomfortable about asking these women for interviews and less relaxed with them in participant observation; both factors which might have impeded my concentration. With the Sta. Adriana group, on the other hand, I felt extremely comfortable; so comfortable, indeed that I tended to relax and behave as a regular group member, talking a lot, observing less and not always concentrating hard on what was being said.

All the above aspects of the researcher's subjectivity, lead to certain data to be obtained rather than others, and result in the construction of one text rather than another. As Clifford (1988: 25), Geertz (1988: 143), Aldridge (1993), Brewer (1994: 231), and numerous others have pointed out, the text does not emerge from the data, but is a construct of the anthropologist's making. The production of an ethnography is always partial. Quotations from subjects' speech only give the illusion of polyvocality; in reality the ones selected and place at which they are inserted serve to support a narrative which is of the ethnographer's own making. As Hastrup (1992) points out, regardless of the number of quotations, they do not penetrate the ethnographer's discursive speech. Furthermore, as (Callaway (1992: 44) notes, 'Whose voices are included in the text, how they are given weight and interpreted, questions of priority and juxtaposition are clearly anthropological and political concerns. They are, at the same time, textual strategies'.

Personality, age, nationality, culture, gender, motherhood status, educational status, social class, political leanings, social skills, linguistic knowledge, and personal interests all affect the interactions of the researcher, and thereby the data she gathers and the text she produces. As the articles in Golde's 1970 collection (1986) point out, differences among women- age, race, marriage status, and motherhood status- are critical in the research process. The result of these aspects of a researcher's subjectivity is that the research is the record of not raw data but entirely mediated data, a dialogue between subjectivities. As Hastrup (1992, 117) suggests, 'it is not the unmediated world of the 'others', but the world between ourselves and the others... Our results are deeply marked by this betweenness and there is no way, epistemologically, to overcome its implications'.

MY RELATIONSHIP WITH THE RESEARCHED AND OTHER NATIVES

The research influenced my relationship with my family and with the women in the groups.

The Other Natives and I

In many cases, the locals see the researcher in terms of what she is studying, and their perception will alter the way they relate to her. The nature of my study had an impact on my relationship with my closest friend as well as on strangers I met. When I arrived in Chile I lived for the first few weeks with a friend from three years previously, sharing the rent. She was a charming, lively and intelligent business woman. Like many wealthier Chileans, she never set foot in the poorer areas of town, had class prejudices and took an interest in people's family of origin. Sadly, as she was unfamiliar with the demands of ethnography, she was not at all understanding of my need to stay at home five evenings a week to write fieldnotes and work on my research in other ways. She also thought me very strange indeed when I left at 7 am one cold and rainy Sunday morning for a homage to the disappeared at Santiago's oldest cemetery on the other side of the city. Her attitude was incomprehension and slight disapproval, and our friendship deteriorated rapidly.

A branch of my family was also uncomprehending. As they are excessively pro-Pinochet and know me very little, (having met me for the first time when I was twenty-one and seen me once since) I was afraid that if I told them what my topic of research was they might not want to have anything to do with me. Chile is a very politically and economically divided society in which the right-wing and wealthy usually want nothing to do with the left-wing and less wealthy unless it is in an employment relationship. As my subjects were left-wing shantytown inhabitants and enemies of Pinochet, I told my right- wing relatives I was studying popular art in Chile. However, they did ask whom I was studying and I did tell them that the relatives of the disappeared were one of my groups. A second cousin responded to this with 'How curious. How curious'. On another occasion, when I was answering a third party's question about what I was studying as apolitically as possible, another second cousin looked at me, winked and said knowingly 'And it has a political side to it'. I was bound by kinship to one type of native and studying another whom they were antagonistic towards. Relations with my favourite great aunt became increasingly strained as the months went by until one day when she was in a bad mood she accused me of being a communist (because of my interest in the poor and left-wing), with considerable bitterness in her voice (from her, this was an insult). Such encounters caused me to feel considerable irritation with what I perceived as my family's narrow-minded views and existence of cushioned privilege, and relations between us cooled.

Strangers of the same wealthy, right-wing, 'of the right surname' set reacted in similar ways. At a cousin's wedding I was sitting next to two people my age, one of

whom were Opus Dei[6]. When they asked, I told them I was studying the art of the relatives of the disappeared and shantytown women. When I went to the bathroom one of the two told the close friend who had accompanied me that what I was doing sounded very boring and the other said 'She's a communist- I guessed immediately'. Such encounters made me feel very frustrated, Chile-hating and discriminated against as a social scientist. (In Chile there is a tendency to view the social sciences and arts as easy options; the respected paths are the medical sciences, law and engineering, including business management which is called 'commercial engineering'). I also sensed a discrimination against social scientists when a doctor asked me 'what on earth can you do with a degree in sociology?' and when a student on a bus said 'sociology- so you must be into marihuana'. It certainly was not mainstream to study sociology and especially left-wing groups in this technically-oriented culture, and this contributed to my feeling of marginalisation within a not very diversified society.

The mere fact of my doing research affected the way people (especially my business-minded relatives) saw me. Most were not familiar with what research or a doctorate involved. Many made comments along the lines of 'twenty-seven and still studying!' and I had to explain why. A number also asked me how it was that I was not thinking of getting married and having a family[7]. One relative went so far to tell me that it was a little odd that I was living alone (I rented a room) and that usually people lived with nice girlfriends. Such questions and comments often did not disguise the implication that I was a little odd. I could not help feeling offended by them and those who expressed

[6] A branch of Catholicism, the believers in which are very right wing.
[7] Wealthier, right wing people in Chile expect women to be married or engaged by the time they are twenty-seven. Motherhood is also expected.

such ideas began to strike me as unbearably intolerant and provincial. They coloured my general impression of Chile as an excessively isolated country in which people were self-righteous and arrogantly sure that their way was the right one. Such ideas in natives have been encountered by other anthropologists (e.g. Kurin 1986).

I began to feel uncomfortable about visiting my relatives because of their opulence as compared with the women I studied. One evening, in particular, I went straight from Sta. Adriana to my mother's cousin's lavishly decorated house. I stopped at home for ten minutes on the way, to change into clothes which were more acceptable to my family. Without my intending it, the way I talked and what I talked about was very different in both places. As time went by my relatives seemed increasingly shallow, phoney and hypocritical and I began to avoid them. Meanwhile, I grew to like my groups more and more. By comparison they seemed to have real warmth and sincerity. My schizophrenic position of having close ties to two groups which saw each other as the 'enemy camp': 'communists' and 'right-wing', 'rich' and 'poor' did make me feel uncomfortable. When I was with one I was vulnerable to exposure and rejection on the grounds of being a part of the other. I was a double traitor, a double marginal.

The Arpilleristas and I

Just as I did not like to mention my research to my relatives, so I did not like to mention my family to the women, to the extent that I occasionally bent the truth. If I went to spend the weekend with a relative at the exclusive beach resort where she had a house,

I told the women I had been to a less exclusive beach resort. On one occasion the word 'aunt' actually slipped out and I explained, embarrassed, that I did have an aunt here. I was vulnerable to appearing to be a member of the enemy camp. This, however, became less of a risk as the groups came to know me and as genuine ties of affection began to form.

I grew to like all the women I studied and became relatively close to three. Ada, the leader of the Sta. Adriana group had an exquisite sense of humour, was very broad-minded and wise, and a very warm person. She spoke to me a good deal about her family and a little also about her feelings about other members of the group. She also became one of my key informants, and helped me by, for example, suggesting names of others to interview. As Crick (1992: 186) suggests: '[Key informants] affect not only what one does, but how one interprets, to whom one has access, etc.'. I also became close to Toya, the leader of the Song Group. She told me many of her most intimate and distressing thoughts and feelings which she shared with no-one except for her psychiatrist. We spent some time alone, taking photographs of places her father had lived in or visited, both in Santiago and Valparaiso. Finally, I became quite close to Estrella of the Sta. Adriana group, who was nearest to me in age and confided in me considerably.

Unfortunately, the friendships were spoilt to a certain extent by my position as researcher. It was difficult for me to tell the women how exasperated I felt with Chile, for example, or to talk about my research. With Ada and Estrella I even felt I could not mention that I had been to the cinema because I knew they could not afford to go. As Patai (1991: 143) points out, exchange is not reciprocal and researchers frequently are

less frank than the researched. Because I could not reciprocate in conversation as naturally as I would normally do, I tried to do so in other ways - by finding a psychiatrist and persuading her to lower the cost of sessions for Toya (who wanted to change psychiatrists), for example, but I nevertheless felt I was cheating my two friends by not opening up as they did with me. As Crick (1992: 189) describes out: 'It is obvious that "participant observation" coexists with a series of sometimes painful contradictions - stranger/friend, involvement/detachment and so on'.

Friendship was always strained by the fact that I was there as a First World researcher studying Third World women, in a slightly colonial hierarchy. The women were aware of this hierarchy and position throughout. On the occasion of the farewell party the Místicas put on for me, a member made a jokey comment about my coming to study 'Indians with feathers in their hats'. She was not the only woman who felt that I was coming to study them as if they were Third World curiosities. One of my relatives made the same comment at the beginning of my stay. It is probable that hegemonic European or American subjects would react entirely differently. When Becker studied medical students, they found it quite natural and not at all humiliating that people should take an interest in them (Becker 1993: 29). In my case, our respective positions and the local history of colonisation coloured personal relationships.

Betrayal often coloured my feelings for these friends and the women in general. One dilemma I faced was whether or not to take fieldnotes of what my friends told me as friends. To take notes was to use that friendship and betray them, but not to do so was to lose data. I discussed this with my anthropologist friend Peg and resolved to note down

only what was very directly relevant (according to my judgement of relevance at that time). I put myself in a similar quandary when I invited the Song Group over for a Christmas tea. I knew there would be valuable data from the relaxed situation but it felt immoral to have my observation self switched on rather than to be relaxed and participating like the others, not taking a mental note of everything that was said. However, the data were so good that I threw morality to the winds and wrote fieldnotes afterwards.

The sense of betrayal was particularly strong upon leaving Ada, Toya and Estrella. To a certain extent I felt needed by them, for my friendship if nothing else, and the knowledge that they would stay behind dealing with their enormous problems whilst I moved on to a life of privilege and bright prospects made me feel extremely cruel. Toya and I were in tears when we said goodbye, Ada was strangely distant, and Estrella was sad and affectionate. They have all written to me since my return but the betrayal continues as they hope I will go back to see them but I, despite being fond of them, would prefer not to return to Chile.

Participant observation creates a situation in which the observer can never be truly the friend or a member of the group. The observer is there for her own benefit and the group is aware of this fact. Consequently, they are likely not to see her as a friend. This was painfully brought home to me when I brought the owners of a handicraft stall in a market to meet the Sta. Adriana group, in the hope that they would buy their arpilleras and help the group financially. I had met the stall owners at the market and had interviewed them. They did turn out to be interested in buying the group's arpilleras. The

group, however, seemed to think that I had brought the stall owners to them so as to help 'my friends' ('Sus amigas') the stall owners. They were surprised and a little disbelieving at first when I tried to explain that it was the group I cared about.

Despite barriers to membership in the groups, I was always well-treated by them. No-one pretended not to understand me, used me or made fun of me. I became very fond of all except for one of my groups (and had my favourite - the Sta. Adriana group- which I adored). They were very affectionate with me and would joke, for example, about finding a boyfriend for me, or ask me how the romantic side of my life was faring. Several of my groups began to call me 'Jackie', the shortened version being a sign of affection in Chile.

With the Sta. Adriana group, the evening of my farewell dinner

I did not experience the depression that comes with finding out that people one thought of as friends in fact only want something from the researcher, as Chagnon (1986) found in his fieldwork among the Yanomamo. Some were more hospitable on a one-to-one basis than others, inviting me to their homes for lunch, whereas others never invited me to their homes unless it was for an interview (a couple did not even want me to come to their homes for the interview). Nevertheless, when I left they all gave me farewell parties and very thoughtful and personal presents; the Sta. Adriana group even gave me a meal which was sumptuous relative to what they could afford. Even though we did not have much in common we had grown used to each other's company and liked each other at a basic level. At least one member of all the groups has written to me since my return.

Despite liking the women, I sometimes wanted a break from being with them. After a few hours of their company I usually felt exhausted, because I had been concentrating so hard on what was being said, and because I could not relax in the way I could with normal friends. So, for example, I chose to come back from a day's outing to a coastal town with the Song Group, on a different (later) bus than the group, having been with them all day. I chose not to go on the Prisma two-week summer camp. Ninety per cent of the time I made the most of every opportunity to be with them, but there was a ten per cent in which I turned down opportunities. This left me feeling guilty, both because of my research and because I was shunning people who were very kind to me.

HOW THE RESEARCH AFFECTED ME

As many ethnographers have pointed out, fieldwork can involve extreme social isolation. One is not short of company, but misses the sort of company to which one is accustomed in an academic environment, and simply people who share a way of seeing the world. Surprisingly, this can be the case in a large, fairly European city as much as in a rural village. Such isolation can, in the case of the sort of person who enjoys company, affect the work considerably. It was many weeks before I met people with whom I felt I had a background and/or academic interests in common. In my first few weeks I met only people with whom I interacted for my research, and yuppies, largely because of whom I was living with. I began to long desperately for conversations about research or merely conversations with anyone from Europe or America. When I eventually began meeting such people (and I did not meet very many) I felt overjoyed. Part of the joy of meeting other Europeans and Americans was the feeling of relief that came with realising that I was not the only one experiencing uncomfortable feelings of marginalisation and sensing hostility. When they told me they had had similar encounters, experiences or feelings, I stopped worrying that I was paranoid and seeing things in a distorted way.

The marginalisation my relatives and others of their ilk contributed to my general impression of Chile as a hostile place. This feeling was further coloured by experiences of people's routine pushing in in queues, men's lewd comments in the street, landladies and some shopkeepers trying to take advantage of what they imagined to be my wealth, and other such small acts of aggression. This perception of my environment made me intensely homesick at times. I started to long for the impossible: mediaeval villages, castles and towns with a well-defined historical core. Fortunately a conversation with a great aunt set me aright and I made a list of all the good things about Chile and did

succeed, to a certain extent, in remembering them and taking advantage of them. Nevertheless, I became very impatient to return to the US where I had planned to write up my thesis.

I had periods in which I felt intensely lonely and morale was very low. This is likely to have affected my work in that I felt less energetic and enthusiastic. I sometimes felt so depressed that I closed myself off slightly to what was going on around me when I was participant observing and dwelled on my own gloomy thoughts. At such times I cheered myself up by telephoning a close friend and my family in Europe, as well as by writing long letters and bad poetry, keeping a diary in which I thought things through, listening to music, reading Chilean classics, and occasionally getting out of Santiago for a day at the week end (usually to visit national parks or to stay with a less right-wing aunt at the sea side). The support of a close friend in Europe was particularly helpful and she helped me put things in perspective many times.

I savoured the times when I did meet with people with whom I could speak of work, but it never felt like enough. I became friends with a professor of anthropology and it was principally with him and Peg (my American anthropologist friend) that I discussed my work. I missed having easy contact with my professors in Europe and the US who seemed, like my friends, very remote, and was I delighted whenever I received a letter from them. Email would have been a good investment as I frequently had doubts or situations for which I would have appreciated feedback more rapidly than the postal system offered.

I became intensely aware of my privileged position as a comfortably-off member of the First World. 'Normal' pastimes for a European began to feel like a luxury, after a few months of contact with my shantytown friends. I began to feel guilty about going out for meals, to the cinema or buying any item of clothing. I even began to think how lucky I was every time I went to the supermarket. (For some of the ladies the supermarket was too expensive; they used their local street market. Also, they ate meat and drank orange juice less often than I did). Throughout my time in Chile, I was profoundly affected by my contact with the researched and other natives, and with interactions of others with whom I came into contact.

My perception of the local environment, and of the groups I studied, my sense of well-being, and my social relationships, were all intimately affected by my research and, in turn, closely impacted it. My research can only be the record of the interactions of a feeling, changing, shaping self with an environment which experiences similar flux. As Scheper-Hughes (1992: xii) points out: 'In the act of 'writing culture,' what emerges is always a highly subjective, partial, and fragmentary- but always deeply felt and personal- record of human lives based on eyewitness and testimony.'

Appendix 3

THE WRONGS OF RECIPROCITY

Qualitative sociologists advocate reciprocity during fieldwork, describing it as unambiguously desirable. In reality, however, reciprocity can jeopardise the research. Problems arise because of the researcher's ever-changing membership status within the group studied, and also because of cultural differences, power differences, and differences in knowledge between the researcher and the researched. So complex are the implications of a reciprocal gesture that reciprocity often contains numerous pitfalls.

I define reciprocity as repayment by the ethnographer for the help given by the subjects of the research[8]. This repayment is not on a service-by-service basis but rather comes in the form of gestures over the course of time in the field. There are an infinite number of reciprocal acts in which researchers might engage. They might, for example, look after subjects' children, help them sell their wares, help them produce their goods, negotiate with government authorities on their behalf, or help them build houses. In some cases they pay their informants money, but I will not be dealing with financial transactions of this kind.

[8] Some ethnographers define reciprocity more broadly but I will not focus on these definitions here.

As ethnographers, we usually engage in reciprocity because we feel it is moral to do so. This moral obligation is particularly pressing when we study people in less fortunate economic circumstances than our own; we do not experience the reciprocal urge so strongly with the more advantaged. There are other motivations for reciprocity (for example, it can be a means for establishing rapport) but I will not explore these in depth here. I will focus instead on the complications that arise when a researcher tries to 'give back' to the subjects of her research in non-monetary ways.

The urge to reciprocate is relatively new. The first generation of ethnographers did not usually attempt to reciprocate and their relationship to their subjects was like that of a colonial administrator and the 'natives'. Photographs of researchers interviewing from a chair whilst the subjects sat on the ground are not uncommon in works of this period, suggesting a hierarchical distancing. Ethnographers of the second generation learnt that they should do no harm and avoid involvement and intrusion. Third generation ethnographers, in their youth today, believe that the ethnographer comes from a powerful and sometimes malevolent culture and must in some way atone for this or at least not exacerbate the harm already done to exploited peoples. They assume that the power relationship between the researcher and the researched is asymmetrical but that the ethnographer should do all she can to treat the subjects with respect and consideration. Reciprocity is one way of achieving this goal. Consequently, fieldworkers are encouraged to reciprocate by their teachers, by colleagues, and by the voice of 'duty' that lies within them. Admonitions to reciprocate come from all sides.

Yet, when I combed the fieldwork methodology literature looking for explicit references to reciprocity, I found that in the vast majority of writings reciprocity is not mentioned at all. Moreover, whilst some researchers mention it in ethnographies, they never analyse it in depth (even when they do analyse reciprocity amongst the natives). The following is a survey of the few references to reciprocity that I have found in works on fieldwork methodology in English.

A number of authors present reciprocity as a moral duty. For example, Bosk (1989: 141-142) states: 'the right and privilege of being an observer is a gift presented to the researcher by his host and subjects... The fact that the fieldworker is both the receiver of a gift and a guest means that he has a diffuse sense of obligation to his host-giver-subject...'. Like Bosk, Freilich (1977: 261-263) suggests that researchers have an obligation to reciprocate: 'What does the anthropologist have to offer in exchange for the risk-taking and time-spending done by the natives? He or she has "capital" to offer and some items of such capital are obvious'. These authors emphasise the ethical aspect of reciprocity.

Others go beyond the idea of a 'diffuse' moral duty to suggest that subjects actually expect reciprocity. Ellen (1984: 109), for example, reveals that: 'The anthropologist's presence and continual questioning is only tolerated because of compensations he can offer, material or otherwise'. Scheper-Hughes (1992: 18) describes how the women of the Brazilian shantytown she was studying reproached her angrily for refusing to work with them when they had worked with her, and demanded that she 'be with them' on her return to the shantytown. Ostrander (1993: 25) suggests that elites

managing non-profit family welfare agencies demand something in return for the right to study them: 'They [elites] will also check you out by... asking what you expect to gain from the research as well as what you intend to give back to them'. The subjects of the research may view reciprocity as something to which they have a right. Some authors suggest that reciprocity fulfils functions other than the repayment of a debt. Ellen (1984), for example, views reciprocity as part of three stages in the development of a 'new social personality for the field situation or a new self image and social projection'. Reciprocity has functions other than the most obvious 'payback' one.

If few authors mention reciprocity at all, even fewer show that it is not unequivocally positive. What follows is a brief survey of those who do. Bosk (1989: 141-142) suggests that the reciprocal urge can cloud the researcher's judgement about how much she owes her subjects: 'The gift of access, of witnessing social life as it is lived in someone else's environ, exercises a tyranny of its own. This tyranny has as its most distinctive features three significant elements:.. the danger of overindebtedness, so thoroughly feeling a sense of diffuse obligation that one can no longer assess what one does and does not properly owe his subjects...' Wolcott (1995: 92). points out that the subjects may take advantage of this obligation: 'One must learn how to manage being 'put upon' by those who recognise the inherent fieldwork vulnerability to requests, when success depends on being able to make requests of others.' The reciprocal urge can cause the researcher to feel or be forced to feel that a heavy debt has been incurred.

A number of researchers have emphasised cultural misunderstandings. Borsht Lee (1986: 17-20), when faced with the apparent ingratitude of the !Kung bushmen in

response to his gift of a huge ox, found that cultural differences between researcher and researched can give rise to misunderstandings. A similar ignorance of the culture caused Hammond (1990) to displease the Polynesian quilters she studied by giving them better cloth than they had given her (her better cloth was of no use to them for their work). Wolcott (1995: 91-92) found that: '...fieldwork entails a subtle kind of exchange, one that often involves gifting across cultural boundaries where exchange rates may be ambiguous or one wonders what to offer in exchange for intangibles such as hospitality or a personal life history.' The researcher's lack of an intimate knowledge of the culture can lead to disappointment at 'poor gifts' and tension. Other problems with reciprocity include: not knowing which rewards are appropriate and how much to give, creating dependence of subjects on the researcher, emphasising the gap in socio-economic standing between researcher and researched, offending people by distributing inequitably, and being taken advantage of by subjects (Ellen, 1984).

As this brief survey shows, reciprocity is not often mentioned explicitly in works of fieldwork methodology and when it is mentioned, its pitfalls are rarely examined in significant depth.

RECIPROCATING IN CHILE

As a participant observer, I observed the women in the workshops whenever they met to work on their arpilleras, songs or embroideries and, in some cases, helped with the sewing or joined in the singing. Although I did not make arpilleras until some months

into the fieldwork, I did, even in the early days, make the figures they stick on the arpilleras, sew the hems, and stick the arpilleras onto card. The women met for one afternoon every week or every fortnight, either in a home, community building, or room in their institution, depending on the group. As well as spending those afternoons with them, I accompanied them to other settings in which they functioned as a group. These included markets, local community ceremonies, and acts of political protest. At such events, I spoke to the women and others present and took photographs.

The first 'arpilleristas' (arpillera-makers) with whom I came into contact were based in a shantytown in the East of Santiago. I met with them so as to conduct a group interview (my first). I had never met the group before and to my surprise, the first thirty minutes of our meeting consisted of an explosion of rage about 'gringos' (Northern Europeans and Americans) capitalising on their hardship to produce books and films, and then disappearing entirely. Their complaint was about emotional as well as economic abandonment and the feeling that the foreigners gained a great deal but never gave anything in appreciation. The story was directed at me in an accusatory manner because I was clearly a member of the 'gringo' category as I lived in Europe, looked and spoke like a European, and also because I had come to Chile with the same aims as those who had so upset the women. This story of other Europeans gaining articles and films out of the plight of the arpilleristas but giving nothing back made me feel like a parasite: I was going to derive enormous benefit from my contact with the arpilleristas, but they would probably not gain at all from my presence. Moreover, at the end of my year I would leave Chile for the comfort of a privileged lifestyle, whilst they remained behind in their

poverty-stricken shantytown. From that moment onwards, reciprocity was high on my agenda but the feeling of gaining more than I was giving never left me.

I tried to reciprocate in different ways with each of the five groups I observed, assisting in the production and selling of arpilleras, carrying coats and bags when one group performed, giving them feedback on the sound coming out of the loudspeakers, writing a promotional article for a newspaper, and numerous other small gestures. The groups reacted in very different ways to my reciprocity and my level of comfort with what I was doing also varied considerably. In most cases my efforts were appreciated and appeared to be useful. For example, a group from the South of Santiago appreciated my making the figures for the arpilleras because it saved them time when they had to work under pressure to finish an order. I felt that not to reciprocate in any way could have caused hard feelings. In some cases, however, in reciprocating I caused more harm than good, both to the groups and to myself. It is on these cases of unsuccessful reciprocity which I will focus, to illustrate the point that reciprocity is not unequivocally good and desirable. On the contrary, because of power differences, cultural differences, and membership status, reciprocal acts performed with the best of intentions can prove a minefield. Reciprocity per se is not dangerous, but reciprocity in such a context can be as dangerous as it can be successful.

THE WRONGS OF RECIPROCITY

There are four main differences between the researcher and the researched which cause problems in reciprocity: power differences; cultural differences; differences in knowledge (the researcher knows what the subjects do not know), and finally differences in membership status.

Differences In Power

Many of the pitfalls of reciprocity occur because reciprocal actions can demonstrate the researcher's power and in so doing, can harm the researcher-researched relationship. The researcher-researched relationship is hierarchical. In a 'study down' situation, the subjects usually are and consider themselves to be less powerful than the researcher. The director of one of the institutions I studied clearly saw me as powerful because she expressed anxiety about how I would portray her institution, and her anxiety increased when another researcher published an article about her institution during my stay. She said 'I cannot write or publish' and saw me as the voice she could not muster. The researcher holds considerable power in that she will represent the subjects to a wider public. Subjects in a Third World setting also perceive a First World woman as having considerable power because they assume she is much wealthier than they are[9]. My subjects also saw me as powerful because I was better educated, European, and (in their eyes) of a higher social class than they were.

[9] A concrete indication of such 'wealth' to my subjects, was the fact that I had been able to travel to Chile but they could not even afford to go to travel within the country. I was asked a number of times, how much my ticket to Chile had cost and whether I had travelled much within Chile and elsewhere.

In reality, the researched also hold considerable power. They can give or withhold information, access, or the right to observe. My research, for example, depended on my having been granted permission to join each of the groups and on their willingness to co-operate. The researched also have the understanding of cultural norms which the researcher does not possess and can define and enforce values or norms which the researcher has to learn. The researcher is more powerful in some ways and less powerful in others, although the researched generally view her as more powerful.

The leader of a group studied may take as a threat an action of reciprocity which involves a powerful initiative. Towards the end of my year of fieldwork, I organised an exhibition of the work of all five of my groups. It seemed accident-proof and beneficial to the groups: all would gain publicity, the arpillera as an art form would become better-known, and as a result sales might increase. Visitors to the exhibition could buy directly by telephoning the group leaders whose numbers were posted at the entrance to the exhibition hall. The venue was excellent: the Instituto Chileno Británico, which ensured newspaper and subway-poster coverage. Moreover, there would be a cocktail party at the beginning and the women could invite their friends and relatives, the whole process providing them with recognition and making them feel valued by family, community members, and society at large (when the journalists wrote about them). I could not imagine an unhappy outcome. However, two of the exhibiting groups functioned within an institution which trained them, exported their work, and held exhibitions sporadically. The director of this institution had never experienced an exhibition in which some of her students were exhibiting without she herself having had a hand in the management and

organisation. The exhibition caused a great deal of tension between us. She told me she felt I had undermined her authority by not telling journalists or the poster-designers that she had invented the arpillera (her claim was controversial) and became so angry that she almost asked me to leave[10]. This event suggests that where the reciprocal gesture is a powerful one, the researcher can expose herself to negative feelings on the part of a figure of authority for the group and involve herself in an undesired power struggle.

Reciprocity can emphasise the power gulf between the privileged position of the researcher and the relatively powerless position of the researched. I negotiated free visiting cards with the manager of a card shop for the first, angry group of arpilleristas I interviewed. This gesture inspired gratitude but at the same time bitterness. It reminded the women of what is 'common knowledge' amongst the Chilean working-class: that middle and upper-class Chileans (and shop keepers) pay attention to a request coming from a *gringa* (because to be *gringa* carries a certain level of prestige in Chile) but not from a member of the working-class. I had reminded them of their marginality and the discrimination which works against them. I caused a similar reaction with a reciprocal action I performed for the group of embroiderers. I regularly talked to shop managers in an elegant neighbourhood about their work and asked for an opportunity to come with the ladies to show samples. Although the ladies were grateful for the contact, one of them said that people in shops in the elegant neighbourhood would never take any notice of them if they went. Again, my reciprocal gesture had reminded them of their marginality

[10] Thanks to a friend of mine who worked with her and spoke on my behalf, I was not asked to leave.

within Chilean society. In both cases, the reciprocity emphasised power differences precisely when I wanted to come closer to my groups.

Attempts to help can also be humiliating or patronising for those who are 'helped', suggesting that they are worthy of pity or unable to help themselves. The above example of the negotiation of free cards for the group with great financial difficulties is also a statement: 'you are so poor'. Such gestures can be embarrassing for the group.

In addition, reciprocity can upset the balance of power. One group could have benefited greatly from help with selling and finding new clients. However, becoming 'marketing manager' for the group would have been taking over and putting myself in a powerful position. I would have been 'out to save them'. Finding shops and merely giving the ladies the addresses upset the power balance less. Similarly, I could have taught the embroidery group some English before an artisan fair which attracted foreign tourists, but this would have placed me in a superior teaching role. Reciprocity can create hierarchical relationships.

Reciprocity will work in different ways depending on the economic or social power of the group studied in relation to the researcher. The situation of a First World researcher studying Third World women will bring up different issues from a 'studying up' situation. Although in general, Third World women consider themselves less powerful than the researcher, one cannot lump 'Third World women' together. Within the group 'Third World women' the issues will change according to the class, race and ethnicity, and age of the studied. The local social class of the researched can override

hierarchies of a grander order such as the Third World-First World divide. A European researcher studying upper-class women in a Third World context might find herself studying up. The director who had disliked the exhibition I organised was from a privileged socio-economic background and made me feel it by complaining loudly to everyone in the institution about how I conducted it. The women I studied, however, were working-class and I doubt they would have been so vociferous in their complaints had they been displeased. The relative positions of power will affect how the subjects take reciprocal actions.

Other factors also mediate the very broad Third World subject-First World researcher divide. Age is one such factor. Reciprocal gestures by a young woman for a group of older women carry a different charge than those performed for a group the same age, and the young woman will feel differently about doing them. I held back at first from reciprocating with some of my groups because I felt I might insult them (as older and more experienced than myself) by suggesting what they should be doing to sell their work better[11]. With the embroidery group, for example, I waited some months before bringing in addresses of shops at which they could present their work. They expressed gratitude but did not follow up my suggestions. When a much older woman than myself came to the group and suggested how they might sell their work, the women seemed to take her more seriously.

[11] This feeling might have been accentuated in a society such as China where older people are venerated more than in Europe. The cultural context must be taken into account.

The self-confidence of the group as a whole is yet another factor determining how a reciprocal gesture will be received. More self-sufficient groups can communicate a sense of not needing or wanting help. The same is true for groups with higher collective self-esteem. I felt most patronising when trying to reciprocate with the group which had functioned well for a long time and was quite confident. A proud independence sometimes comes with high self-esteem, and, in this context, reciprocity is not always well received. On the other hand, the more marginal the group and the more marginal its members feel themselves to be, the less likely it is that they will be insulted by reciprocal actions. I felt least inhibited in my attempts to help the group which functioned least successfully and had the lowest collective self-esteem.

The gesture of reciprocity itself can be more or less powerful. Offering to look after someone's children every now and again is not a gesture which emphasises the power of the researcher, because it is something any member of the group can do. However, giving advice on how better to sell places the researcher in a 'superior' position to the researched. Powerful gestures can cause greater problems than less powerful ones, as we saw in the case of the exhibition. A mediating factor, however, is how the researcher carries out the action or speaks.

Some acts of reciprocity can be so powerful as to change the group radically, and so pose dilemmas for the researcher who came to study the group 'as it is'. Naturally, the mere presence of the researcher alters the group somewhat, but certain reciprocal actions can dramatically alter the group. For example, one of my groups had come to a standstill in their production of arpilleras because their only client had stopped making orders.

Consequently, the meetings had become more social, and the women had started with another economic activity which brought them very little income. I considered finding new customers for their arpilleras and even selling for them but held back because I realised that this would radically alter the situation of the group. The aims of the research came into conflict with the desire to reciprocate in this way.

Differences In Knowledge

In the interaction between researcher and researched, knowledge is distributed unequally. The researcher knows the value of what the informants are giving her, but the informants do not fully appreciate its worth. This situation gives her a great deal of power as far as reciprocity is concerned because she can decide how little or how much to give in return for what she receives. Reciprocity is very different, however, in the case of subjects who are used to being studied or who have themselves had contact with academic settings. They are usually much more aware of the value for the researcher of what she is receiving from them, and, consequently, they might make requests or expect reciprocal behaviour. One of my groups (the Song Group) had been studied several times before and this was the only group that made requests of me (mainly for translations and recordings of their songs for correctional purposes) and seemed to expect reciprocity.

The group's lack of knowledge about what is required of the researcher by her academic institution can lead to misunderstanding when she tries to reciprocate. Its members may think that she reciprocates because her university requires her to do so to

'pass the course' and may not see the gesture as something done for them. The leader of the Macul embroiderers group believed I was organising the exhibition because this was something my university required me to do. A member of the Song Group kept referring to it as 'your exhibition' and provided arpilleras for it in a way which suggested she thought she was doing me a favour. Such scepticism may bring negative consequences for the researcher as the subjects perceive her as placing further demands on them.

Cultural Differences

Problems in reciprocity arise partly because of cultural differences between the researcher and researched. An act of reciprocity can introduce Western values which conflict with local values. Introducing these foreign values can disturb relationships within the group and between the group members and their families. I found out about a management course for micro-entrepreneurs, conveniently located near the house of a member of one of my groups. Thinking that it would help her with the selling of arpilleras, I encouraged her to go. She was interested in the course but reluctant, saying that her daughter would resent her not being at home and that her husband did not like her to leave the house. I suggested (according to my European values) that she had as much right to self-development and pleasure as the other members of her family. In so doing, I could have sewn the seeds of discontent in her (as far as her family life was concerned) and also caused tensions with her husband. She did attend the course but did not tell her husband. Ignorance of or insensitivity to a culture or different cultural values

can cause the researcher to reciprocate with an inappropriate gesture, causing offence or potential damage to the subjects of the research or their families.

Furthermore, reciprocity in the form of help (by a relative stranger such as the researcher) is not expected in all cultures; indeed, sometimes passivity is preferred. In some cultures the act of offering help can be seen as offensive because it suggests the person whom the researcher 'helps' is unable to help herself. In others, a woman researcher's taking action to help a group might be considered unfeminine and inappropriate and this 'unfeminine' behaviour can create distance between herself and the group. Moreover, the researched frequently suspect the ethnographer of being amongst them because of ulterior motives, and often some time elapses before they believe that she is there purely for the purposes of a study. Beginning to perform important reciprocal actions can re-arouse their suspicion, because they do not associate such actions with students. Cultural expectations can produce misunderstanding, suspicion, and even offence when researchers try to reciprocate.

Group Membership

Attempts to reciprocate can be an intrusion. The Macul group wanted to keep an exercise book to serve as a back copy of the book in which they kept a record of work handed in and money owed. Because they could not agree on who would keep it and because the group had long since been deeply divided into two camps, I offered, thinking that I could give them the neutrality they seemed to feel would be lacking if one of them

kept the book. They accepted and seemed pleased with the solution, but a few weeks later they told me gently that they knew I had meant well but thought the exercise book should remain with one of the members of the group. I was clearly not 'one of them' and had stepped over the boundary which existed between us[12].

I also 'intruded' on another group. Every year the Sta. Adriana group sold its wares at a Christmas market located in one of Santiago's tourist spots (the 'FESOL'). Thinking that they might need help with selling to foreigners who did not speak Spanish, I offered to sit at the stall with the leader of the group. Ada, the group leader, refused, saying there was no room at the stall (although in fact there was). Later I learnt that this fair was much more than a place at which to sell. It had acquired symbolic significance as a celebration of the efforts of all the handicraft workers who had struggled to survive during the years of the military dictatorship, and its participants shared a collective identity as members of the resistance movement. The fair was also a special setting in the sense that it was one of the few occasions (since the end of the dictatorship) in which arpilleristas from different areas of Santiago could meet, recreate the bonds between them, and reaffirm their identity as arpilleristas. There was no room for an outsider in this setting; the identity issue predominated over the commercial aspect in their rejection of my help. In both cases, the group has a territory and in attempting to reciprocate I had trespassed.

[12] Naples (1996: 84) has pointed out that there is no dichotomy of insider and outsider but rather a shifting position: 'Outsiderness' and 'insiderness' are not fixed or static positions, rather they are ever-shifting and permeable social locations that are differentially experienced and expressed by community members'. Whilst I agree that the position is ever-shifting, I also believe that at any one point in time one is more 'outside' than 'inside' and vice versa.

It is difficult for the researcher to know when she is intruding because the nature of this territoriality varies from group to group. What one group sees as intrusion another might perceive as a welcome involvement. I offered the embroidery group help with selling at another artisans' fair and they were very grateful; one member even reproached me for not coming more often. This fair was merely commercial; it did not have a deeper significance. What groups perceive as 'their space' varies greatly and the researcher often cannot know beforehand whether she will be intruding.

To reciprocate is to claim close connection or membership within a group - a membership which is not always desired. Reciprocal gestures can make the researcher too prominent for the group's liking, especially when the group stands before a public. Groups of artisans or artists at an artisans' fair might not want someone so obviously foreign to the group to be seen by customers as part of the group because it ruins the authenticity which is one of their main selling points. I might better have helped the group which exhibited at the fair by helping to set up the stall and then disappearing. To reciprocate is sometimes to claim a membership which the subjects do not always accept.

The degree of acceptance of a person in a group can determine how the subjects are likely to receive a reciprocal gesture. A group might reject a gesture of reciprocity if most of its members do not accept the researcher as part of the group. The more included the researcher is in the group, the less likely the group is to take her actions as an intrusion or as actions of a powerful person over a less powerful one. It is the researched as much as the researcher who determines the degree of membership of the latter in the

group and hence the nature of reciprocal relationships. Because membership status changes over time, the amount of time spent in the field alters the nature and expectations of reciprocity. At the beginning of the participant observation period, the researcher is likely to have guest status and cannot begin to participate fully without upsetting the hosts. Later on, she will become part of the group to a greater degree and participation will be expected. Even within the framework of this broad progression of increasing inclusion, however, membership status shifts continuously. It is a function of the number and also the nature of the experiences shared with the group. Membership can make it easier to reciprocate without many of the attendant pitfalls, but a greater degree of membership does not necessarily make reciprocity easier. Once the group considers the researcher a quasi-member it becomes difficult to make powerful reciprocal gestures because they can reassert the power gulf between researcher and researched. Shifting membership status makes the appropriateness of reciprocity shift as well[13].

Inextricably bound to membership status is the character of the researcher and a reflection of it: the persona she adopts. Her character and the persona she adopts (that of fly-on-the wall observer or that of full participant, for example) will determine in part how she relates to the group, her degree of membership at any one time, whether she attempts to reciprocate at all, and the way the group reacts to reciprocal actions. The researcher's stay in the field involves continued negotiation of this persona and adaptation of it. When the researcher is a distant observer with her notebook on the table,

[13] Reciprocity can influence the degree of membership, helping a researcher become more accepted as one of the group, just as much as membership influences reciprocity. Repeated attempts to help can convince the group that the researcher is not an exploitative person. The degree of membership at any one time both influences and is influenced by reciprocity.

the group is not likely to consider her a group member. When, however, she gets thoroughly involved in doing what the group is doing, the group will tend to consider her a quasi-member and willing helper, and will receive her reciprocal acts differently. Reciprocity shapes and is shaped by this character one creates for oneself.

Reciprocity very early on in the participant observation can clash with norms of hospitality. The Macul embroidery group considered me a guest of honour of sorts for a period of time before I became a visiting friend and quasi-member. I always brought biscuits for the tea break (for which they always provided food and tea). The ladies themselves, however, paid for the tea and other food by contributing money at the end, discreetly so that I would not notice. I felt uncomfortable with merely bringing biscuits because I knew that the special status one has as a guest could not continue throughout the year. Moreover, the ladies did not seem to like the biscuits[14]. But to suggest very rapidly that I should contribute with money *Alo*ng with the ladies would upset my 'hosts' and force group membership. It is difficult to know how to repay hospitality which is part of the participant observation process. It is likely that the ladies of the embroidery group were pleased and proud to offer me food and tea; offering me what they cannot easily afford might have made them feel richer. In this case, repayment should have been kept subtle or indirect. The virtual impossibility of defining when the relationship is solid enough for overt payback complicates repayment. Some group members might view the relationship one way, others another. Moreover, how they feel about repayment often

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[14] I later discovered that this was because they thought they were fattening.

depends on the behaviour of the researcher at any one time. The ever-shifting status of the researcher complicates paying back hospitality and information.

CONCLUSION

Reciprocity is far more complex than the recommendations of colleagues and fieldwork methodologies imply. Usually, ethnographers frame it as repayment of favours or services accorded and imply that it is highly desirable. In reality, any notion that one can or even should pay off the debt is dubious. Attempts to do so with reciprocal gestures may be well received, but more often they endanger the research and can create trouble for the researched. Power differences, cultural differences, differences in knowledge and ever-changing membership status make the terrain of reciprocity a potential minefield, rather than the unambiguously positive practice most ethnographers imagine.

Despite its potential dangers, however, engaging in reciprocity (even when it causes problems) can teach the researcher a great deal, both about the group and about how the group perceives the researcher. Buying an ox for the !Kung bushmen taught Borsht Lee (1986) that his subjects were wary of a person becoming arrogant if they praised him when he made a big kill. Reciprocity, despite its pitfalls, can bring gains by providing insights into the ideology of a group and the researcher-researched relationship. Moreover, not to reciprocate at all in the fieldwork context might seem as unnatural as not to do so in everyday social interaction.

Reciprocity is similar to gift-giving and trade, both standard social forms based on the underlying principle of exchange. In trade one party gives something and receives something in return which they judge to be of equivalent worth. Both parties know the value to them of the items and together they negotiate an agreement about what is acceptable as an exchange item. In desiring to give back in exchange for services or hospitality received, the ethnographer approximates the position of trader. However, reciprocity is unlike trade in that the subjects of the study do not usually appreciate the value of what they are giving and cannot estimate what would be of equal value to them; nor are they inclined to do so, as most often they do not identify the situation as a trade-like one in which they have the right to demand something in return. If they do catch on to the trade-like notions of the researcher, they might feel angry that they have not been given the chance to determine their side of the equation, because trade involves awareness and negotiation of the values of the items in question. The exchange element of trade is present in reciprocity, but the negotiation of trading is not.

Reciprocity approximates gift-giving more closely than it does trade. In Western culture we associate gifts with uncalculated and altruistic giving in which the receiver does not negotiate or demand. However, Mauss (1954) suggests that gifts often do contain a trade-like element of calculation; rather than spontaneous gestures the exchange of gifts is rule-governed. Gifts combine self-interest and altruism (as suggested also in Taussig, 1993): 'as these gifts are not spontaneous so also they are not really disinterested. They are for the most part counter-prestations made not solely in order to pay for goods or services, but also to maintain a profitable alliance which it would be unwise to reject, as for instance partnership between fishing tribes and tribes of hunters

and potters' (Mauss 1954: 71). A combination of self-interest and altruism characterises reciprocity in the fieldwork context. Even if the affection the researcher sometimes develops for her subjects does inspire acts of spontaneous generosity, no fieldworker's action can be purely altruistic because a history of dependence on the subjects' information services lies behind it and because, ultimately, her giving benefits her. Even when the subjects have not yet given anything, a researcher giving the first gift cannot be innocent of the awareness (if not the intention) that this gift will aid relations and help her research. The idea of giving back purely in the spirit of altruism is sentimental and naive.

When the researcher reciprocates the subjects might see her gesture as 'the first' gift and feel obliged to give something in exchange. This is particularly likely to happen when they do not understand the enormous value the researcher places on their answers to her questions. This creates a momentary power imbalance, as Bourdieu (1972: 223-224) points out: 'As long as he has not given back, the person who has received is indebted, obliged to show gratitude towards his benefactor or, at least, to show him respect, to behave nicely to him, to not use against him the weapons at his disposal, for risk of being accused of ingratitude and to be condemned by 'what people say'...'[15] Hammond (1990: 66) found this in her research on Polynesian quilters: 'They did not like to draw attention to the gift giver or the gift. To do so, I believe, would underline the unequal relationship established in gift-giving in which the recipient 'owes' something to the gift giver'. In such circumstances, small acts of reciprocity which can be repaid easily or quickly, akin to the 'balanced reciprocity' mentioned by Sahlins (1972: 194), succeed better than more important gestures such as the exhibition. Part of the difficulty in

[15] My translation.

judging how to reciprocate with our subjects is that a miscalculation might put them in the awkward position of feeling obliged, yet unable, to reciprocate back.

Situations of reciprocity can cause the researcher to behave inappropriately, confusing trade with gift-giving. Counts (1990: 20) made several reciprocity *faux-pas* in Papua New Guinea where he gave tobacco, chewing gum, coffee or Milo in exchange for information as well as gifts of food: 'Tobacco as currency got a little complicated, but since the exchange rate was one stick to one shilling, it was not too much trouble as long as everyone was happy, and meanwhile we could account for the expenditure of "informant fees" and "household expenses".' The routine of exchanges he set up with his informants worked smoothly until he returned a gift and, trader-like, demanded that someone who kept coming for things give something in return: 'We didn't mind sharing things, we explained... The problem was that she kept coming to get things, but never came to talk, or to tell stories, or to bring some little something that the kids might like'. Both faux-pas caused consternation amongst the parties directly involved and other inhabitants of the village. Because reciprocity is not clearly defined as either gift or trade, it can be dangerous terrain.

It is in the setting of continual renegotiation of the relationship between the researcher and the researched that the problems associated with reciprocity arise. The researcher's position in the group is ever-changing. As a result, what the researcher can do for the subjects is always changing, any understanding of what the subjects need is always changing, and the ways the researcher can provide this is always changing.

Moreover, it is the researched as well as the researcher who determine the nature of the reciprocal relationships, just as it is they as well as she who determine membership roles. A greater amount of time in the field may appear to bring the researcher steadily closer to the researched and consequently involve her more closely in a web of obligation and give her a more realistic notion of what is possible, but in reality the nature of the relationship shifts continuously. Every new negotiation has a history; it takes into account everything that went before. As a result, for the researcher to think that she can do something to settle a debt once and for all, is hopelessly to err. Reciprocity must be reconceptualised as set in the context of a continual process of negotiation between both parties.

Given the problems which can arise, to give back at all might be a mistake. When we are in the field, we often feel we are in some way harming or taking from those we study when we interview them, observe them, ask them questions, and accept their hospitality. In reality, the notion that we are harming people by taking information away is fundamentally flawed. In asking questions of those we study we are not taking anything of value to them as they would not use the information they give us to write books themselves[16]. Moreover, the notion of harming only exists when we study people less privileged than ourselves. We are fearful of exploiting our subjects when we 'study down' but feel no such qualms when we 'study up'. No-one tells us to be sure to reciprocate with elites. Notions of repairing the harm we do by reciprocating hinge on the image of the subjects as less fortunate and in need of help. In reality, however, even the

[16] On the other hand, the subjects do value the way they are represented to a wider public and we are, in asking them questions and observing them, acquiring this power of representation. Once again, however, this is both giving and taking; often they lack the means to represent themselves.

poorest groups usually cope well alone and do not need the 'Lady Bountiful' actions of a researcher.

Moreover, we are both giving and taking when we interview, observe and ask questions. In taking an interest in our subjects and accepting their hospitality we are giving them a feeling of self-worth. Also, in our subsequent writings about them we are making them known to the rest of the world. Some, not all subjects, value this. As Lawless (1992: 305) observes in her work on Pentecostal women preachers in Missouri: 'Although many were openly flattered by my attention, and by my intention to include them in a book, as many were also very nervous about my attentions because within their community they had to strive always to keep a low profile...' Fieldwork can involve gains for both parties.

Rather than not reciprocate, however, we should question the way we view reciprocity and abandon the notion that reciprocity is necessary to repair harm done to helpless people. Not to reciprocate at all would feel unnatural, both to the researched and to ourselves, given that the exchange of gifts is a standard social form. Many reciprocal gestures are appreciated and do not cause problems. Reciprocity can be enjoyable for both parties. Furthermore, it can lead to greater involvement and understanding of the group. Whilst reciprocity is not unequivocally desirable, neither is it to be shunned.

Appendix 4

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE ARPILLERA LITERATURE

My dissertation contributes to the literature on arpilleras in the following ways. I analyse how exactly the women became interested and then lost interest (to a degree), in political issues. Although the arpillera literature does state that the women developed a political consciousness (e.g. Brett 1978, Kunzle 1979, Agosin 1988 and 1996), and (in Kunzle's case) mention the fact that the women had different levels of political consciousness, it does not analyse how exactly this consciousness formed. Even Agosin (1988 and 1996) whose work focuses on the rise and fall of the Agrupación arpillera group, and the development of a political consciousness in the women, does not explain the nature of contact between the arpilleristas and the various actors in the resistance movement (e.g. the feminists, the clandestine activists, the people in Europe and America). Although Brett (1978) suggests links with the broad wave of cultural activity which existed before the Coup he does not analyse in detail the nature of the link with the resistance movement, i.e. who exactly the women were in contact with, how they came to be part of the resistance protests, etc.

A number of authors (e.g. Rowe and Schelling (1993) as well as Brett (1978) and Agosin (1988) stress that the arpilleras are a new form of cultural action in resistance to the regime. Although Rowe and Schelling are illuminating in that they link arpillera-making with other forms of protest (e.g. chainings to fences) by the women of the

Agrupación, pointing out that both use personal metaphors to counter the aggression of the state (187), they do not show how the women came to conceive of themselves as part of the same group, or how they came to act politically. Nor do they show how exactly the arpilleras operate as cultural action in resistance to Pinochet. They are illuminating in that they make the point (188) that the arpilleristas contributed to the development of a new concept of democracy and politics, but do not show how interactions with the Vicaría and various feminist NGOs led to this concept. Moreover, they do not treat the de-radicalisation of the women, or the link between the distribution system and the women's thoughts.

Moreover, whilst the arpillera literature does mention that the women became interested in women's right issues (Agosin 1988) it does not analyse how exactly this happened, or why this interest diminished over time. I show why the women became less interested in political and gender issues, with time.

I also study the shantytown arpilleristas, which Agosin barely mentions. I also have attempted to portray workshop organisation and the nature of relations with the Vicaría, whereas Agosin (like Kunzle 1979 and Brett 1986) only sketches this very lightly. Moreno Aliste (1984) redresses the balance somewhat. In her examination of the organisations which administer the production of handicrafts (including arpilleras)- e.g. the Vicaría, FASIC, etc. she gives a sense of the organisation of production, and also of the distribution system in Santiago. However, she presents her data in raw form.

I have analysed the distribution system, whereas Agosin and the other authors do not describe it in depth. Kunzle describes briefly some distribution outlets for arpilleras abroad, but does not suggest how the arpilleras reach these outlets. He also suggests that in being sold abroad, the arpillera was used to arouse and inform politically, but does not detail how this worked. Moreover, by showing the way the market governed what the arpilleras looked like, I have shown that this is not the raw expression of women, but rather an expression in which creativity was severely restricted. The literature suggests that the women needed to express their bitter experiences and tell the outside world, but does not analyse how they came to make such images, or how such images were censored and controlled by the Vicaría and market.

I have analysed the themes in the arpilleras. Although much of the literature describes the themes in the arpilleras (e.g. Agosin 1988 and 1996, Kunzle 1979, Brett 1986, Moreno Aliste 1984, Jacques and Camus 1977), it does not analyse these themes in depth, or construct a chronology over two decades. I have also examined the arpilleras of the Nineties. This is something the literature (even Agosin's latest book) does not do. Indeed, Agosin claims erroneously that arpilleras are no longer being made.

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