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The Precarity of Sonic Geographies: Politics and Identity of Chilean Nueva Canción in  
East Germany

A Dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction  
of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

in

Music

by

Jesse Aaron Freedman

June 2022

Dissertation Committee:

Dr. Jonathan Ritter, Chairperson  
Dr. Liz Przybylski  
Dr. Christina Schwenkel  
Dr. Sarita Echavez See

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The Dissertation of Jesse Aaron Freedman is approved:

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## ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

The Precarity of Sonic Geographies: Politics and Identity of Chilean Nueva Canción in East Germany

by

Jesse Aaron Freedman

Doctor of Philosophy, Graduate Program in Music  
University of California, Riverside, June 2022  
Dr. Jonathan Ritter, Chairperson

This dissertation examines the reception, circulation, and production of the Chilean political song movement known as *nueva canción* (“new song”) in the former German Democratic Republic (East Germany – GDR). This music, and its practitioners who lived in exile in the GDR during the years of the Pinochet Dictatorship (1973–1990), drew on diverse range of experiences, styles, and aspirations as they wrote and performed songs in the global Chilean solidarity movement. Similarly, East German audiences interacted with these songs from a variety of subject positions and with different goals for the future of the socialist state. To examine these interactions, I introduce the term “sonic geography,” which refers to alternative forms of geographic and cartographic praxis

through musical and sonic engagement. I situate these alternate geographies within a framework of precarity, that I use here to describe how these formations were often unstable, fleeting, and contingent.

The dissertation is based around four case studies in which I draw on cultural products from the GDR and interviews with Chilean and East German musicians to trace the shifts in these sonic geographies over time. Specifically, I address: 1) changes in the representation and programming of Chilean artists at the Festival of Political Songs (1970–1990) in relation to East German ideas of space in the Global South; 2) processes of exchange and participation between Chileans and East Germans through political anthems in the *nueva canción* movement; 3) the political and musical development of the most prominent musicians in exile in the GDR and how this was impacted by the cities in which they lived and their unique backgrounds; 4) the presence of Chilean musical activity in various textual sources and how this offers a counter-narrative to mainstream depictions of East German space, memory, and history. These case studies draw on different materials, theoretical streams, and methodologies to examine relationships between sound and space around this community. The sonic geographies that these relationships formed and the precarities that marked the ways they were bound together offer alternative ways of considering how the Chilean community in exile shaped space both within and outside of the GDR.

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## *Chapter 1: Introduction*

### **A Precarious Interaction**

By the time I arrived at the Plaza Italia—since dubbed Plaza “Dignidad” by protestors—in downtown Santiago, I had been receiving messages and warnings to avoid the area for weeks. Administrators from the Chilean Fulbright Commission had explained to us how to mix *bicarbonato de sodio* and water to combat the effects of tear gas. The woman at the Chilean Consulate in New York who processed my visa was insistent that I reconsider my decision to travel. Various Chilean and expat colleagues, several of whom I never met, would periodically reach out to me with updates about the protests that had changed—and continue to change—the political, social, and cultural identity of Chile and its citizens. What began on October 14, 2019, as a coordinated subway fare evasion by high school students in response to a hike in metro prices, led to over a million people pouring out into the streets in cities across Chile to protest the neoliberal economic policies and social and political injustice against students, the working class, and Indigenous communities that had been in place since the years of the Pinochet Dictatorship (1973–1990). These events prompted violent confrontations with the police and gross violations of human rights by state forces as protestors literally dismantled their cities with aims of creating a future of possibility and hope. In every corner of Santiago, the songs of the *nueva canción* (“new song”) musical movement could be heard as a fragmented and hopeful soundtrack to a modern revolution.

I came to Plaza Dignidad on March 6, 2020, several months after the initial shockwaves of the *estallido social* (“social outburst”) had begun to abate, to see the band

Illapu perform a concert that had been coordinated through social media. A few days earlier I had been abruptly stopped on my bicycle when a group of students had begun hurling rocks at the militarized vehicles of the *carabineros* (Chilean police force) and were subsequently fired upon with tear gas grenades. After a few minutes, I, and the group of strangers with whom I was hiding, detected a safe moment to run across Avenida Vicuña Mackenna and avoid the wrath of the police who were clearly interested to resume firing.



Figure 1.1: Protest event at the Plaza Dignidad, March 2020, photo by Jesse Freedman

The discomfort of this earlier experience was still very present in my mind on the night of the concert, and I made my best efforts to navigate the streets safely and at a distance from the *carabineros*. After failing to park my bike at the Centro Gabriela

Mistral due to road closures and fires on Avenida Bernardo O'Higgins and seeing groups of fleeing students on Avenida Lira, I flipped back around Cerro Santa Lucía and pulled into the plaza on Merced. There were more fires on the road, but it was quiet. I started to see more and more people, a cross-section of Chilean society: students, workers on their way home, cyclists out for exercise. and people playing music, sitting with friends, making out, smoking pot.



Figure 1.2: Protest event at the Plaza Dignidad, March 2020, photo by Jesse Freedman

I pulled up and dismounted. Once again unable to find a bar or a tree (one that would be accessible in the event I needed to run) to which I could lock my bicycle, I opted to roll it alongside me into the crowd and squeezed my way around to the stage. There were three areas operating in sonically distinct ways at this event. There was the main concert stage where Illapu led the audience in familiar anthems of Chilean nueva canción such as “El pueblo unido jamás será vencido” (“The People United Will Never Be Defeated”) by Sergio Ortega, or a repurposed version of Víctor Jara’s “‘Móvil’ Oil Special” (“‘Mobil’ Oil Special”) with lyrics denouncing the then-President Sebastián Piñera. Another group had climbed atop and occupied the now repurposed bus stop at the corner of Vicuña Mackenna, conducting a *cacerolazo* (a noisy form of protest) banging fervently on their pots and on the warped metal of the stop itself. These rhythms had no relationship to the music emanating from the stage speakers and provided a powerful sonic counterpoint to the activities of the main concert. Lastly, there were people occupying smaller nodes of sonic counterpoint around the (now removed) statue of Gen. Baquedano. A group of students with a guitar sang Víctor Jara’s “*El derecho de vivir en paz*” (“The Right to Live in Peace”) at the foot of the general’s graffitied horse, upon which sat a group of shirtless boys shouting out indiscernible calls. Groups of drums and wandering guitarists paced through regions of the crowd. The periodic pop of tear gas grenades and other anti-riot weapons filtered in from several blocks away.

This complex and shifting sonic fabric produced a fundamentally different geographic orientation than the visual composition of this scene. While the carabineros ostensibly occupied the limit of this space, the sounds, songs, and voices of the various

participants in this event easily slipped passed their armored cars: Haitian and Venezuelan refugees calling from their stations selling arepas, beer, or handkerchiefs (for masks) threading in their own sonic and migratory narratives; two girls no older than fourteen waddling past, each holding the handle of a bag easily filled with 100 pounds of rocks and preparing to commence with their own contributions to the sonic landscape; a young man tearing across the crowd to the steps of the monument screaming out as he is mercilessly beaten by half a dozen pursuers. I can vaguely hear the music from the stage and know that that is my sonic north star, but as sounds move and reshape space around me, I lose my orientation. Finally, I find my way out of the crowd with my bicycle, approach a quiet street, and head home, periodically dodging piles of burning debris and hearing the sounds of Illapu, the cacerolas, and tear gas cannons fade into the distance.

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This scene demonstrates—or at least opens up the possibility for considering—many dimensions with regards to the relationships between music, politics, protest, and space. One thing that strikes me as profoundly resonant about this moment is the broader condition of precarity under which it took place: the precarity of my and the other participants safety at the hands of the police; the precarity of future for Chile and its government;<sup>1</sup> the precarity of sounds and songs meeting and clashing against the individual precarities felt by so many across the plaza. However, although precarity in

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<sup>1</sup> I am writing this about a week after Chile's December 2021 run-off election, which resulted in the election of Gabriel Boric, a 35-year-old student organizer, as president of the republic. This election is a monumental achievement for progressive causes not only in Chile, but around the world. While the majority of Chileans are experiencing a new sense of hope for the future of their country, I believe that this moment, for many, still feels marked by a sense of precarity.

this instance is useful in examining the past, present, and future of neoliberal policies in Chile, it is also a useful descriptor for the specific relationships between sound, space, and identity in this scene and the way these elements interact with and unsettle notions of fixity and boundedness. The soundtrack of Illapu and the other Chilean artists oriented towards progressive politics since the middle of the twentieth century was forged against the conflicting experiences of fear, hope, fascism, participation, exile, and possibility that produced it. Precarity here considers this plurality behind the sonic expressions of this community as an antagonist to renderings that try to mark it as a singularity without the possibility for exchange or even conflict. The musical activity of a group of Chilean artists in exile during the 1970s and 1980s resonated within and against the manifold other precarities of individuals, communities, and nation states during the Cold War. As this group traced across the world through song, they further inscribed their sonic products onto fleeting interactions between and ideas about place, space, and geography.

This multifarious and shifting set of sonic relationships marked the lives, work, and exchange around a particular group of Chilean musicians in exile and the ways they impacted space, music, and politics in the former German Democratic Republic (GDR). Due to the *nueva canción* movement's affiliation with the democratic election and ascendancy of socialist president Salvador Allende (1970–1973), this music was deployed by the East German Socialist Unity Party (SED) toward a variety of ends and shared a powerful connection with dimensions of the former state's political and musical future. After the coup, Chileans were received in the GDR as “freedom fighters” and the songs of this movement became a part of the soundtrack of not only the solidarity

movement against Pinochet, but anti-fascist movements around the world. Although Chileans were in exile in dozens of countries, East Germany's historical framing as an island, separated from the West, is made porous and complicated when we examine how this group sounded against ideas of geographic fixity. The music of this community was involved in processes of spatial mutability and revealed a feebleness to narratives of the kind of "x against y" binarism that underscores so much framing of the Cold War era. I would like to consider how precarity might describe the ways that these historical narratives come apart through examination and orientation around musical activity. Without denying the term's utility in evaluating experiences like trauma and vulnerability affiliated with exile, I also argue that it is useful in describing a condition that frames processes around the musical production and reflection of space and geography between two nationally defined groups comprised of innumerable subjectivities.

I also do not want to suggest here that Chileans in the GDR were somehow distinct in the way precarity marked their experience of exile. The effects of exile on Chileans permanently altered the lives, families, and identities of tens of thousands of individuals around the world. In the GDR though, ideas about space and borders that marked the lives of this exilic community were contentious and porous. On the one hand, as Charles Maier has argued, "[t]he Wall at the frontier had made possible all the walls within; the GDR had been a regime of walls, the most effective being within its citizens' heads" (1997, 56). This feeling of proscription and boundedness was no less experienced by migrant communities than by GDR citizens. On the other hand, Chileans participated in and contributed to a system of real and imagined exchanges across innumerable spaces

through a network of sounds and songs within a diffuse exilic community. The sense of possibility that these soundings represented was overlaid upon this “regime of walls”; never breaking them down, but rather affording opportunities to think and hear across them through the activity of a migrant community in an environment ontologically defined by a sense of demarcation (Major 2010). Although East Germany is a state that no longer exists on maps or on the register of member states at the United Nations, it is still present, often awkwardly and sometimes angrily dialoguing with the space of modern Germany. These fleeting and precarious geographies were animated in unexpected ways through their engagement with the sonic geographies of the Chilean community, which may today offer alternative legacies around the way the space of the GDR continues to resonate today.

This project is centered within the unstable borders of a state fortified both by the reality of the Berlin Wall and by the imaginaries of ideological and political walls during this era. As someone born at the end of the Reagan era and coming of age after 9/11, ideas about statehood, borders, and their impermeability were extremely vivid in my mind, especially in consideration of “The East”: that region from where my Jewish relatives emigrated in the early-twentieth century and to where certain “card-carrying” members of my family continue to invest in a precarious relationship. I assumed at the beginning of this project that the Chilean community entered into this fixity as a political and musical singularity producing a very clear point of contact between two distinct groups. However, this community and their music resonated within and across these borders partly in spite of, and partly as a product of their precarities. Similarly, the

evolution of the East German state, of its geocultural relations, and of its citizens, aspirations interacted in unique and unexpected ways with the Chilean musical community challenging any notion of boundedness or singularity. I present this scene at the beginning to show how an ensemble like Illapu, a group deeply connected with the history and changes of the GDR,<sup>2</sup> continues to transmit and participate in precarious exchanges in contemporary Chile, thereby ensuring the maintenance and connection between two otherwise distinct geographic and sonic possibilities.

## **Precarity**

Discussions on precarity have gained traction in response to increasing deregulation, instability, and uncertainty among vulnerable populations under advanced capitalism and neoliberal forms of economic and governmental organization. Several scholars (Butler 2004; Ettlinger 2007) have argued that precarity is an omnipresent feature of all social and political life. Anna Tsing, in her consideration of interconnectedness between ecological and political forces poses the question: “What if...precarity *is* the condition of our time—or, to put it another way, what if our time is ripe for sensing precarity? (2015, 20; italics in original). I think that most of us, in light of global climate crises, deregulated labor and financial markets, wars, and dozens of other political and economic uncertainties, need only look out the nearest window to experience precarity firsthand. But Tsing’s question is also an historiographic one—while

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<sup>2</sup> The group Illapu was detained and forcibly expatriated by the Pinochet dictatorship in October 1981. They lived for several years in exile in Paris but toured almost yearly in the GDR and were frequent invitees to the yearly Festival of Political Songs in Berlin. José Miguel Márquez, who performs on winds with the ensemble, lived in the GDR from 1984–1989 and still actively performs as a soloist and with Illapu in Chile and Germany (Márquez, email correspondence, January 8, 2021).

certainly the question of our time, the moment is also “ripe” for sensing its machinations and effects in the past and the ways they have caused us to arrive in this precarious present. This is in part what I hope to accomplish here: re-weaving the sonic threads of precarity from one particular historical moment to consider how they continue to resonate today.

It must be clarified here that the way I am using this term here is fundamentally distinct from the way it has evolved in philosophy and social science discourse. The condition of exile is, without question, marked by an experience of precarity. However, I am less interested here in making a claim about how precarity underscored—to a lesser or greater extent—the ways this group experienced life in comparison with other migrant groups or Chileans under non-socialist political formations. Instead, I am deploying this term to consider the sonic contributions of a particular exilic community to a political space that has historically been considered impermeable. Precarity here acknowledges and describes the awkward and unstable interweaving of sonic and spatial narratives in this unique environment.

There have been a number of critical special issues of journals devoted to precarity in the fields of Geography and Urban Studies (e.g., *Current Anthropology* 2015; *Cultural Geographies* 2018; *City and Society* 2021). These articles generally describe conditions distinct from the GDR as they examine experiences brought on by the recession of the State as opposed to its omnipresence as in the former socialist bloc. Nevertheless, nearly all of the articles concur that precarity is something processual, something that is experienced, produced, and challenged through intersections between

communities and the spaces they occupy. There is, therefore, a fundamental concern around the topic of borders—or, at least, an idea of boundedness—that obstructs our recognition of its processual character. Efforts to reduce the plurality and exchange in places and communities (Das and Walton 2015 and Fraser 2018 are two useful examples from the above-mentioned special issues) are similarly efforts to reduce the acknowledgement of precarity in social processes and the way it might be strategically mobilized by individuals and groups (Waite 2007). In another sense, and one that I draw on here to examine processes of exchange between sonic expression and space, it becomes useful to consider how ostensibly bounded activity tends to overflow the space to which it may be officially conscribed. As the (in this instance, sonic) activity of a group overflows beyond its borders, it brings markers of a unique experience into dialogue and exchange with similarly unbounded and overflowing environments. This is one way that precarity can be useful in describing generative and space-making techniques.

Judith Butler (2004) who has theorized precarity extensively, suggests that the articulation of boundedness (e.g., of the nation state or of the “enemy”) that is so prevalent in the media, obfuscates its existence as a broader condition that marks the lives of everyone. Instead, an acknowledgement of our precarity implies an ethical duty to other individuals and communities and this duty to another is inextricable from the ethical and social dimensions of exchange between precarious populations (2012, 148). They draw on Levinas’ argument that one can only exist through the confrontation with an “Other” that is ontologically prior to it, and this means that we must put the needs of

the other before the needs of ourselves (Levinas and Kearney 1986). In other words, the fullest realization of a sense of self (and here I would extend that sense to place and political identity as well) occurs as a relational process. This orientation to an Other, therefore, has powerful implications for our own sense of precarity since one's existence is predicated on the interaction and indebtedness to something other than ourselves. Rosine Kelz (2015) similarly follows Butler and Levinas and also Derrida's writing on "hospitality" to develop the idea of the "non-sovereign" as a precarious subject that can be imbued with a kind of radical sense of responsibility and reshape politics between communal groups and their others.

Over the course of this writing, I draw on the term as a descriptive technique in both overt and less-direct ways and in ways that are both inspired and distinct from the aforementioned scholars and their works. For example, in the second chapter, I interrogate the complex mobilization and framing of race in the GDR through an analysis of recordings and albums made of the yearly Festival of Political Songs in East Berlin. Chileans participated in this festival in eighteen of the twenty years of its existence (1970–1990) and were awkwardly positioned within and against ideas about race in a state with an equally awkward relationship to its past during the National Socialist era and its goals for its future. Talking about race here is as much a discussion of intersecting precarities as it is about racial politics in the GDR. In this context, race, and the mediation of race through expressive products, becomes another way to evaluate how it was conceptually articulated and undermined by the manifold intersections of subjectivities in the GDR. Similar discussions around issues of national identity (chapter

three) and migration (chapter four), realized against the sonic products of this community, are intended to illuminate how this descriptive use of precarity was an active agent in framing a wide array of social, political, and cultural conditions and experiences. In this sense, the idea of race in the GDR and in the context in which I evaluate it, was both produced and undermined by contingent and dynamic forces between both Chilean and German community members and institutions.

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The interest among geographers, philosophers, and social scientists in using precarity as a frame to reconfigure relationships between wealthy nation states, their political representatives, and vulnerable populations has a powerful resonance for this project defined around the exile of a community fleeing political violence and oppression. Immediately after the coup and the bombing of La Moneda presidential palace in Santiago in 1973, military forces began rounding up high-ranking members of the leftist parties that comprised Salvador Allende's *Unidad Popular* (Popular Unity – UP) coalition. A veritable industry of imprisonment, torture, and assassination was pursued by the dictatorship, resulting in thousands of left-aligned Chileans fleeing to embassies and boarding planes out of the country, often leading to the separation of families for years. Additionally, many prisoners were offered exile as an alternative to incarceration, or sentenced to exile after long periods of imprisonment and torture.

Arriving in new climates with new foods, customs, and languages, these individuals began uncertain lives abroad. Many lived in a condition of “in-betweenness” (Hirsch 2012, 47), neither feeling fully a part of the community in their new country nor

certain about when they would return to Chile. The messaging from party officials in exile, at least early on, suggested that the dictatorship would be only temporarily enforcing the uncomfortable condition of “living with one’s suitcases packed” (Wright and Oñate 2007, 38). In the mid-1980s, when the dictatorship finally began permitting the return of exiles from abroad, these “*retornos*” experienced a new form of alienation and discomfort due to propaganda from the dictatorship that exiles had been living easy or comfortable lives outside of Chile (Hirsch 2012; Norambuena 2000; Rebolledo González 2012).

The precarity of exile brought on by the dictatorship therefore has political and identificatory consequences that continue to have significance for Chileans around the world. However, these conditions brought on new forms of political and musical interaction that went across and retraced the geopolitical boundaries during the Cold War. The diffusion of Chilean politicians, intellectuals, and students led to a fragmenting and reorientation of Chilean politics abroad (Angell and Carstairs 1987). Exile was pursued as a political policy by the dictatorship as a means to destabilize and handicap the various leftist parties and their leadership, but this diffusion ultimately ended up amplifying the international presence of the Chilean Left (Wright and Oñate 2007, 39). The solidarity movement for the people of Chile and its resonance around the world was a product of many different positions and experiences of precarity coming together to form a powerful, albeit dynamic and continually changing source of political power. This movement was administrated at the “official” levels of the Chilean Left through party offices such as the Chile Anti-Fascist Committee (CHAF) in East Berlin through

publishing networks, rallies, and concerts. More than any other mode of solidarity mobilization, the circulation of Chilean music and songs inspired by the Chilean cause contributed to these dynamic constructions of space and geography around the world.

In the case of the GDR, Chileans were faced with uniquely contradictory experiences in comparison with those arriving in other nations. As a product of tensions and debates over the reasons for the failure of the Chilean socialist experiment, the Chilean Socialist Party (PS) headquarters in East Berlin in coordination with officials in the East German SED instituted a policy of “proletarianization,” which, however short-lived, placed intellectuals and professionals in manual labor positions (Pieper Mooney 2014, 283–5). Similarly, Jost Maurin (2005) demonstrates a complicated infrastructure of discipline and reward towards the Chilean population suggesting that this group was strategically instrumentalized to strengthen the position of the SED. On the other hand, due to the intensive energy mobilized around the public support of the Chilean community and their anti-fascist struggle, unusually large sums of money were invested to support them, prompting resentment among many GDR citizens (Poutrus 2005, 260–1). This support also facilitated Chileans crossing the border between the East and the West to participate in conferences and concerts to promote solidarity against the dictatorship.

These descriptions clearly underscore the unique and oftentimes contradictory experiences for many Chileans living in the GDR. However, I do not suggest that this community was somehow uniquely vulnerable compared to Chileans in other countries or to other migrant groups in the GDR. Similarly, I am not offering precarity here to dilute

what several scholars have demonstrated as its real potential for fostering activism and political engagement in communities with complex migratory statuses or relations to hegemonic forms of labor organization (Archambault 2021; Das and Walton 2015; Tsianos and Papadopoulos 2006; Waite 2009). Instead, I hope that this work shows that multiple precarities are present in many—if not most—forms of political, cultural, social, and migratory exchange, and that when this exchange occurs, it is inseparable from beliefs and understandings about the spaces that shift around it. Theorizing precarity in this way suggests the possibility that, rather than appearing as an instantiation, it is something mutually produced, itself the product of the multitude of precarities behind it. In this way it is not unlike Thomas Claviez’s (2016) framing of “contingencies” within communities. For communities attempting to forestall a possible contingency, they will only reveal the unexpectedness of another future contingency. This dynamic interplay between engagement and possibility results in an irreparable tear in a social fabric; the source for what Jean-Luc Nancy, in the same volume and contributing its title refers to as “the common growl.”

Whereas Claviez and Nancy are interested in the machinations around this precarity with regards to the ways communities relate to themselves and one another as political actors, I am interested in how these dynamics of intersecting precarities have an impact on the spaces around which they occur. The role of *nueva canción* in exile was a powerful resource in reshaping the space around continental Europe and elsewhere. The soundings of this community, whether recorded or fleeting in a concert hall, brought in the identities, histories, and aspirations of all those that participated in its sonic

occurrence. The failure of the songs to be *one thing*, just as the community that produced them failed to exist as a singularity, even while working collectively, resulted in their soundings across and against the geographic borders that similarly failed in their singularity around them. This relationship between precarity, sound, and space is therefore consistent with the way that Tim Ingold frames our world of experience, and also the way that we think about it, in terms of the intersection of various forms of lines (2007; 2015). Many of my own preliminary assumptions in this project described above might stem from what Ingold describes as a kind of prominence in modern thinking of dots over lines (2007, 73–5) or “objects,” such as “blocks,” “chains,” and “containers” over “knots” (2015, 15). Although he does not use the word “precarity,” “knots,” which is his preferred metaphor for considering the ways that people, ideas, cities, and pretty much everything else comes into contact, reveals a sense of precarity that affords possibility for dynamism and movement. The possibility that a knot might come undone is precisely what allows us to consider the extensiveness and impact, the future and history, of the fibers that weave themselves to form them. Here song is but one of several fibers weaving knots with the conditions and space in which it emerges.

Lastly, whereas Ingold uses the knot as a metaphor for the intersection between two lines, he also provides a powerful model for considering the nature of the line’s inscription onto its environment. He describes two major classes of lines: “thread[s]...which may be entangled with other threads or suspended between points in three-dimensional space” (2007, 41) and “trace[s]...any enduring mark left on a solid surface by continuous movement” (2007, 43). These two classes of lines can interact with

one another in ways that either reveal or reduce awareness of the “surface” underlying them. Ingold’s metaphor here is fascinating and I think the interaction between these two classes of lines has a political implication when theorized in connection with the socio-political tension described by Claviez and Nancy. However, for the purposes here, lines and knots, while presenting abundant theoretical possibilities, provide a way of seeing the multiple fibers of interwoven experience of Chileans exiles and the ways their soundings were heard, instrumentalized, and written on to the space of the GDR.

Framing precarity in this way, I hope, will complicate certain dimensions of the history of *nueva canción* and particularly its reception in exile. By setting it as a dynamic that surrounds the fibers threaded against various spatial and sonic intersections from many unique subject positions, the threading of its various traces and the re-tracing of those various threads continually subjected East German space to processes of reinscription (Ingold 2007, 52). In this way, I hope to frame the Chilean community in exile as active agents that drew on a dynamic of precarity to construct new spatial narratives and possibilities. Similarly, we see the ways that this group was mobilized by East German officials, students, recording agents, and artists further reframing Chilean spatial and sonic agency. Rather than a group exclusively or solely define in their precariousness as a product of trauma, violence, and uncertainty, this work shows their active contributions to and destabilization of East German space.

### **Nueva Canción**

If precarity is a sort of descriptive condition that this work assumes about space and exchange in the GDR, then *nueva canción* and the artists broadly connected with it

are the instrument by which this condition is, at least here, functionally realized. Nueva canción is sometimes described as a genre and sometimes as a movement, but it emerged as a concept in the 1960s and spread across the Spanish-speaking Americas and Brazil in connected forms. It is generally defined by a synthesis of Indigenous and popular music forms and draws on a broadly Pan-American canon of themes, rhythms, and styles. The music was partly a response to the domination of European and American popular music in Latin American music markets and the general commercialized character of the Latin American record industry (Carrasco 1982, 7–9). Eduardo Carrasco who was one of the founders of the ensemble Quilapayún describes the goals of the movement as such:

The nueva canción seeks to revitalize a tradition, whether it be the folkloric music or the popular music and consciously seek to establish a bridge between a song of the past and a new creation...In any case, throughout the movement of nueva canción, the new will be constructed in the bedrock of the old bringing forth its original valor. (1982, 15)

The foregrounding and integration of folkloric and Indigenous traditions therefore offered a kind of antidote to the commercialization of the hegemony of the music industry as well as a national character that allowed artists to distinguish their musical style.

Locating Chilean national identity in the songs of miners, the working class, and Indigenous communities gave the music a powerful political identity as it denounced the injustices of which these communities were some of the most prominent victims. Marisol García suggests that, “[i]n almost every one of the songs [in the nueva canción movement] beats a same pulse of collective demand and outrage over our continued inequality. This pulse of liberty and communal reflection has resulted over the long term to be a mark of cultural identity” (2013, 13). Similarly, Nancy Morris states that, “[n]ew

Song [sic] musicians do not seek to create escapist entertainment but endeavor instead to voice current reality and social problems in a meaningful style” (1986, 117). This characterization of militant denunciation of injustice, was concomitant with the political orientation of many other folk revival movements in the United States and Europe at the same time, many of which were forged in the context of larger human rights movements and opposition to the Vietnam War. This “militant” character became a core element of understanding the movement for international audiences, especially after *nueva canción* began to circulate more widely around the world after the military coup and the forced exile of many musicians affiliated with it. In many ways however, its persecution by the dictatorship and its affiliation with the presidency of Salvador Allende has immobilized much of its historical and continuing political impact.

In the case of exile, the artistic and creative developments have generally received less attention than the ways musicians were operationalized in broader anti-fascist movements (Fairley 1989; McSherry 2015). This work of denunciation was critical both as a component of life in exile and as a core element of exilic identity for Chileans, for whom many had complicated feelings of shame for fleeing.

I met with the former sub-secretary in the Ministry of Culture under Chilean President Michelle Bachelet, Lilia Concha, in a café in the Chilean neighborhood Nuñoa for a conversation around her thoughts about the role of Chilean political song during the years of the dictatorship. Her father, Marcelo Concha, was detained in 1973 and tortured by Chilean military forces in the Chacabuco prison camp in the north of Chile. He was a member of the ensemble “Los de Chacabuco,” which formed in prison and was directed

by Ángel Parra. After his release from prison, he was detained again on May 10, 1976, and was disappeared by DINA (secret police force under Pinochet) agents. Lilia Concha has spent her entire adult life denouncing the human rights abuses of the dictatorship and she offered a more expansive understanding of the role of song in political movements. She suggested to me that song has three principal functions: protest, denunciation, and therapy (personal communication, February 26, 2020). We might suggest that these three functions correspond to various conditions of precarity at state, communal, and personal levels. Relegating the function of *nueva canción* to only one dimension of the precarity ignores the productive and progressive ways it comes into interaction with other circumstances and identities. Perhaps ironically, portraying this group exclusively as political militants may actually undermine some of the political power they were able to exert. There is likely not a single musician in the *nueva canción* movement in exile that would not foreground the militancy and denunciation of their song. However, I believe it is also important, especially for those looking at this moment from outside perspectives, to approach this era and this artistic community through multiple spaces of artistic and political identity.

Even for Eduardo Carrasco, writing in 1982, a time of incredible political activity for *nueva canción* artists in exile, the resignation of the movement strictly to the realm of the political seems to reduce the humanity and history behind the songs:

...the Nueva Canción can neither be reduced to the political, nor can its complexity [*problemática*] be dealt with [*despachar*] with a simple gesture of indifference or refusal, as if it was purely the work of partisanship or sectarianism: it is part of the historical movement of Latin America and even its political aspects have a development that has not stopped and has continued delivering an unprecedented experience of the

influence that a small genre of popular art can have in the struggles of common people. (1982, 42-3)

This perspective represents a powerful counterpoint to framings of the movement as locked into a political moment and identity oriented around the coup. For Lilia Concha these songs continued—and continue—to provide a resource for navigating aspects of trauma and memory associated with the dictatorship (see Lazzara 2006; Stern 2010). Juan Pablo González (1989), conversely, argues for the movement's artistic evolution over the period of exile, suggesting that it continued to push the boundaries of Latin American folklore and reveal progressive approaches to artistic production. These perspectives reflect two considerations of the way the movement evolved over time. However, the change, flexibility, and precarity of these narratives have posed challenges, particularly for western scholars, positioning the reception and role of this music in the binary geopolitical dynamics of the Cold War. Instead, this work here aims to offer another possibility with regards to how the music shifted and changed while in exile and how these changes interacted with equally shifting conceptions about space and geography during this time.

### **Nueva Canción Between Eastern and Western Europe**

It is useful to discuss a little further how the Chilean musical community emerged on the world stage during the years of the Allende presidency and after the coup. Of the approximately 200,000 Chilean refugees that fled in the immediate aftermath of the coup, between one third and one half ended up in Western Europe (Wright and Oñate 2007, 36). At the time of the coup, the two most popular ensembles affiliated with the Allende

campaign, Quilapayún and Inti-Illimani, were on tour in Europe and, because of their strong connections to the Chilean Left, were forced to remain out of the country in exile for the next seventeen years (until the end of the dictatorship) in Paris and Rome respectively. Due to the prominence of these groups in the solidarity movement and the discourse around their experience as freedom fighters who were essentially marooned in continental Europe, much of the discussion around nueva canción in exile has tended to center around their artistic productivity in the West (see Bessière 1980; Cobos and Sater 1986).

The Chilean community in Eastern Europe has, conversely, received considerably less attention, and the musical activities of Chilean musicians in exile in Eastern Europe have typically centered around performances by groups in the West such as Inti-Illimani and Quilapayún performing at the Festival of Political Songs, which was held yearly in East Berlin between 1970–1990. These events were by far the most significant sites of international musical exchange in the GDR, and each year for a week in February dozens of artists from all around the world arrived to exchange songs associated with various leftist and workers movements. “The festival was for many a ‘leftist creative island,’” describes former festival organizer Lutz Kirchenwitz, “a free space where things could be tried out that up to that point were not customary in the GDR” (1993, 69). Although he also notes expected instances of censure and banning of lyrics, artists, or materials, these events provided “untypical freedom of movement and looseness” and “a window to the world” for young East Germans (1993, 71). Chilean artists were some of the more powerful and prominent performers at these events due to their association with the

Allende election and broad support after the coup. East German officials responded to the energy around the community at the festival awkwardly, attempting to simultaneously demonstrate public support while also tempering perceptions of the group's freedom of movement and political cosmopolitanism (see Chapter Two).

However, while the political and social impact of the festivals—and of Chilean artistic presence at them—is crucial in understanding how *nueva canción* circulated and interacted with the precarities of East German space, the historical emphasis on this event as the only real space of exchange between these groups obfuscates other instances of generative and awkward interaction. For instance, a number of important *nueva canción* groups resided in the GDR that have been historically under-considered in the history of the movement. Aparcoa, an ensemble that formed in Santiago in 1965 at the School of Architecture at the University of Chile, resided in the northern port city of Rostock. A connection at the Bulgarian embassy facilitated their leaving Chile shortly after the coup, after which they made their way on to the GDR. The ensemble Tiempounuevo was based in both Dresden and the former Karl-Marx-Stadt (today Chemnitz). The group Jaspampa formed in Leipzig in 1972 and later merged with another group of Chilean students to form the group Alerce. These groups, and others based in the GDR, performed on East German television, radio, and at smaller festivals and concerts. The members of Illapu (mentioned above), were able to continue performing in Chile up through 1981, when they were refused reentry after a European tour. After one of the group's members, José Miguel Márquez, moved to East Berlin to study in 1984, the group and their politics became deeply imbricated in the fabric of East German political and cultural life. These

artists travelled as representatives, both of Chile in the larger movement for solidarity, and also of the GDR to support the state's cultural interests in events and festivals abroad. For example, in 1981 the group Alerce was sent to represent the GDR at a similar political song festival in Beirut sponsored by the Lebanese Communist Party. Representing both Chile and the GDR, they served a complex and dynamic function abroad as transnational ambassadors or, in the words of guitarist Cirilo Adriazola Salas, “un grupo de la casa” (personal communication, December 9, 2020). Through this process they traced new paths of connection between the “Three Worlds” of the Cold War and established new dynamics and spaces through interactions between their own precarities and those of the worlds they occupied.

Despite the central role of exile in disseminating nueva canción across the globe during the years of the dictatorship, case studies of artists in exile have received comparatively little attention and those of artists in the GDR, even less. Jan Fairley's (1989) ethnographic work with the ensemble ¡Karaxú! was one of the earliest English-language analyses of Chilean music-making in exile. This group, which was comprised of members of the *Movimiento de Izquierda Revolucionaria* (Revolutionary Left Movement – MIR), notably formed in exile as a product of the global solidarity movement with Chile. Fairley here presents a kind of structuralist analysis of concerts by ¡Karaxú! in England suggesting that the presentation, set list, and other elements of performance actually communicate a deeper meaning and were specifically choreographed to connect with the audience in certain ways.

Several “testimonial” and autobiographical texts have appeared both during the years of the dictatorship and after the return to democracy. Osvaldo Rodríguez, who was initially in exile in the GDR but later left to live for periods of time in France, the former Czechoslovakia, and Italy, thereby earning the nickname “Gitano,” produced numerous texts of which his most well-known is the testimonial *Cantores que reflexionan* ([1984] 2016). Eduardo Carrasco wrote *La revolución y las estrellas* (2003), which was named after their 1982 album and presented an historical account of Quilapayún from the late-1960s through the years in exile.

After the turn of the twenty-first century, we begin to see more interest in the circulation of Chilean music in exile exploring the ongoing organization of musicians that remained abroad after the end of the dictatorship (Knudsen 2001). Nancy Morris (2006) has produced a valuable analysis of some of Osvaldo Rodríguez’s epistolary correspondence and examined the ways it tracks his movement across Europe in exile. There are also a number of important works centered around the activities of the Chilean singer and folksong collector Violeta Parra (1939–1967) and her children Ángel and Isabel in France in the 1950s that describe her instrumentality in transnational development of what would become nueva canción as well as the particular orientation of the movement towards ideas about Indigeneity (Rios 2008; Verba 2013). Lastly, beginning in the mid-2010s, a renewed look at the nueva canción engaged in decentering and pluralizing narratives around the movement’s history has taken root particularly among younger scholars in the Southern Cone. This work has been highly influential for my own work as it gives prominence to less frequently discussed figures in the movement

(Jordán González 2014 in Karmy and Farías et al. 2014) and the importance and circulation of Chilean music in Europe during the dictatorship (Gavagnin 2021; Mamani 2013; Rodríguez Aedo 2014; 2016).

On Chileans in the GDR specifically, there has been very little written that takes this experience as something unique and needing to be considered distinctly from broader analyses of Chilean exile and artistic activity in Europe more generally. Claudia Sandberg (2017; 2021) has examined the work of Chilean and East German filmmakers working for the *Deutsche Film-Aktiengesellschaft* ([East] German Film Company – DEFA), which produced dozens of Chile-inspired films from the 1970s through the fall of the Berlin Wall. Musical artists such as those mentioned above were frequently contracted to develop the scores for these DEFA projects. Sandberg is keen to explore the ways these films reveal conditions of memory and nostalgia among Chileans both during the period of exile and among young people growing up in Chile after the dictatorship. Christina Richter-Ibáñez (2020) has also given attention to Chilean and other Latin American song translations by the East German *Liedermacher* (song maker) Gerhard Schöne and how they informed his political activism. These themes pertaining to memory, international exchange, and political engagement through song are further expounded upon in the present work.

The two most significant works that focus specifically on Chileans in the GDR deal less with artistic concerns and occupy themselves more with political and migration questions. Inga Emmerling (2013) has produced an extensive account of the political and economic relations between Chile and the GDR going back even a decade before

Allende's election. This work is significant as it demonstrates that Chile did not just suddenly appear on the radar of the GDR after the coup, but instead had a longstanding cultural and diplomatic exchanges with it and other Eastern European states. Sebastian Koch's (2016) work on Chileans in the GDR is probably the most systematic and extensive study of the topic to date. He includes one chapter on Chilean artists and culture behind the Wall but is much more concerned with processes of integration and the selection of Chileans to be granted exile.

The present work certainly draws from historical and archival analyses such as these to develop context for the work and reception of Chilean artists in exile, but it is less systematic in approach. Instead, I develop several different points of intervention into geographic and spatial questions centered around Chilean musical activity. This music was consumed and experienced in many different contexts and therefore requires a more flexible framework for interrogating it. Similarly, while topics like the Stassi (East German Secret Police), supervision, and censorship certainly appear, they play less of a central role than they do in works by Koch and Emmerling. The reason for this is not to provide some sort of rosy depiction of life in the GDR, but rather because these elements and the administrative forces that directed them were so integral to the way that space was experienced in the GDR that framing them in a unique relation to Chilean cultural production runs the risk of fetishizing the conditions around this activity. The conditions of precarity around which this community came into contact with conditions of restriction or supervision is just one of many precarious interactions between the different strata of sonic space.

## **Sonic Geography**

The precarious interactions between sounds, identities, and ideas about politics and nationhood reveal and contribute to shifting and unstable constructions of space that I refer to as “sonic geographies.” Sonic geography is an alternative form of geographical praxis, one in which music, as a product of diverse and complex meaning, is mapped onto an environment or place. This mapping is imperfect, and it resists cartographic legibility as the landscape into which it enters is itself a product of its own precarities. *Nueva canción* was a sonic index of Chilean ideas of pastness and futurity. It located ideas about state-making and geographic agency across the Spanish-speaking Americas and Brazil in musical subjects that resisted the region’s colonial history and commercial influences from the United States and Europe. During the Allende campaign and after his election, the songs of the movement decentralized the “idea” of Chile, incorporating the experiences of miners in the North, Indigenous communities in the Andean region, and working-class families in rural areas and cities. In this way, the musical participation in the promise and future that *nueva canción* offered artists and audience members in Chile before September 11, 1973, was also a way of reinscribing the landscape and one’s relation to it with new geographic possibility.

After the coup, the music of the Chilean community in exile did not cease to index the possibility of reconfiguring space both in Chile and abroad. Solidarity concerts and activities were ostensibly oriented around political issues like protecting democracy, or human rights issues like denouncing political violence and imprisonment, but these issues were also framed by the omnipresent possibility that musical activity could lead to

the reshaping of space. This sense of possibility was crucial for a community engaging with various conditions of precarity in the GDR, and this musical participation and engagement also facilitated access to space in ways unrecognized or inaccessible to many East German citizens. These processes of reconstruction posed a vague threat for elements of the SED agenda as it challenged official narratives about international aid projects and the political agency of cultural representatives from the Global South (Chapter Two). Conversely, this reconstruction also offered opportunities to many younger East Germans desiring deeper engagement in their own political lives in a system that afforded the average citizen very little in the way of political and space-making agency (Chapter Three). Nueva canción and the Chilean community therefore came into a very complex and precarious system of relationships and conceptions about space and who would participate in it.

This last point is perhaps where my framing of the relationship between sound and space slightly differs from Kristie Dorr's (2018), whose work has been extremely influential for the present study. As in her analysis of what she terms "performance geographies," I am deeply invested in undermining binaristic framings of "global" and "local" and the ways sounding within these contexts occur within bounded dynamics. As she argues:

To think the spatial and the aural together...is to enliven registers that, through their subordination to the (purportedly) animate corollaries of the visual and temporal, have often suffered a common fate: relegation to static and/or abstracted domains such as Euclidean backdrop or reflective node. (2018, 8–9)

The sonic, in this way, becomes an application by which we can disrupt notions of its fixity or containment within a rigid space. This is an important consideration for the present work as we see numerous situations in which Chileans literally and symbolically crossed and reshaped borders through sound and song. However, her work under-acknowledges the relationship between precarities of participants and a precarious sonic geography. Her work seems to suggest that musical participation in an unstable and shifting event occurs as a kind of antagonism or rejection against the way space is constructed within a neoliberal and capitalist geography. This dynamic of sonic-geographic hegemony appears to establish a new form of binarism in line with Hardt and Negri's (2000) theorizing of "empire" or Chatterjee's (2004) notion of the "political society."

Dorr's work here takes seriously the economic dynamics that stratify geographic-sonic possibility between cultural representatives of the Global South and the role of their cultural work in the Global North. Performance geographies are a strategy for recognizing the "circulation of musical performances as at once *in situ*, or 'intelligible in the framework of the immediate environment and issues surrounding them,' and *in flux* or perpetually (re)shaping the very function and meaning of their contexts of elaboration" (2018, 17). However, geographies produced out of capitalist and neoliberal political organization, in her analysis, are not compatible with the precarious soundings of the vulnerable communities in a hegemonic relationship to the space they sound within.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> I want to be clear here to not to elide the geopolitical and economic types of organization that structure the way Dorr is thinking about sonic practice and responses to space, particularly since East Germany was a

Space here becomes an antagonist to sounding and performance geography becomes “rooted in performance cultures rather than capitalist scales, positing the site/sound relationship as an entangled negotiation between dispossession and embodiment, displacement and territoriality, muting and sounding” (2018, 17–8).

My thinking of sonic geography, on the other hand, is perhaps one that works in an *agonistic* relationship with ideas of fixity, hegemonic and/or violent geographies, or, in Dorr’s reading, “scales” (see also Smith 1992). Neil Smith (1992) talks about scales as actively contested and engaged sites that are both constructed by social processes, while also providing the space in which certain activities are conducted. Examples of scales might be bodies, homes, cities, regions, and nation states. This framing is productive in thinking about sonic geography as it problematizes what Smith identifies as a purely metaphorical identification of spatial construction. In other words, and apt to the discussion of the cultivation of space through musical activity, a scale produced through a musical community would not simply be some metaphorical site of retreat housing a singular musical community and existing in a state of marginalization to some larger scale. Instead, the sonic articulation of scale, manifesting in sonic geography, actually provides the conditions for other forms of scale to participate within and against it. He states:

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socialist state. However, Sharad Chari and Katherine Verdery (2009) argue that while the economic and social policies that framed First and Second World interventions in the then-Third World were ostensibly opposed, they had significant cumulative effects on the shaping of space and experience for much of the world that cannot be evaluated strictly on binary terms. Michele Lancione (2022) has also convincingly argued the carrying over of socialist economic and geographic values and their connection with contemporary forms of urban housing predation.

Refracted in the mirror of a highly rigid absolute space, metaphorical space carves out "room to move," the space in which to be fecund, dialectical, life-giving. It is in this way that metaphorical space gains its richness—at the expense of material space, whose impoverishment it reinforces. Indeed, the metaphors succeed only by retaining the most traditional and most totalizing of modernist spatial narratives. (1992, 64)

Sonic geographies overlaid upon existent notions of space work to reveal interwoven precarities present within and across the various strata. The picture here becomes three-dimensional. Whereas antagonistic performance geographies describe relations between sounding and space on the same plane, overlain sonic geographies reveal precarities within other axes of geographic comprehensibility. Again, here we might find useful Ingold's various framings of lines and knots as they account for the manifold pasts, presents, and futures that, in this case a sonic line, might retain as it inscribes itself upon a performance/listening environment. Similarly, Ingold's description of "surfaces" (2015, 41–5), comprised of infinitely intertwining lines, knotting and disentangling themselves, continually revealing new avenues of connection and surfaces, is an apposite description for the way sonic geographies bring various intersections of precarity into focus.

This distinction here is not to undermine Dorr's development of performance geography. Just as I am deploying the notion of "precarity" to describe a set of conditions different from those articulated by geographers and social scientists theorizing precarity, I am also here describing a different dynamic of spatial-sonic relationships than Dorr. Indeed, her geographic analysis is invariably more appropriate than mine for describing the particular conditions and questions at the heart of her investigation. A convenient feature of Ingold's development of lines as an ontological condition, holds that these and

other forms of sonic-spatial framing need not be incompatible with one another. Instead, they reflect the orientation and paths of all the lines in question.

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One interesting example of sonic geography oriented around Chilean music making in the GDR can be seen through the union of two student groups, Jaspampa and Tierra del Fuego, into a new group, Alerce. This new group performed Luis Advis' *Cantata Santa María de Iquique*, which tells the story of a historic miners' strike leading to a horrible massacre at the hands of mine owners and was made famous by the group Quilapayún. Alerce's performance of the piece resonated in unexpected and dynamic ways within the cultural fabric of the GDR and is just one exciting example of this sonic-spatial overlap. Cirilo Adriazola who arrived in the GDR in 1976 as a teenager fleeing the Chilean military was a member of Tierra del Fuego and later Alerce. When we spoke over Zoom in the summer of 2020, he jokingly referred to the "rivalry" between the two groups before they joined due to their different artistic perspectives. It was important, however, for members of both groups to perform the cantata as it brought distinctive forms of their experience in exile, their artistic aspirations, and their history into dialogue with East German space.

Adriazola described to me over Zoom how it was very important that they not only performed the famous work at the highest caliber, but also that it was transformed as a product of East German-Chilean artistic cooperation:

*La principal tarea era apoyar el trabajo de solidaridad con Chile y con los países latinoamericanos también. Pero también promover la integración cultural de los chilenos en Alemania. Eso era una tarea muy importante... había dos tipos de intercambio: uno era con*

*músicos académicos, músicos de conservatorio, y queda músicos de conservatorio integrándose en el trabajo de este grupo Alerce. Y el otro era los contactos del grupo Alerce con otros músicos y grupos activos en Alemania. Eso era las dos formas de cooperación que había. Cuando comenzamos a trabajar en La Cantata de Santa María de Iquique se integraron músicos del conservatorio apoyar la obra. Porque requería contrabajo y cello a la Cantata. Entonces como José estudiaba en el conservatorio y la profesora chilena también estaba ahí entonces nos apoyaban con integración de jóvenes músicos alemanes, que mas tarde después de la cantata siguieron con el grupo.*

The principal objective was to support the work of solidarity with Chile and also with the other Latin American countries. But also, to promote the cultural integration of Chileans in Germany. That was a really important objective...there were two forms of exchange: one with academic musicians, musicians from the conservatory, and there were conservatory musicians joining the work of Alerce. And the other were contacts between the group Alerce and other musicians and groups active in Germany. Those were the two forms of cooperation that existed. When we began work on the *Cantata Santa Maria de Iquique*, musicians from the conservatory joined to support the work, because it required bass and cello. So when José [Perez] was studying in the conservatory and the Chilean [music] professor was also there, they supported us with the integration of young German musicians that continued with the group long after the cantata (personal communication, July 7, 2020).

In this way, the work became a sonic strategy for integrating diverse histories with different relationships to GDR space into the more mainstream experience of East German singularity. The ensemble used the cantata as a means to integrate with GDR culture, but in doing so, they established new possibilities for exchange and connection rooted around these complex subjectivities of the ensemble members negotiating life in exile.

Ricardo López, who was the musical director of Alerce during this time before he left the GDR in 1979 to live in Cyprus (where he still remains today), also describes how the cantata led to a broader integration of the group into more diverse and public spaces

in the GDR. López arrived in 1966 as a student in economics and began performing with a colleague for students and Latin American groups in the GDR. Eventually they began performing for workers at factories. He responded to some questions of mine about this period over email:

*Expresaban así su solidaridad y en algún nivel un cierto paternalismo hacia estos “muchachos” que aún no habían recorrido el camino del Socialismo. El proceso que nos llevó a entender la necesidad de mejorar nuestros conocimientos musicales fue más lento y de mayor duración.*

They expressed their solidarity and at some level a certain paternalism towards those “muchachos” that still had not been down the road of Socialism. The process that made us understand the necessity to improve our musical understanding was slower and took longer. (Personal Communication, June 13, 2020)

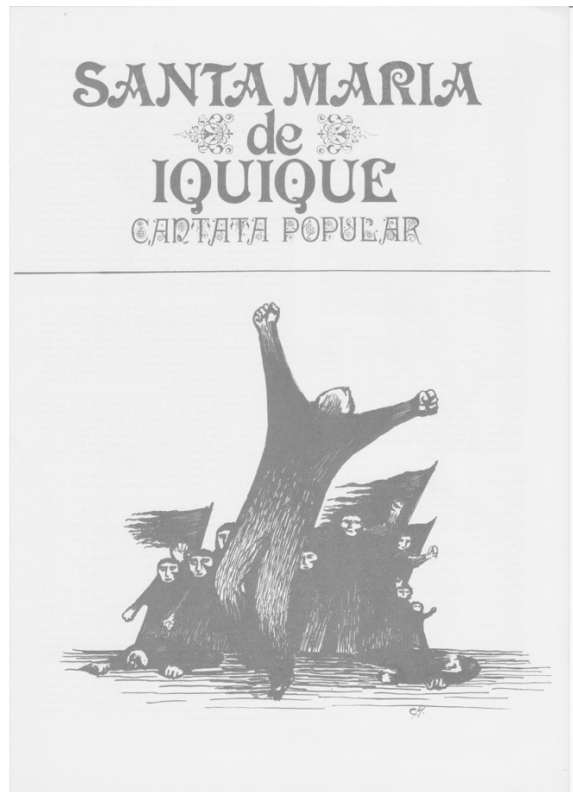


Figure 1.3: Program Cover from Alerce's 1977 Performance of the *Cantata Santa María de Iquique*

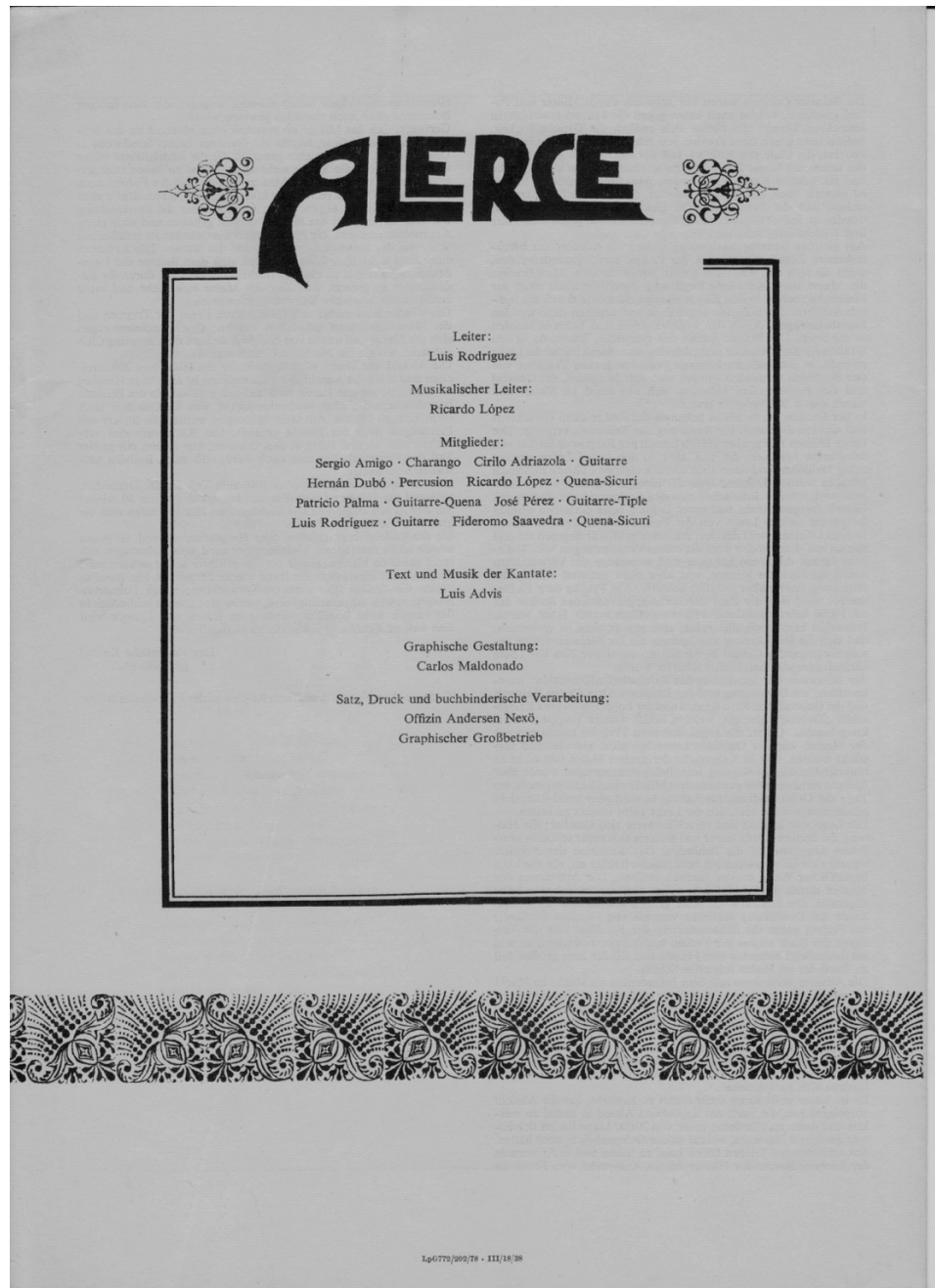


Figure 1.3: Program notes from Alerce's 1977 Performance of the *Cantata Santa María de Iquique*

He goes on to say that groups like Inti-Illimani and Quilapayún functioned as a kind of “academy” for these young artists providing them the musical resources to professionalize and develop creatively. Here we can therefore see Alerce's performance

of the cantata functioning both as a continuation and a repurposing of a critical musical text in the GDR to produce new possibilities of access and exposure, thereby shaping spaces of reception and participation in their music. The group traces a line through the history of the nueva canción movement while simultaneously shaping the space around them with their own unique identities.

*No se propusimos el nivel conocimientos musicales de nuestros integrantes. En ese momento, nosotros descubrimos, ninguno de nosotros había pasada por una académica musical. Entonces descubrimos...Pero bajando sobre textos musicales que ya habían sido interpretados por conjuntos como Quilapayún o Inti-Illimani, podíamos adquirir una parte de ese conocimiento. Hasta que llegamos en 1977 a trabajar la partitura la Cantata Santa María de Iquique. Y eso trabajamos...nos tomó algo como cuatro meses. En preparar primero las partituras para cada instrumento y después iniciar el estudio de las partituras. Empezamos en el verano de 1977 y presentamos la cantata en noviembre del mismo año.*

We didn't determine the level of musical knowledge for our members. In that moment, we discovered, none of us had been in a musical academy. So, we discovered...But working with the musical texts that had already been interpreted by groups like Quilapayún and Inti-Illimani, we could acquire a part of that knowledge... Until we arrived in 1977 to work on the score for the *Cantata Santa María de Iquique*. And we worked on it...it took us four months. At first, we had to prepare the scores for each instrument and after to begin the study of the scores. We began in the summer of 1977, and we presented the cantata in November of the same year (personal communication, August 6, 2020).

López left the GDR several years after the performance of this work in 1977, but he has suggested that it opened up many new avenues for Alerce. Although he recognizes here the connection between the cantata with more prominent groups like Quilapayún and Inti-Illimani, it is notable that he marks the work on this piece as a kind of shift away from their tutelage. Both Adriazola and López here deploy the *Cantata Santa María de Iquique* as a technique in artistic and cartographic praxis. Beyond its function as one of the core

pieces in the nueva canción literature, they both describe approaching this piece with distinct aims and establishing ways to thread these aims within and against the space around them in East Germany.

### **Space and Place in Ethnomusicology and Social Science**

Scholars have been concerned with the dynamism and contingency of place and geography now for a number of decades. Margaret C. Rodman ([1992] 2003) offers a useful summary and critique of much of the early anthropological literature on the social development of place. She argues that, historically, ethnographers have reduced the multifarious and individual dimensions of space to the “locale,” which circumscribes the activity and processes of exchange between spaces and also substitutes the spatially oriented practices of one group for a larger area ([1992] 2003, 204). She offers the idea of “multilocality” to situate multiple and dynamic relations between individuals and spaces and the many voices that contribute to the production of a sense of place ([1992] 2003, 212). Gupta and Ferguson (1992) similarly argue against an assumed naturalization of spatial distinctiveness, Otherness, and compartmentalization, suggesting that these concepts are the products of historical oppressive tactics of land stratification. They argue, “notions of locality or community refer both to a demarcated physical space *and* to clusters of interaction...the identity of a place emerges by the intersection of its specific involvement in a system of hierarchically organized spaces with its cultural construction as a community or locality” (1992, 8; italics in original). Theorizing about space, place, and geography in the late-twentieth and early twenty-first century therefore, in addition to demonstrating the social contingency of spatial configurations, also demonstrated how

these contingencies were imbricated in historical imbalances of power (Feld and Basso 1996, 4–5; Massey [1993] 2018).

The emphasis on the fact that places and geographies are produced through complex and frequently unstable interactions between movements of people and cultural, economic, and political exchanges resulted in a necessary interrogation of how those interactions manifested in shifting spaces around the globe. We see a further fragmenting and repurposing of spaces within spaces dependent on vantage point, racial, economic, and migratory statuses and oriented through strategies of imagination (Appadurai 1996; García Canclini [1999] 2014). New cultural forms and ways of thinking produced through transnational exchange operate as historiographic referenda on considerations of hybridity between communities (Seigel 2004; 2005; Pacini Hernández 2011). These processes of instability and the role of the arts in bridging and redefining borders led some scholars to consider a “postnational” approach to music as one that embraces the ambiguity of the presence of a national character or the nation state itself as music circulates in its unique geographical configuration (Corona and Madrid 2008). More recently, it seems as though national identity and borders have received a renewed scrutiny in the form of musical transits between distinct cultural and national territories (Dorr 2018; Karush 2014; Tucker 2014).

This very brief excursion through trends in thinking about the relationship between geography and culture over the past forty years is in part meant to help us trace the questions surrounding the role of the nation state in globalized, international, transnational, and postnational exchange that led to Dorr’s—and my own—questions

about the way Latin American music becomes inscribed on the space of the various contexts that receive it. However, all of these theories, while broadly informing dimensions of the analyses in the chapters that follow, do not really offer tools for thinking about hemispheric exchanges between the Global South and Eastern Europe during the Cold War. Thomas Turino provides one of the more seldom and direct acknowledgements of this fact in his own analysis of globalism suggesting:

During the cold war [sic], Soviet/Chinese communism and American/European/Japanese capitalism were the two leading contenders for creating trans-state social orders. With one contender severely weakened, the contemporary discourse of globalism emerged in the political, corporate, journalistic and academic spheres both as a victory song and, dialectically, to ideologically naturalize the increasing reach of cosmopolitan capitalism (2003, 54).

In *In from the Cold: Latin America's New Encounter with the Cold War* (2008) editors Gilbert M. Joseph and Daniela Spenser argue for revisiting the geopolitical conditions during the Cold War era from the vantage point of local and grassroots movements centered in Latin America. They also reposition Latin America's centrality in Cold War conflicts, thereby dismantling the prevailing binarism that marks much of the scholarship pertaining to the then-Third World during this era (see also Westad 2005).

Here then appears one strategy for thinking about smaller, dynamic, and shifting spatial formations against and in spite of the hegemonic tension these places have with the idea of the nation state, while simultaneously recognizing the centrality of borders and statehood during the era of the Three Worlds (Poutrus 2014). Although processes of globalization began decades before the post-Wall, post-reunification, or post-Socialist condition seemed to begin encouraging their acknowledgement, the theoretical

consideration of space for Chileans in exile cannot be articulated through a “post-” framework, nor as an antagonistic counterpoint to the hegemony of Cold War geography. This is because the sonic apparatus of *nueva canción* both wrote across and within ideological and geopolitical borders in the East and the West, all the while maintaining a sonic index of Chile subject to its own conditions of geographic tension. In this way, the relationship between a dynamic sonic geography and a “stable” one is more in line with an overlap map superimposed onto state borders. Joseph and Spenser (2008) and the other contributors to their volume appear to support this idea that reorienting political activity around Latin America does not need to subvert or ignore the political activity of the so-called “superpowers” during the Cold War. Instead, it offers a more expansive and complex picture that shows this activity occurring on a different stratum within and against the binarism between the United States and the Soviet Union.<sup>4</sup>

It is important to end this discussion of sonic geography by bringing it back to the idea of precarity and how it frames the present work. The cartographies that Chilean artists in exile drew through song across a divided Europe do not offer a static alternative to Cold War era maps. These sonic geographies arise specifically out of the activity of groups living and creating art under shifting and unstable circumstances. If we take the idea of Chilean musical activity as an overlap map seriously, then we can see the ways that not only state borders, but also other types of borders like the walls of an apartment building or musical theater, or the enclosure around an event like a music festival are

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<sup>4</sup> Discussion of Chile is notably absent from the volume under discussion here, which is much more oriented around México, Cuba, Brazil. Several authors have sought to position Chile in a more central role in global politics during the Cold War including its relationship with divided Germany (see Dufner 2017; Harmer and Riquelme Segovia 2014; Fernandois 1998; Ulianova 2009).

rendered simultaneously meaningful and porous. As in the ethnographic description that begins this chapter, systems of ostensibly discreet musical activity continually overlap both because, and in spite of their precarity. Perhaps most clearly stated in relation to the symbolic border of the police around the Illapu concert, this border, as an index for the hegemony and violence of the police state in contemporary Chile, establishes one condition of precarity against which sound and song can write new paths and reinscribe new possibilities.

In the GDR, Chileans entered into a world of many precarious boundaries and geographies. Between the Wall itself, bureaucratic stratification, apartment complexes set aside for Chileans, and spaces designated for certain political parties over others, artists sounded their own delicate condition as exiles in ways that acknowledged and resisted the notion that sound is circumscribed within a particular space. The sounds of *cuecas* drifted along with the aromas of empanadas into neighboring apartments. Chilean musicians scouted artists for East German music festivals in the West as they could cross the border with greater ease (Elke Bitterhof, personal communication, October 20, 2020). Concert halls were rewritten with descriptions and memories of cities in Chile through songs bringing new exchanges and meanings into contact. These overlapping sites of meaning and geography extended to all those involved in these distinctive processes of “musicking” (Small 1998), tracing new lines and forming and unforming new knots in space and through song.

## **Methodology and Project Background**

Precarity was not a condition through which I initially intended to describe my research on Chilean exiles in East Germany. However, it is interesting how it has been so central not only in the theme of sonic geography, but also in my own relationship to the research. I began work on this project at the beginning of February 2020 with support from a Fulbright Institute of International Education (IIE) fellowship. I arrived in Santiago on February 3 and, less than two months later, the program was dissolved due to the emergent COVID-19 pandemic. Upon arriving back Philadelphia to quarantine, generally disoriented, and unclear about the future of the project, I sent an email to the single contact that I had procured through conversations with curators at the Museum of Memory and Human Rights that I knew lived in exile in the GDR during the years of the dictatorship. We became quite close over Skype, but he suggested that I reach out to his ex-wife, an East German woman who has lived in Chile since the 1980s. She connected me with an East German filmmaker who connected me with a group of Chilean musicians and the connections continued to grow and proliferate, all from the confines of my tiny bedroom office in Philadelphia.

In total, over the course of researching this project, I have been able to identify and interview approximately 35 sources with connections between Chile and the GDR. These sources include Chilean musicians that were in exile in the GDR, politicians, journalists, East German artists, European spouses and colleagues of Chilean artists that were in the GDR, and various other artists and fans of *nueva canción*. Some of these collaborators I was able to interview through Skype or WhatsApp multiple times and

some of them preferred to send me autobiographical texts or respond to questionnaires. Although not all of the voices of these participants and collaborators appears in the form of direct citations in the dissertation, developing this network between myself, Chile, and Germany has been a geographically and sonically rich and complicated experience that has informed many larger aspects of the project's framework.

After fieldwork plans were so abruptly interrupted, I found myself in a city where I had never lived before and with an uncertain relationship to the future of this project and more broadly to my own future in academia. During the pandemic we were instructed to “socially distance” from one another and to “shelter in place.” We were also forced to think creatively about how spaces might function, overlapping multiple purposes and meanings on to rooms, environments, and relationships, and recognizing the porosity of the boundaries that historically marked them.

Reaching out with uncertainty in an attempt to construct a network of research collaborators and colleagues became therefore—in one way—an act of liberating cartographic praxis during a moment otherwise marked by isolation and borders. Building this project that was originally conceptualized within the institutional and geographic elements that might be recognizable to something like a funding organization, required reconceptualization. With my collaborators, we built a geographic network defined by and oriented around song. This practice, much in the way that I describe the sonic geographies of the Chilean exile community, could not reshape or break down the literal walls of our bedrooms or our apartments precariously wrapping around us with varying degrees of intensity in relation to the erratic pulse of the pandemic. Instead, it

offered ways of working across and against these borders through sharing sonic memories, histories, and materials. This type of cartography allowed this diffuse and frequently disconnected group to participate in an exchange of precarities and—if only briefly—redefine space.

I should say here that I cannot know exactly how this process was experienced for the other people involved in this project. Although I frequently heard individuals in interviews say that it felt positive to talk about these memories, this project is driven by the materials and exchanges that were available to me during the pandemic and also by what stood out to me as novel or important themes in the context of the broader research on *nueva canción* in exile. The observations and ideas that I develop here are in response to conversations and materials and they come out of my own reflections on them. Due to the fact that this project was developed and experienced largely mediated through a computer screen and disconnected from the spaces and practices that it analyzes, I think that it necessarily reflects my own understanding of how space is constructed and transformed through sonic practice. My own role in this work is therefore one that is simultaneously spatially exterior and disconnected, and also very much at the center of the theoretical solar system in which the project orbits.

It is also worth mentioning something about the broader demographics of voices involved in this project. The majority of research participants and interlocutors are Chilean men between the ages of 60–75. There were, of course, many Chilean women that lived in exile in the GDR and it is an unfortunate limitation of this project that more women's voices are not included in the text. In general, the world of Chilean political

music has been a man's world, despite frequent appeals to "maternal" figures like Violeta Parra or Margot Loyola. The broader absence of women's voices in this project is as much a product of these historical circumstances as due to the limitations of connections during the pandemic. The voices cited in this project were not selective decisions, but instead the voices that were willing and available to speak with me and with whom I was able to connect during this awkward period of time.

While primarily conducted online, in addition to my research period in Chile, I was also fortunate to receive funding twice to live in Berlin for short periods of time. The first was for two months in the summer of 2018 where I attended a German language intensive program and also conducted preliminary fieldwork and library research at the Ibero-American Institute in Berlin. For three months in the winter of 2021–2022, I had another research grant to stay in Berlin from the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) where I was a guest researcher at the Ethnology Museum and conducted in-person interviews with a number of musicians and scholars with whom I had, until then, only met virtually. During this time, I also spent several days working each at the Radio Archive in Potsdam, the German National Library in Leipzig, and the Berlin State Library.

Alongside this project, I also began work in February 2020 with the digital testimonial archive, *Cantos Cautivos*. This project, which documents the musical experiences of Chilean prisoners in political detention during the military dictatorship has been directed by Dr. Katia Chornik since 2015. In addition to this valuable public-facing archive, which is registered with the International Coalition of Sites of Conscience, her

research (see Chornik 2013; 2018) and our professional relationship have been instrumental in the development of the project, the ways that I have approached this community as an ethnographer, and the ways that I have approached the subject of memory in this era of Chilean history. I have worked with Dr. Chornik as an editor, translator, and researcher and she has facilitated connections with several survivors of political detention that also lived in exile with whom I conducted multiple interviews for adjacent research and publishing projects (see Freedman 2022). Although I do not directly draw on *Cantos Cautivos* testimonies here in the text, my work with this project has strongly oriented my methodology and framing of my work with the Chilean community in exile.

Despite the difficulty of developing a multi-sited international fieldwork project virtually from a region where none of my research collaborators were physically located, I believe that this work has actually been able to approach more interesting theoretical questions precisely because of the instability that framed it. It is unclear if I would have had the same opportunities to digitally work with scholars and musicians in Europe if my primary fieldwork “site” was based in Chile. Similarly, I question if I would have framed the project more along exilio/retorno, East/West, national/foreigner, or some other binaristic paradigm had I not been so oddly situated at the nexus of many different orientations and histories. Certainly, the language surrounding “solidarity” with Chile was ubiquitous in the 1970s and 1980s and continues to be well known today, but I am unconvinced that much of the scholarship that engages the trope of solidarity during this era meaningfully interrogates the way this network engaged with space and also the

diversity of the people involved. I hope that this work offers some possible dimensions for considering this.

Lastly, and as a practical consideration, due to the fact that many libraries and archives were closed and confined behind the precarious borders of other nation states inaccessible during the pandemic, the materials used to organize this project also reflect a fragmented and dynamic approach to documents and history. Beyond the secondary sources readily available in the United States where the majority of this project was written, primary materials in the form of books, albums, letters, and newspapers came to me in unexpected ways. Generally, these sources were proffered by research collaborators and therefore reflect ideas that they think were meaningful about this time. Other materials were products of “trades” with journalists and nueva canción scholars who might have offered a recording or contact information in exchange—and always with permission—for some other document or contact that might facilitate another project. In this way, this work becomes another element in a complex and ever-shifting patchwork of history, space, and sound, not claiming historical authority, but rather like a thread (or a line), tracing its path with and against other threads and revealing the contingencies of the spaces where they meet.

## **Chapter Summary**

The layout of the present work does not present a direct historical account of Chilean exile in the GDR, beginning in the months following the coup and ending with historic 1988 plebiscite vote that removed Pinochet from power. Instead, each chapter pursues a kind of “theme” around the relationship between space and Chilean music in

exile. In several of these chapters, I revisit similar themes from different vantage points to demonstrate how it is impossible to compartmentalize the sonic activity of this community to one role or function during this era. Similarly, I explore various dimensions of the way this music was mobilized and received at various levels of the state apparatus including performers, consumers, and government officials. These categories are not distinct as members of various groups frequently interacted and shaped the conditions of performance and reception in unexpected ways. Each chapter therefore offers a particular view of precarious exchange and the ways that it was both shaped by and shapes the conditions around it.

Chapter Two outlines the shifting position of GDR foreign policy towards Latin America and its domestic policy towards the Chilean community in exile by tracing the representation and presentation of Chilean musicians in the nueva canción movement at the annual Festival of Political Songs (1970–1990) in East Berlin. At the time of its inception, the festival was one of the largest international music festivals in the world. Artists from dozens of countries, including the West, were invited to perform sets in support of various leftist and workers' movements around the world. Each year, an LP was pressed highlighting the most popular performances of the week-long festival. Chilean musicians were programmed and featured on the corresponding *Rote Lieder* (*Red Songs*) LP series more than any other artists representing any other nation representing the Global South. I argue that the festival provides a powerful index of GDR policy towards Chile as it traces along the history of the democratic election of President Salvador Allende (1970), his fall and the installation of the Pinochet dictatorship (1973),

and the mutual return to democracy in both states in 1989. In the early-1970s, we see Chilean artistic representation as an extension of both Soviet and East German desires to encircle the West through the ideological occupation of “Third World space.” By the 1980s, numerous failures in domestic policy caused an increased fracturing of space and identity within the GDR. By the fall of the Berlin Wall, GDR officials displayed a form of acquiescence and tolerance towards the increasing division in politics and tastes in society. Throughout this process, I demonstrate that Chileans were strategically framed along precarious geographic, racial, and gendered lines to either promote or suppress the attractive political elements that they and their music brought to the GDR socio-political climate. By tracing these changes through the festival and the corresponding LP series, I demonstrate how cultural products were both a reflection and component of the implementation of East German statecraft and nation-building.

In Chapter Three, I center my analysis around the study of Chilean anthems in the GDR. Following Shana Redmond’s (2013) study of anthems, I situate these sonic products within processes of exchange and accumulation. Drawing on theories of the materiality and circulation of the voice in anthropology and literary studies, I use the concept of “antiphony” to demonstrate how East German artists became imbricated in a form of ideological and political exchange with Chilean anthems circulating in various forms in the GDR. As members of this exilic community drew on anthems to sound out and resonate themes of solidarity against the Pinochet dictatorship around the world, many East Germans heard and participated with these themes from distinct and evolving subjectivities continually accruing new meanings and possibilities for these anthems to

interact with space. By reconciling participatory dimensions of exchange with material dimensions of the voice, I attempt to reconcile how anthems became connected to ideas about spatial engagement and construction. In order to demonstrate this, I reflect on several East German recordings featuring Chilean themes and also ethnographic work with one of the leaders of the East German singing group Oktoberklub.

In Chapter Four I draw on virtual and in-person fieldwork with the diverse cohort of Chilean artists that were physically exiled in the GDR. Unlike many of the more prominent ensembles and artists like Quilapayún, Inti-Illimani, and Isabel and Ángel Parra who were exiled in the West, the artists representing the *nueva canción* movement in the GDR have received considerably less historical attention in analyses of the movement's impact abroad. I argue that the *nueva canción* movement is frequently painted as a monolith despite the fact that there were numerous divisions, conflicts, and political motivations within its ranks. The community of artists that ended up in the GDR were generally not representative of the more mainstream wing of Chilean political music-making. I situate their plurality within the development of the Chilean recording industry in the years leading up to the coup and the ultimate transplanting of this industry to France. Lastly, rather than presenting this community as the "Eastern counterpart" to the more commercially popular artists in the West, I trace the development of these artists in exile, drawing connections between their unique artistic and political backgrounds and the different cities they ended up in in East Germany. Through this work I demonstrate that not only were there manifold divisions and styles within *nueva canción* broadly, but

that these differences interacted meaningfully with the geographic and political differences within a state that is often historically defined as homogenous.

The fifth chapter of the dissertation presents the most methodologically challenging intervention into the topic of space, architecture, geography, and music. I draw on a number of textual sources including epistolary exchanges, novels, journals, and films produced by or about Chilean musicians in exile in the GDR. I situate the legacies of these cultural products against contemporary efforts to erase and/or manage the history and presence of East German artifacts and structures in present-day Germany. Drawing on conversations in performance theory and theorizing about the relationship between music and urban space, I extract the performative and ephemeral traces that these texts reveal in their discussions of Chilean music-making in exile and demonstrate the ways that these traces continue to circulate as meaningful points of contact into the fleeting and unstable architecture of the GDR. I argue that, unlike memorials, monuments, or preserved sites, the fleetingness and impossibility of access into musical performance is a powerful intervening benchmark and measurement for the equally unstable and fleeting geography of a disappearing state. I end the chapter by suggesting the possibility that most geographies are unstable, and the products, practices, and people often thought to be invisible or passive as spatial formations shift around them, may actually serve as their most reliable geographic and architectural historians.

I conclude the dissertation by reflecting on the constructive dimensions of precarity and sonic geographies. I open the conclusion with the question: “How to people build things with delicate materials?” and “What do these constructions look, feel, and

sound like when they appear in equally delicate environments?” At the most macro level, this project is about making things, and, in this case, these “things” are sonic geographies articulated through musical expression of a unique and unstable condition. Precarity here is not to be elided with “delicacy,” but the latter term is a useful one in considering how the various historical threads in this project must be actively stewarded through memories, sounds, and texts. I offer an experience of walking the street with an older East German friend and how “hearing” these threads affords the opportunity to (re)imagine and (re)construct space.

### **Final Thoughts**

Chile was not the only country that played a role, musically or otherwise, in the political space of the GDR. The state saw enormous mobilizations of solidarity around causes in Vietnam, Nicaragua, El Salvador, South Africa, and many other countries. Furthermore, the energy around Chile evolved and shifted over the years of the dictatorship, particularly at the official levels. It is not the goal here to argue that Chile was the most important international community that engaged sonically with East Germany. However, it cannot be understated that this group was profoundly significant for many in the GDR and that the precarity of their sonic geographies was received over a particularly dynamic era in the state’s history. As stated by Leonardo Rodríguez, a former musician in the Chilean music collective, Basta, who continues to live in Berlin to this day:

*Yo no veo, no siento que el espíritu solidario de la población de la DDR—ante Chile, porque los otros no se—se mantuvo muy alto siempre. Porque con Vietnam, las cosas subían y bajaba. Palestina si, hoy día si,*

*mañana no. Pero con Chile era algo que yo sentía era latente. y que siempre había un espíritu solidario alto...Corvalán, Allende, Pinochet. Términos que la población no solamente en las ciudades pero también en las pequeños aldeas. Era algo para ellos de corazón. Yo sentí, hasta el ultimo día que para los alemanes de la DDR el tema era el tema de corazón.*

The spirit of solidarity of the GDR population...always remained very high. With Vietnam: things went up, and they went down. Palestine: one day yes, tomorrow no. But with Chile it was something that I felt was much deeper [*era latente*] and that there was always a high spirit of solidarity...Corvalán, Allende, Pinochet—terms that that population, not just in the cities, but also in the small villages—it was something of the heart. I felt until the last day, that for the Germans of the GDR, the theme [of Chile] was a theme of the heart. (Interview with author, January 7, 2022)

While Rodríguez's experience may differ than official policy initiatives, it underscores a level of engagement between Chileans and Germans. I argue throughout this project that this engagement fostered various forms of participation and ways of thinking about and shaping space in an environment marked by impermeability. These forms of geographic praxis were often imagined and fleeting, but they had real consequences in the lives of individuals and the ways they moved about and experienced the space around them.

Through these interactions and the histories behind them, people sounded and sang across and against this environment producing distinct sonic and geographic possibilities.

## *Chapter 2: Politics, Race, and Geographic Anxiety: Representation of Chilean Artists and Music at the Festival of Political Songs*

### **Introduction**

In a 2020 Skype interview with Osvaldo Puccio Huidobro, former Minister Secretary General under the Chilean president Ricardo Lagos, we spoke, as we do every two or three months, about his experience in exile in the former German Democratic Republic (GDR). I thought that my blonde-haired, blue-eyed friend, with his pale, baby-faced features (even as he was approaching 70), would have an important perspective on the role of race in East German daily life. As a light-skinned Chilean, within the complex matrix of racial politics in East German life, I thought he might talk about issues such as “passing” with his superior German skills or instances of perceived or actual racism he witnessed or experienced. Instead, when questioned about what role race played in the GDR he responded thusly:

*Ninguno, muy por el contrario. O sea, no tenía ningún rol. O sea que tenía uno era contra-concepto de raza que estaba tan negativamente cargado por los Nazis. El racismo o tener conducta racista o discriminatoria en la RDA era delito. Y ahí piensas tu cuando nosotros estuvimos en los 70 estamos hablando de 20 o 30 años desde el fin de la guerra que era un concepto muy propio de los Nazis. Por lo tanto, si había alguien que todavía tenía concepción en que incorporaban perjuicio sobre las persona por su raza lo mas seguro es que nunca lo haya confesado... me sorprende con la pregunta porque creo que no jugaban un papel ni evidente, ni en segundo plano.*

None. Quite the opposite. Or that is to say it didn't have any role. It had a role, but as a counter-concept that was so negatively charged by the Nazis. Racism or to have racist or discriminatory conduct in the GDR was a crime. And from there, you think when we were in the 70s—we're talking about 20 or 30 years after the end of the war—that was a concept belonging to the Nazis. Therefore, if anyone still had felt that way—that

included detriment to people based on race—the most secure would have been to not confess it...That question surprises me because I believe that [race] did not play any role neither conspicuously nor in the background. (personal communication, September 14, 2020).

Puccio's sentiment echoes the “official” party line of the Sozialistische Einheitspartei Deutschlands (German Socialist Unity Party—SED), which approached the subject of international solidarity and policy in the then-Third World through a “colorblind” lens. Quinn Slobodian uses the term “socialist chromatism” to explain the way that officials “relied on skin color and other markers of phenotypic difference to create (overly) neat divisions between social groups within a technically nonhierarchical logic of race” (2015, 24). In a country where race officially did not exist, and the word “race”—with the exception of reference to dog breeds—was stricken from dictionaries, traditional racial stereotypes were still frequently drawn upon by officials in relation to international aid and solidarity projects (Slobodian 2015, 26).

This approach to racial politics might be usefully considered within a framework of precarity. With Germany's racist history circumscribed in a historical and geographic pastness, and an emphasis on neat racial categorization, official discourse around the subject needed to be continually buttressed through the articulation of real and imagined boundaries. However, ideas about race and its articulation by the Chilean community often spilled over in unregulated ways revealing the precarity of the concept at official levels of East German discourse. Beyond posing challenges to a GDR identity vis-à-vis a Third World Other, this process of exchange also extended to reveal an unstable foundation to ideas about German statehood and its influence and role in Latin America.

The prevailing western understanding of East Germany and the Soviet world in general, still remains one of isolation, division, and containment. While a number of important English-language works published over the past decade have complicated notions of Eastern isolationism (Gorsuch and Koenker et al. 2013; Rupprecht 2015; Sanchez-Sibony 2014; Slobodian et al. 2015), perspectives on international cultural and artistic exchange in the GDR and the former Soviet states have received considerably less attention than efforts to explore political and economic relations between the East and the Global South (Koch 2017; Trnka 2015). Furthermore, while considerations of race were conspicuously absent in official discourse, it was a powerful marker and frame for the reception and circulation of cultural products indexing the then Third World.

In this chapter, I will show how race was a concept that was strategically mediated and drawn upon in accordance with larger goals and anxieties around East German internationalism and construction of Socialist geographies and spaces in the Third World. Rather than a mark of official policy, the deployment and framing of race in the GDR was something that belied a greater sense of geographic instability both at home and abroad. In this way, the construction of race in East German society was not a stable concept, but rather one that changed in accordance with the state's shifting self-identification and relationships with other nations. This complex geographic fabric fostered the articulation of sonic geographies by the Chilean community that we will see in later chapters. Here I aim to demonstrate how Chilean artistic representation fluctuated in accordance with the shifting dynamic of relations between the GDR and—what its leadership perceived to be—its international subjects.

Beginning in 1970 and continuing through 1990 after the collapse of the Berlin Wall, the *Festival des Politischen Liedes* (Festival of Political Songs) took place yearly in the East German capitol. Generally occurring in February, dozens of artists often representing just as many countries, were invited to Berlin to share and exchange musical cultures before audiences numbering in the tens of thousands. Artists hailed not only from communist nations such as Cuba, North Vietnam, and the Soviet Union, but equally from the United States, Great Britain, and other bastions of the capitalist West. Pinning down the festival as either a purely propagandistic tool intended to promote a specific version of East German internationalism or a once-a-year disruption and loosening of state restrictions is ultimately an unproductive debate (Kirchenwitz 1993, 69–71; 2011, 52). Like many cultural spaces in the GDR, the festival frequently assumed a complex, and often contradictory function; another possibility in the way it was marked by the precarity of the state. However, the regularity of the Festival of Political Songs, its particular containment and association with the East German state, and the unique demographic and representational evolution of its musical lineup over the twenty years of its existence position it as a useful barometer for measuring the relationship between the German Democratic Republic (GDR) and the rest of the world.

This event was further encapsulated and mediated in the form of records pressed under the state-run label VEB Deutsche Schallplatten (The German People's Record Enterprise). Invited artists were subject to the evaluation and scrutiny of the festival organizers in the *Frei Deutsche Jugend* (Free German Youth—FDJ), which was the official student and youth arm of the SED. Artists were generally chosen on the basis of

their direct or perceived ties to causes and political parties that would be seen as sympathetic and consistent with GDR's internationalist identity. These discs, however, do not reflect the artistic spontaneity of live musical performance, but instead demonstrate calculated attempts to mediate the artistic presentation of artists representing for East German audiences what was then understood as the Third World. The ostensible cultural *Treffpunkt* (“meeting point”) provided by the festival and its corresponding recordings, conceived and presented as an egalitarian space devoid of racial or geographical hierarchies, in reality shines a light onto a host of complicated racial dynamics and imperialist geographical directives within both a Soviet and East German consciousness. What is complicated, then, is how we go about reading the choice of artists highlighted on the *Rote Lieder* (Red Songs) LP series and how the music, the album artwork, and lyrical content reflect precarious and shifting perceptions of stability and confidence felt by East German officials in the rest of the world.

While representation on these discs can and should be evaluated on both a region-by-region basis as well as a global level, the case of Chilean artistic representation is notable and presents one of the more robust points of critical intervention into East German political mediation and aesthetic instrumentalization for several reasons. Nueva canción developed in between a dual-mediated imperative on the part of its performers and the political and cultural milieu in which it was performed. It represented simultaneously an intensely local foregrounding of Indigenous or national characteristics as well as a wider effort to draw connections across Latin America. This was seen not only in the case of Chile, but in nearly every country in the region that had some version

of politically engaged song (*canción comprometida*). In addition to the localized scene found in the *peñas*<sup>1</sup> in cities like Santiago and Valparaíso in the 1960s, the genre began its development even earlier in the international song festival circuit across not only Central and South America, but Europe as well (González 2017). What is important here is to recognize is that, from the perspectives of the artists, this music existed in a strong international context of political and cultural networks. Similarly, nearly all of the artists representing Chile on the *Rote Lieder* albums already by the time of the military coup on September 11, 1973, had long-established careers as touring artists on festival stages. Efforts on the part of GDR officials to construct this music as a product of political, racial, or geographic subjects, therefore provide an important opportunity to identify contradictions between the self-identification of Chileans in exile and their East German hosts. These contradictions reveal spaces of productive contact between multifarious experiences and articulations of precarity.

Another important feature of the role of Chileans on these discs is the somewhat distinct political status they held in the GDR in comparison with other immigrant populations. The GDR had longstanding ties with a number of socialist nations such as Vietnam, Mozambique, Namibia, and Cuba in the form of guest worker programs. These workers were subject to a much tighter degree of restriction than Chileans, who came as exiles, regarding issues such as ability to travel into the West, where they were physically permitted to live, and the possibility of having relationships with East German citizens. These rights were typically extended to Chilean students, artists, and Communist Party

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<sup>1</sup> Informal musical gatherings often serving wine and empanadas and featuring political discussion.

officials, the latter category being one of the more significant demographics within the broader Chilean exile population to receive visas from the GDR (Poutrus 2005, 260–1). These freedoms certainly were not extended equally to all Chileans however. Prominent examples of Chileans being subject to processes of “proletarization” (see below) caused political tensions and resentments among many members of the community. However, in general, this community was seen as more politically “developed” than individuals representing other nations in the guest worker program.

Guest workers from outside Europe, while ostensibly part of a system of political and cultural exchange, were, in reality, seen as a labor source intended to fill the dearth of labor brought about under the socialist economic model (Zatlin 2007, 703). Musicians representing these nations at the festival would be much easier to frame, both among party officials and audience members, in a hegemonic relationship with the Soviet region. The Chilean artists recorded on the *Rote Lieder* discs, by contrast, in the majority of cases were representatives of the exile community from Western European nations, such as Inti-Illimani in Rome and Quilapayún and Isabel and Ángel Parra in Paris. The freedom of movement between the East and the West that these artists demonstrated and their participation in East German festivals while still opting for residency in capitalist Western Europe, ran the risk of indexing a degree of cosmopolitanism and mobility that was inaccessible even to East Germans themselves. This combined with the political headquarters of the Chilean Socialist Party (PS) and *Chile Antifascista* (Chile Anti-Fascist Office—CHAF) in East Berlin, highlighted the intense degree of political organization and mobilization among the Chilean exile community. Therefore, in contrast

to East and Southeast Asia and Africa, which were easier to frame in accordance with the established international policy as provincial beneficiaries of the GDR's training in politics and the labor force, Chile, as a broad index for East German and Soviet influence in Latin America, required a more intensive process of political mediation.

Lastly, it is notable that the first recording of Chilean artists on the *Rote Lieder* discs was from the second festival in February of 1971, just several months after the election of the socialist president Salvador Allende to office. Out of the fifteen tracks on the disc, two are by Chilean artists: “*En septiembre canta [sic] el gallo*” (“In September the Rooster will Sing”) by Isabel Parra and “*Comienza la vida nueva*” (“The New Life Begins”) by Quilapayún. Both songs feature straight-forward and unembellished duple rhythms as well as strong lyrics with messages of strength and anticipation towards the leadership of the democratically elected Salvador Allende's *Unidad Popular* (Popular Unity Party—UP). The inception of these discs corresponds almost exactly with the period of Allende's ascension to office and further track the relationship between the South American nation and the GDR through the 1973 military coup and both nations' mutual return to democracy in 1990.

These discs and the figuration of Chileans more broadly over the course of the festival's history therefore provide a truly unique political-aesthetic metric that traces the geopolitical relationship between the two states through some of the most dramatic political changes over a period of twenty years. The recordings and the festival more broadly therefore stand in somewhat of a marked contrast to the individualized experience of Chilean political exile. It is important to acknowledge that these discs

feature artists and musical styles from all over the world and that further analysis of these discs will be of great value to understand how race, identity, and geography were mediated through a specific set of cultural artifacts for an East German audience. However, with the exception of a few nations in Eastern and Western Europe, no other country from the Global South receives so much representation or diversity of performers on these discs. This clearly demonstrates, along with the aforementioned examples, that Chile continually remained a complex and unwieldy subject for GDR officials. Here, I explore some of the efforts to aesthetically mediate that unwieldiness, and how these efforts indeed corresponded with more practical and political considerations in the SED government.

### **Mapping and Geography in the Cold War**

The socialist international projects of the Cold War, including the GDR's aesthetic mediation of Chilean exile, must be evaluated within the consideration of geography and the political-ideological “construction of space” in the Third World. The distinction here between “construction” and Henri Lefebvre's (1991 [1984]) “production” is a small but intentional one. As an output of GDR international policy, East German engineers were deployed to build, model, and construct a cities and other sites around the world (Schwenkel 2014 and Wimmelbücker 2012). This process of engineering geographic space to cohere with a socialist political and aesthetic ideology, reflects the distinction and my reasons for using “construction” in this context. It is my contention—and one that is also supported by Timothy Barney's (2015) analysis of Cold War maps—that this prevalence of engineering and science as guiding principles for technocratic intervention

into the southern hemisphere was driven by a determinate linkage in which political ideology was manifested through civil development.

In the geographic competition between the East and West to construct the Third World, there were a number of distinct but interrelated fronts on which this battle was waged. Efforts to build cities and develop engineering projects were but one strategy to introduce ideology into the physical landscape. At a more macro level, there were battles over cartography. Barney describes a number of cartographic conferences sponsored by the United Nations in which “efforts implicitly acknowledged that the ability to accurately map oneself was a marker of reaching the level of a truly modern (and, from the U.S. perspective, Western) nation” (2015, 12). U.N.-sponsored mapping projects carried out in regions such as Africa and South Asia, designed to introduce cartographic autonomy into these regions, were in fact predicated on a predetermined framing regarding the conditions under which these maps would be constructed. Maps constructed under these frameworks, while permitting the ostensible endogenous construction of self-determined boundaries, in reality reflected hegemonic imperatives to maintain “open, undifferentiated, undesignated *space*” over “a *place* that is bordered, specified, and locatable” (Dickinson, Blair, Ott 2010, 23).

This tension over the ideological de- and re-spatialization of regions in the Third World—and for that matter the notion of the “Third World” itself—was no different from the vantage of the Soviets.

Seeing the 'awakening of the East' as the fulfilment of Lenin's predictions, the Soviet leadership considered that a Soviet-Third World alliance was imminent. Fostering political and economic ties with non-communist countries, which in most cases advocated anti-imperialism or socialism,

was intended to encircle the capitalist world and accelerate the march of communism towards victory (Katsakioris 2019, 285).

Alliances, therefore, were predicated more on creating a mutability of borders that could ultimately “encircle” and engulf the West.

It is difficult to determine whether the presentation of Chileans on the *Rote Lieder* discs was an extension of any meaningful international policy regarding cartographies of the Global South during the Cold War. Instead, what is important about Chilean artistic representation in particular, and the understanding of Chilean exiles as political subjects in general, is that any sort of state-directed mediation of this community's cultural products was inseparable from a broader ideological-political project that characterized the East German government's relationship with the rest of the world. It is not my intention here to characterize this form of mediation as a kind of dark or conspiratorial infiltration of political officials into the record industry, thereby promoting or mainstreaming a perpetuation of ideological and juridical binarism between the East and the West. It is rather to suggest that in both the East and the West, it would have been impossible to conceptualize and produce media projects predicated on themes of international solidarity and ideological expansion without indexing the kind of hegemonic approaches to spatialization that we see in “official” cartographic projects.

It must further be noted that it is neither the intention here to frame the Chilean exile community in the GDR as victims or political pawns in an ideological battlefield, as Timothy Barney suggests. Indeed, from the perspective of historical approaches to policy between the two countries, Chile, under both the Allende (1970–1973) and Frei (1964–1970) administrations, demonstrated a significant level of internationalist geopolitical

muscle. Both presidents played off of West German anxieties surrounding the recognition of the GDR in the wake of the Hallstein Doctrine and even pitted the two nations against one another in deals over aid distribution and foreign investment (Dufner 2017). The GDR did however engage in a number of predatory economic practices with other parts of the developing world, such as Vietnam and Cuba, including the purchase of foreign goods in non-convertible currency and loans that could only be retrieved for East German goods (Zatlin 2007, 705–8). Similarly, the training they provided to guest workers was often limited to East German machinery and technology, thereby cementing contracts with the guest workers' home countries for the future (Julio Alegría, personal communication, September 25, 2020). While Chile was in some instances on the receiving end of these policies, the savvy on the part of government officials under both the Frei and Allende administrations in exacerbating anxieties between the two German states problematized any facile expectation of tethering aid distribution to an ideological and geographic imperative. The legacies of Chile's complex relationship with the GDR between 1966–1973 would invariably therefore figure into official efforts to mediate and instrumentalize the exile community that began arriving after the military coup.

### **Racial Imaginaries and Landscapes**

In her excellent account of critical and racial geographies between the United States and Mexico, María Josefina Saldaña-Portillo (2016) examines the construction and strategic deployment of the Indian/*Indio* in the visualization and mapping of colonial space. Drawing on a diversity of texts, films, archival sources, and correspondence, she argues that:

[T]he ways in which national geographies are perceived, imagined, lived, and mapped are supremely racial, and that these racially produced geographies cannot be understood without a thorough investigation of the colonial modes of governmentality imposed on and engaged by indigenous people. (2016, 6)

My analysis here presents an understanding of the relationship between geography, ideology, and art that follows Saldaña-Portillo's framing while acknowledging the limitations that her analysis brings to the consideration of Soviet and East German more processual elements of “graphing” the Third World “geo” (2016, 19). Whereas her analysis centers around the construction of an Indian/*Indio* subject in the two distinct projects of Spanish and British colonial place-making, the analysis here functions to examine the construction of a Third World—and by extension, racial—subject in a project of political-ideological cartography in the southern hemisphere.

One important distinction between the arguments presented here and those in Saldaña-Portillo's work is how, rather than predicating a system of racialized geographies on the grounds of colonialist expansion, efforts to communicate the construction of Latin America and other regions in the Southern Hemisphere needed to be “imported” for the consumption of a population with limited access to transnational movement. Put differently, any effort to communicate the geographical success of the socialist project would necessitate, instead of physical access and expansion into new territory as in the case of colonialism in the Americas, a softening of and acquiescence of porousness of the GDR's own boundaries.

The American geographer Richard Schein has argued frequently (1999, 2006, 2012) for the importance of the “visual” in the realization of the racialized landscape. He

argues that the “morphology” of cities (and we can extend here to our prior consideration of “place” over “space” in general) is a product of the way our sense of the visual and the socio-discursive frame in which we receive it mutually inform and reproduce the conditions in which we are able to interact with the landscape:

Cultural landscapes are imbricated in the social, economic, political, and cultural discourses of interpretive beings. As discourse materialized, the cultural landscape presents a spatial, visual order and discipline, even as it is a site of intervention into, in this case, our cultural understandings and disagreements as well as engagements with ideas and practices revolving around the concept of “race.” (Schein 2012, 943)

Schein and Saldaña-Portillo both inform the present discussion in the way they communicate the frequent inseparability between the cultural and experiential elements of space. Where a conversation on GDR framing of the Global South necessarily departs, however, regards how the spatiality of the imaginary is communicated to demonstrate a non-experiential ideological connection. In what better way then could the spatialization of subaltern imaginaries be communicated than through cultural products framed to index particular geographic motivations?

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José Perez came to the GDR from Chile in 1972, not as a political exile, but as a student to study economics in East Germany. I first learned of José early on in the project through a connection with the German filmmaker Gabriela Wojtiniak who worked closely with him and other Chilean musicians in the GDR. Shortly after arriving, he transferred to study music in the University of Music and Theater “Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy” in Leipzig and went on to found the groups Jaspampa and Alerce with other Chileans and Germans in the GDR. He has remained in Leipzig up to this day and

continues to have a successful career as a musician. Additionally, he worked as a translator for groups such as Inti-Illimani and Quilapayún at East German song festivals. He has an intimate knowledge of the East German music climate and described the presentation of Chilean artists on the *Rote Lieder* series thusly:

The disc was a way to represent the Festival of Political Songs so they chose the most popular themes that they public already liked or knew from the concert so that they would buy the discs. The truth is that if a group like Los Jaivas [see below] performed all of *Las alturas de Macchu Picchu*, which is practically a cantata, it would have been really difficult to sell the disc. So, they just left one song. Political anthems sold: “*El pueblo unido jamás será vencido*,” “*Venceremos*,” and the like. Rhythms sold too. Rhythms from the north of Chile, from Peru, from Bolivia. Fantastic rhythms. With the quena, zampoñas, the charango and that carnaval rhythm. Or the rhythm that was sung often by Quilapayún, the malembe. And something that is maybe a little more delicate [*suave*], as you say, is that songs were chosen to stay with the possibility, I believe, that they would sell the disc. A lot of people were not interested in political songs. There were lots of people that worked in industry and they didn't care about it. But maybe listening to the music: “Oh! How interesting! Look you can dance to it. I thought it was something else.” It's not just political, but it's the exotic, the rhythm. To see a group play music is different than to hear it on the radio or an LP. There isn't the live emotion of the concert...They were chosen explicitly so that they could go on a LP that also represented the festival...The diversity of singers for example. (José Perez, personal communication, September 2, 2020)

Perez's description here assists in the framing and support of an argument that the types of songs featured on the *Rote Lieder* discs performed by Chilean artists fall into two categories: a) “anthems” of political and/or “militant” orientation and b) dances featuring distinctly “exotic” or “ethnic” rhythms and sounds. This classification extends largely to all of the tracks featured from groups from Latin America, Africa, and Asia as well. Setting aside for the moment his important comments regarding the economics and taste of the “world music” market in the GDR, we can situate his commentary within a broader

project to communicate a specific representation of the Chilean community. During a time when the movement for solidarity against the Pinochet dictatorship was gaining traction throughout the European continent, the cosmopolitanism of this movement often existed in state of flux with the imperatives and motivations of GDR and Soviet officials regarding ideological mapping projects in the Third World.

Visas supporting Chilean political exiles in the GDR were typically issued on the basis of party affiliation, and it was primarily members of Communist (PC) and Socialist (PS) parties that comprised the first cohort that arrived in the months after the coup. The international Solidarity Committee of the GDR was firmly guided by directives not only within the SED, but from Moscow as well. The coup, while certainly viewed as an important area of denouncement and international support, was also seen as productive fodder in sustaining animation across the East German population against a framing of capitalism and fascism of the West (Pieper-Mooney 2014, 277). After that first appearance of Isabel Parra and Quilapayún celebrating the triumph of the UP on the 1971 disc, the only other appearance of two Chilean artists on a single disc appeared on the 1974 disc, six months after the coup, and in the midst of one of the highest periods of Chilean flight into the country.

The 1974 disc opens with Inti-Illimani performing “Canción del poder popular” (“Song of Popular Power”) on the A-side, and also once again features Isabel Parra, here with Patricio Castillo performing the song “Por todo Chile” (“For all of Chile”) by Uruguayan singer-songwriter Daniel Viglietti. Viglietti is also featured on the disc performing his composition “A desalambrar” (“To Tear Down the Fences”).



Figure 2.1: Front Cover of 1974 *Rote Lieder* LP, Image provided by Luis “Lucho” Briceño

The album artwork (Figures 2.1 and 2.2) on this disc features two full-size photos covering the entirety of the front and back sides of the jacket. Both are taken from a medium shot at ground level and exposed in gritty black on a tired sepia background. The front shows an old nineteenth-century apartment building in the foreground and large modern edifice in the background. The street is empty with the exception of two workers walking towards the modern structure suggesting a movement towards progress. In between the two buildings is a dilapidated apartment building brightly ornamented with the only splash of color, the red festival logo, *Oki* the sparrow, and the insignia of the FDJ. On the backside of the jacket, we see the back of a man wearing a shirt with the *Rote Lieder* logo, posting flyers on a wall advertising the festival. Behind the man

stands—presumably—his small child looking off and pointing in the distance. The man's faceless figure suggests the collective work required by a generic *Volk* in the construction of a socialist world for the next generation.

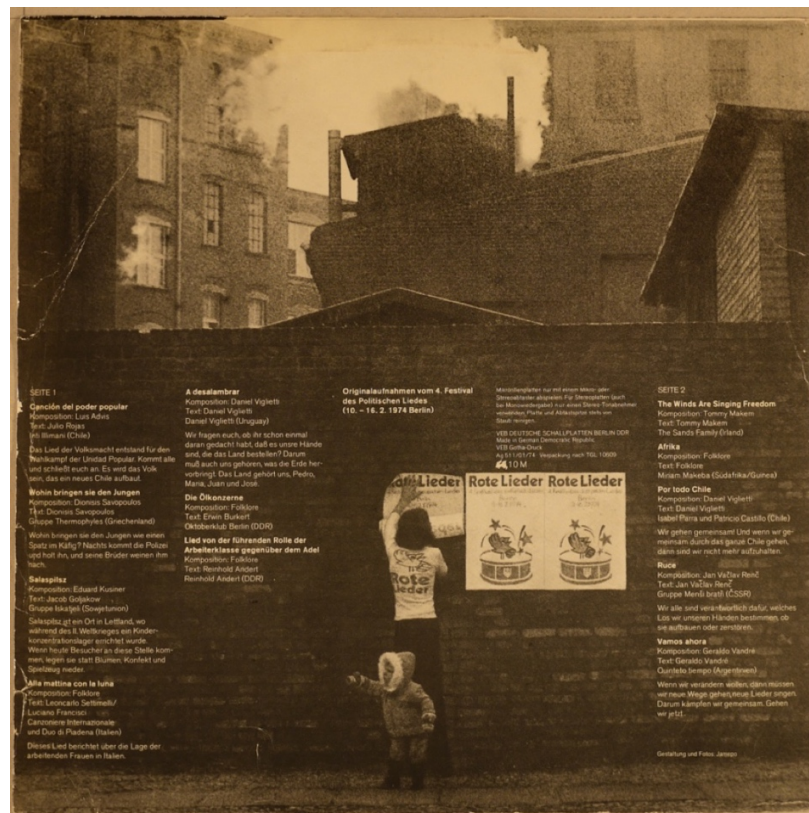


Figure 2.2: Back Cover of 1974 *Rote Lieder* LP, Image provided by Luis “Lucho” Briceño

Striking here is that under each of the songs, the brief textual framing in German makes no mention of the conditions of human rights abuses and forced flight from Chile. Rather the text supports themes of “building” and “movement” towards a future: “*Es wird das Volk sein, das ein neues Chile aufbaut*” (“It will be the people that build a new Chile”); “*Wir gehen gemeinsam! Und wenn wir gemeinsam durch das ganze Chile gehen, dann sind wir nicht mehr aufzuhalten.*” (“We go together! And if we go through all of Chile together then we will not be stopped.”); “*Darum kämpfen wir gemeinsam. Gehen*

*wir jetzt.*”<sup>2</sup> (“That’s why we fight together. Let’s go now.”) While these references do point to Chile specifically, it is unclear if they really demonstrated the potential to index a Chilean-centered geography of construction and movement. Rather their positioning around this young German boy, looking off towards his own future, and images of construction and development in East Berlin, centers these insipid and decontextualized quotes of Chilean geographic autonomy around a German-dominated visualization of physical space.

The lack of acknowledgement of the political realities in Chile after the 1974 festival and the corresponding disc have two potential causes. Officially, the GDR severed commercial ties with Chile after the military dictatorship. This was seen as an act of solidarity among members of the Chilean leftist vanguard, and even to this day, party officials exiled in East Germany remain staunch in their commitment to the belief that, with the exception of Romania, the entire Soviet bloc placed ideology over trade (Osvaldo Puccio Huidobro, personal communication, April 27, 2020). However, Georg J. Dufner (2017) has thoroughly documented that not only did the SED maintain economic relations with the Pinochet government, but that trade between the two countries actually achieved record levels between 1973-1975 (Dufner 2017, 110). It would not be until several months after the release of the 1974 disc that “international media pressure [would lead] to intermittent reductions” (ibid.) and indeed it was not until the 1975 disc that there was an open acknowledge of the Chilean dictatorship on the *Rote Lieder* series

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<sup>2</sup> From the text attached to “*Vamos ahora*” (“Now we go”) performed by the Argentine group Quinteto Tiempo

with the inclusion of Aparcoa's performance of their rendition of “Las últimas palabras” (“The Last Words”).<sup>3</sup> Therefore, it is worthwhile to consider that the release of a publicly consumed media product openly denouncing the Chilean military dictatorship would have run the risk of complicating trade between the two governments and the secretive operations surrounding it.

The other important aspect of leaving the conditions of the Chilean coup hidden in plain sight—or perhaps, audibly silent—is the political ramifications it had in the wider geographic competition over the geography of the Global South. The U.S.-backed coup invariably translated, beyond the West's complicity in a gross violation of human rights, as a victory in the battle over political and economic ideologies. Chile was to become the great “neoliberal experiment” and American-backed interventions continue to define policy in the country. This represented a major blow to both Berlin and Moscow in the context of Cold War cartographic embattlement. As a propagandistic tool, it makes sense that the SED would manage acknowledgement of the coup and the loss it represented on these albums.

Throughout the 1970s, the two Chilean groups featured most prominently on the festival LPs are Quilapayún and Inti-Illimani. In many ways, and following the above commentary of José Perez, this is to be expected. These groups were undoubtedly the most famous Chilean ensembles in Europe at the time and their names continue to be practically synonymous with the nueva canción movement. Furthermore, due to the

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<sup>3</sup> A song text setting of last words spoken by Salvador Allende over Chilean radio during the storming of La Moneda palace.

unique circumstances under which both of the groups found themselves in exile (both were on tour in Europe during the time of the coup essentially “trapping” them on the continent for a period of 17 years), both groups came to represent the vanguard of the international solidarity movement with Chile and the musical voices of the Chilean Left more broadly. In addition to the previously mentioned recordings on the 1974 disc featuring Inti Illimani, the group is highlighted again on the 1977 disc with “*Chile-resistencia*” (“Chile Resist”)<sup>4</sup> by Sergio Ortega and again on a 1977 compilation disc of highlights from the first six festivals with “*Cancion del poder popular*” (“Song of Popular Power”) by Luis Advis from the 1974 festival. Quilapayún is heard on the 1972 disc with “*Por Vietnam*” (“For Vietnam”);<sup>5</sup> the same 1977 compilation with their performance of “*Comienza la vida nueva*” (“The New Life Begins”) by Luis Advis from the 1971 festival; and, perhaps most interesting, on the 1978 disc performing “*Solidaritätslied*” (“Song of Solidarity”) by Hans Eisler with lyrics by Bertolt Brecht. Each of these songs fall into the category that I have previously described as “political anthems” and all feature themes of militancy, solidarity, forward motion, and collective building. These tracks are all in either 2/4- or 4/4-time signature and generally feature minimal ornamentation, thin instrumental textures, simple vocal phrases, and uncomplicated poetic content.

This representation of Chilean artists on the *Rote Lieder* discs throughout the 1970s is notable for several reasons. Principally, of all the Chilean nueva canción

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<sup>4</sup> Presented in German on the album as “*Chile im Widerstand*.”

<sup>5</sup> Presented in German on the album as “*Für Vietnam*.”

ensembles that participated in the international solidarity movement, these groups were easily recognized as presenting the highest degree of professionalization. Considerations of fandom or stardom are no less pertinent to a conversation about Chilean music-making in Eastern Europe than Western Europe. This is partly because established artists were supported in their musical careers by the East German state and were guaranteed performances and income. Furthermore, the majority of artists performing in East Germany did not see themselves as part of a competitive musical marketplace, but rather as inseparable from the same project of promoting international solidarity with Chile as their comrades in places like France and Italy. However, while these points are firmly acknowledged by artists that formed ensembles in East Germany, founding members of the lesser-known groups Alerce and Jaspampa both acknowledged the importance of professionalizing themselves and developing their skills in a manner commensurate with groups like Quilapayún and Inti-Illimani (Ricardo López, personal communication, September 6, 2020; José Perez, personal communication, September 2, 2020).

It is worth considering why groups with such high level of musical skill, groups known for complicated polyphonic singing and incredible instrumental virtuosity, who invariably demonstrated a diversity of techniques and musical styles in their performances at festivals, were highlighted through songs on these albums demonstrating minimal instrumental complexity. As mentioned earlier, these groups came as visitors to the GDR for performances but opted to remain in Paris and Rome instead of East Berlin or other Eastern cities during their period of exile. It is therefore likely that the wide diversity of musical styles that each of these groups demonstrated would have indexed a

kind of aesthetic cosmopolitanism that was known, but, at least officially, unavailable to many East Germans. The diversity of styles from around the world with which these artists engaged would have indexed the different countries, regions, and cultures where these groups had toured for East German audiences. Highlighting these Chilean artists thusly, in terms of denouncement of imperialism in Vietnam, in terms of Socialist modernity and movement towards progress, and in the literal words of one of East Germany's most prominent socialist writers (Brecht), functioned as an attempt to reduce the political reach of these songs and the complex matrix in which they were performed. Instead, the juxtaposition of these political anthems against artists more expressly mediated by GDR authorities and imagery promoting East German-centered notions of political space, served to reframe the content, performance, and meaning of this music.

This aesthetic framing not only would have deeply mediated the way Chileans were heard and understood in the GDR, but also was consistent with a core element of its policy pertaining to the acceptance of exiles. Beginning in 1974, Chilean PS officials in the CHAF collaborated with the SED to implement a program of “proletarianization” among rank-and-file members of the party. Jost Maurin (2005) notes that “all available sources show that nearly all Chileans had to work in material production: a data processor screwed the front-left headlight on ‘Trabis’, a chemistry student had to work the nightshift as a production worker, a professor was a mechanic trainee” (Maurin 2005, 350).

Perhaps the most notable example of proletarianization among the Chilean musical community was the case of Payo Grondona, an integral member of the Valparaíso nueva

canción scene who fled to the GDR by way of Argentina in 1974 (see chapter four).

Grondona represented a distinct approach in his songs, often favoring humor and metaphor over the more direct, militaristic approach of some of his comrades. Grondona described his musical philosophy thusly:

My message was as follows: 'Okey [sic] we are planning the revolution, we are in the university protests, we are in all this change, but we also need to live.' And from all that a window opens so that that other wind can enter, that other halo, that other version of life (cited in Bade and Garcia, n.d.).

This statement represents a dramatic shift from the type of militarism and adherence to socialist ideology that, at least ostensibly, marked so much of the music performed by Chileans on the *Rote Lieder* series during the 1970s. It may therefore not be surprising that while Grondona was offered to perform at the Festival of Political Songs in February 1973, he did not receive the same level of backing from the CHAF and the SED as Inti-Illimani, Quilapayún, Patricio Castillo, and Isabel Parra, and he was not invited to perform again. Instead, Grondona worked initially on an assembly line. Jadwiga Pieper-Mooney (2014) argues that the insistence on proletarianization by Chilean officials in the PS and PC was precipitated by a sense of failure in the wake of the military coup. The belief here was that inserting Chileans into these low-level jobs would reanimate their revolutionary spirit. “Leaders now demanded that fellow political militants get in touch with their proletarian selves, through participation in the productive labor force. The East German leadership was pleased to support this experiment as...the practice fit their politics and production goals” (Pieper-Mooney 2014, 284).

Viewing the inclusion of Inti-Illimani and Quilapayún on these discs throughout the 1970s, the highpoint of the proletarianization experiment, thus serves to frame the official GDR relationship and response to Chilean exile in two ways. Principally, the highlighting of what I have described as “political anthems,” and importantly the manner in which I have described their presentation, would attempt to construct an image of a Chilean political subject in a manner consistent with a framing of the ideological “space” this community was intended to occupy. Secondly, it would serve to dismantle notions of Chileans as having more freedom and mobility than East Germans by reducing the breadth and internationalism of their musical message and aesthetic experimentation. In this effort, any acknowledgement of precarity, both for Chileans in exile and for the East German state, was resisted in favor of a more rigid articulation of space, borders, and identity. The inclusion of Quilapayún's performance of a piece such as “*Solidaritätslied*,”<sup>6</sup> in German and with a nod to East German folk traditions, an example which in this case represents the apogee of the proletarianization policy, was likely understood by band members as a mark of musical cosmopolitanism and a self-directed effort to communicate a message of solidarity with a wider audience. In the hands of the SED old guard however, it seems clear that it was meant to reflect a wider understanding and equivalence between the Chilean exile community and a “global” proletarian subject.

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<sup>6</sup> Recording available at: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=912kKH0J1UI&ab\\_channel=ausgeflippter](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=912kKH0J1UI&ab_channel=ausgeflippter)

## Shifting Representation in the New Decade

In the 1980s we begin to see almost a complete reversal of Chilean artistic and geographic mediation on the *Rote Lieder* series. The first, and arguably more notable example occurs on the 1981 disc with the inclusion of the “*Indio hermano*” (“Indian Brother”)<sup>7</sup> by the group Los Jaivas. Unlike Quilapayún in Paris and Inti-Illimani in Rome, or their politically related counterpart in Rostock, Aparcoa, Los Jaivas did not hold any formal or expressed affiliation with any political party. The group, which formed in the port city of Valparaíso at the end of the 1960s, did not draw inspiration from the political lyrics of the *nueva canción* movement, but instead looked abroad to the sounds of rock-and-roll and the “hippie” movement in Europe and the United States. As Jedrek Mularski has noted, the group's rejection of a clear political orientation as well as their active foregrounding of hippie aesthetics and behaviors (e.g., use of psychedelic drugs and liberal practices of sex and sexuality) placed them on the periphery of a society increasingly divided between staunch ideological formations on both the left and the right (2016, 75-6). On the right, the experimental and unwieldy improvisations that became characteristic for the group were clearly inconsistent with the sounds of *música típica* which featured “well-groomed singing *huasos* perform[ing] stylized versions of *cuecas* and *tonadas* from Chile's central valley, imbuing these songs with lyrics that sang nostalgically about idyllic and orderly rural life, pastoral romances, and Chilean nationalism” (Mularski 2016, 80-1). Conversely, on the Left, the hippie movement—at least initially—was seen as decadent, materialistic, and not suited to a country suffering

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<sup>7</sup> Recording available at: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XUPwcWO0ND0&ab\\_channel=fulanodetal4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XUPwcWO0ND0&ab_channel=fulanodetal4)

from the level of economic underdevelopment seen in Chile during this time (Mularski 2016, 86).

The text for “Indio hermano” was taken from Pablo Neruda’s poem *Las Alturas de Macchu Picchu*, which Los Jaivas set to music and released in 1981. The text is clearly legible within a rubric of resistance and opposition, but here the figure of the “Indian” is at the center of these revolutionary possibilities:

*No cambiaré  
mi destino es resistir  
esta civilización de poder y ambición.*

I will not change  
my destiny is to resist  
this civilization of power and ambition.

*No cambiaré  
por que no puedo ya vivir  
engañado, sólo, esclavo,  
triste y sin amor.*

I will not change  
because I can’t live any longer  
deceived, alone, slave,  
sad and without love.

*De tí aprendí hermano,  
querido indio de aquí.  
De tí aprendí yo a resistir cruel opresión.*

From you I learned brother,  
dear Indian from here.  
From you I learned to resist cruel  
oppression

*No me importa el hambre, ni la cárcel, ni  
el dolor.  
Soy un hombre y no una pieza más de esta  
cuestión.*

I don’t care about hunger, prison, or pain  
I am a man and not another piece of this  
question

*Indio hermano tu te has ayudado a revivir,  
en mi pecho la llama de la liberación.*

Indian brother you have helped to revive  
the call of liberation in my chest.

The song text presents an oppositional logic not necessarily legible within revolutionary tropes on the Left. The freedom and resistance to change is reflected at a much more personal level than perhaps some of the more direct lyrics of the anthemic texts that were highlighted on the *Rote Lieder* discs during the 1980s. While centering the figure of the “Indian,” the singing subject is granted a great deal of agency and reflection and might not therefore be tethered as directly to a wider social or political movement. The

improvisational “wanderings” of Los Jaivas’ guitars, and the incessant returning to and exploration of simple pentatonic melodic fragments similarly suggest that these forms of dialogue with an idealized Indian and resistance to change are also happening at a very personal level.

Los Jaivas drew an aesthetic link between figure of the hippie and the Indigenous cultures of the Andean region. Rather than attempting to revitalize and foreground authentic Indigenous artistic expression as in the case of *nueva canción* artists, members of the group attempted to construct a wholly new sound integrating the pentatonic melodies, parallel fifths and fourths, and traditional instruments of the region with electric guitars and wandering improvisations characteristic of artists like Jimi Hendrix or the Grateful Dead. Juan Pablo González has referred to this aesthetic blending as “primitive Avant-Garde” in which “the pre-Columbian era was transformed into a present-day experience, an experience that was ritualized through music, performance, and the use of hallucinogenic drugs” (2018, 124). As singer and guitarist Eduardo “Gato” Alquinta has personally commented, the group played “pre-Columbian music” and that “he had never played a rock riff on his guitar” (Stock 2002, 76-7).

Whereas other groups in the *nueva canción* movement sought to integrate the influence and tradition of indigenous musical resources with a firm political orientation, Los Jaivas expressed their unique blend of indigenous and hippie aesthetics towards alternative goals. The founding members of the group, the Parra brothers Eduardo, Claudio, and Gabriel, had opportunities to travel extensively around South America and observe and hear the musical traditions of Indigenous groups across the continent.

Through the figure of the “Indian” they understood a connection to universalizing themes over politically divisive ones. Their lyrics expressed commitment to “peace and humanism and a re-evaluation of nature and its energy resources” (Boyle and Cánepa 1987, 237). This emphasis on humanistic unity, however, did not cohere with the UP's position in an increasingly divisive political society in Chile. Similarly, and as seen in the song text and improvisational style in “Indio hermano,” this brand of musical humanism afforded a deal of exploration and experimentation that did not necessarily cohere with some of the more anonymizing discourse frequently found in leftist political movements. The music of Los Jaivas thus presented a set of ideological challenges for government officials who could not draw on obvious political content in their lyrics to effect a form of critical mobilization or instrumentalization.

Similarly, Los Jaivas' representation of indigeneity did not cohere with masculinist tropes that were ubiquitous in broader UP discourse. While there has been important research demonstrating the ways women in Chile interacted with leftist politics at lower levels of mobilization such as marches, protests, and community feeding events (*ollas comunes*) (Schotterbeck 2018), women were largely ignored by the Allende administration as meaningful force in the revolutionary overhaul of Chilean society (Tinsman 2002, Townsend 1993). Allende clearly saw women playing a supportive role in the revolution in their position as mothers and wives of the working class. As Los Jaivas were frequently criticized for their long hair, marginal and transgressive sexuality, and peaceful, apolitical lyrics, it is not difficult to imagine their relation to and deployment of Indigenous cultural practices as a feminization of the figure of the

“Indian.” This stands in sharp contrast to the cultural indices of Indigeneity seen in the music of nueva canción artists, in which native instruments played a more militant role in the fight against capitalism and its relationship to a colonial past. While the colonial and socio-historical conditions of this framing are not within the scope of this discussion, what is important here is how Los Jaivas presented an alternative understanding of an instrumental community in the Chilean road to socialism that, from the vantage of the UP, would have been largely understood through a masculinist lens.

The group was likely further viewed in a—as least a peripheral—relationship with homosexuality. As Daniel Party has observed, the presence of homosexuals within the Chilean political song movement, and the concomitant historiography documenting it, essentially denied the presence of any homosexual element or subject within its margins (2019, 49). While musicians like Víctor Jara and Rolando Alarcón were generally known by artists within the community to have same-sex relationships, this fact is largely ignored, almost to the point of an attempted erasure, by both scholars and musicians alike. There is a long history of suppression of gays and lesbians in many socialist countries during the Cold War and the case of Latin America is no exception. In his compelling analysis of the intersection between leftist movements and sexual movements in Latin America, James N. Green (2012) describes the omnipresent figure of “*el hombre nuevo*” (“new man”) personified by Che Guevarra, a man that was “virile, bearded, aggressive, and single-minded in his sacrifice for the cause, postponing worldly pleasures of the moment for a glorious socialist future” (Green 2012, 456). The sexual “non-normativity” of Los Jaivas was a constant point of contention in both the leftist and

conservative press (see Mularski 2016). While no direct accusations were made against the group regarding their purported homosexuality, it is undeniable that journalistic commentary about their long hair, drug use, and rumors about participation in orgies would have signaled to publics on the Chilean Left a clear departure from the idealized *hombre nuevo*. The strained vocal style, which feels more personal and internally directed, as well as the meandering and somewhat aimless pentatonic riffs comprising the sonic composition of the piece, might therefore have also registered as a kind of “queering” of more mainstream nueva canción textuality and expression.

After the 1973 coup, Los Jaivas placed themselves into “auto-exile” from Chile and left for Argentina. As noted by the Chilean musician Patricio Castillo, who would later go on to collaborate with the group after their relocation to France in 1977, because they were not affiliated with any political party, they could not apply for asylum through the same channels as other leftist Chileans who were violently persecuted under the Pinochet dictatorship. Instead, the group undertook what might be considered a “creative exile” or “aesthetic exile” (Castillo in *Rebellión y Delirio* 2020).

How then, did a group with a self-professed lack of political affiliation and one that openly participated in behaviors and musical expression deemed excessive, materialistic, and non-masculine within a socialist ideology come to be featured on one of the most significant festivals for the presentation of international political music in Eastern Europe? It is unlikely that their music and its hippie connotations would have been as unsettling to SED officials as it was to the UP government almost a decade earlier. This may have been in part to a slow, but steady, easing of cultural restrictions

that started to come about under the political leadership of Erich Honecker in 1971. Greater forms of individualistic expression had already begun to take root in East German society over more utopian visions of collective unity through the increasing importation of western music styles and wider proliferation of musical subcultures. However, due to the intense political vetting of Chileans in the GDR through collaboration between the SED and CHAF, it is certain that Los Jaivas' antecedent reputation in Chile would have been made clear to the selection committee for the festival. Furthermore, while women's roles in the GDR in reality were much more integrated, and in many cases autonomous from those of men (Berdahl 1999; see especially chapter 6), official party understanding of the sexes still remained fundamentally rooted in "traditional" gender roles (Paul 2015). Lastly, although homosexuality in the GDR was not as aggressively rejected as in leftist political discourse in many parts of Latin America, it was not officially recognized until 1985, thereby inscribing it within a similar culture of silence that we have seen within the nueva canción movement.

From a geographic perspective, it might therefore be suggested that the presence of Los Jaivas at the 1981 Festival of Political Songs and their inclusion as the anchor track on the corresponding disc, may have had the consequence of associating Latin American Indigeneity with marginality, meekness, and femininity. In the context of the complicated racial politics in the GDR, the musical articulation of this identity would further likely have registered within a particularized racial framework. The hegemonic displacement or reframing of the social positionality of women and non-heterosexuals

has been a strategy in colonial projects of geographic and bodily subjugation. Audra Simpson (2014) identifies the legacies of gendered violence perpetrated by colonizers and the tensions between traditional roles of female Indians and the pervasiveness of colonial influences on Mohawk tribal membership among the Haudenosaunee nation. “Their bodies have *historically* been rendered less valuable because of what they are taken to represent: land, reproduction, Indigenous kinship and governance...Theirs are bodies that carry a symbolic load because they have been conflated with land and are thus contaminating to a white, settler social order” (Simpson 2014, 156). The feminization and/or queering of Los Jaivas on the festival stage and on the 1981 *Rote Lieder* disc reflects an effort towards the maintenance not only of a “social order,” but a political-geographic one as well. However, whereas Simpson demonstrates the way that female Natives were, in reality, the most dangerous subjects within a colonizer logic, within the political logic of the SED and the Chilean political elite, the feminization/queering of an Indigenous subject was a productive strategy in maintaining geographic and spatial hegemony.

Saldaña-Portillo (2016) follows Simpson in her analysis of Octavio Paz's chapter “Hijos de la Malinche” from his book *El laberinto de la soledad*. She notes Paz's comparison of “‘hijo de la chingada’ (son of the fucked one) [against] the Spanish colloquialism ‘hijo de puta’ (son of a whore) ...underscor[ing] that the indigenous victims of colonialism ceded nothing ‘voluntarily’ or for a fair price” (2016, 13). In this case, Paz connects the perpetuation of colonial violence against Indigenous peoples in North America with an historical framing of land and territory in relation to the violation

of a female Indigenous subject. Saldaña-Portillo takes this observation further however arguing that through the (self-)identification as an “hijo de la chingada,” the invocation of this colloquialism constructs the colonized as a complicit subject in the colonial project; the “hijo” is simultaneously victimized and carries out the legacy of the perpetrators of this victimization. “The act of colonizing is still enabled through the territorial embodiment of the indigenous [sic] woman, but it is paradoxically the offspring of the rape that the one who colonizes, as the chingón aggressively opens not only the female indigenous body of his mother, but also the territory of the future nation” (ibid).

It is important here to step back and acknowledge that GDR and Soviet relations to land, borders, and territory during the Cold War manifested through a very different dynamic than colonial violence against native people in North America. However, it is difficult to acknowledge these historical strategies for implementing colonial violence among white settlers beginning in the sixteenth century and continuing to this day, strategies constructed around the manipulation of a feminine Indigenous subject vis-à-vis territorial autonomy, without informing our consideration of Soviet cartographic projects in the Third World. Whereas settler colonizers in North and South America inverted and destabilized gendered framings of Indigenous space, mid-twentieth-century ideological and political cartographies of the southern hemisphere, fought over in both the East and the West, clearly drew upon a continually evolving rhetoric to hegemonically define and attribute spatial autonomy and ideological citizenship to regions in the Global South (Berlant 1997). Even further, and here following Saldaña-Portillo's commentary on the constructed complicity of the colonized, the Chilean political leadership stationed in the

GDR in the CHAF seemingly facilitated this association between Indigeneity with queerness and feminization due to the longstanding perception of this band and the themes that they indexed for leftist elites.

As many Chileans in the early-1980s began either to transfer to Western capitalist nations or return to their homeland, the narrative of the GDR's functionality began to erode. It became increasingly difficult for officials to continue to "sell" the success of real socialism when members of one of the most significant migrant groups in the country were continuing to opt for lives under alternative political formations. This would have been just as complicated for officials within the CHAF as their political status in many ways hinged on the compliance of the Chilean exile population. Shifting narratives around Chilean cultural products from those of militant political subjects seen in the 1970s to "objects" of aesthetic consumption foregrounding Latin American exoticism, simultaneously served to reframe the discourse around the increasing visibility of this community's disaffection with the GDR way of life. Furthermore, reframing this mode of presentation and reception of Chilean artists in the context of GDR internationalist discourse would serve to dismantle some of the perceived empowerment or autonomy of this group as a political subject and one, in actuality, largely steering their own narrative around the solidarity movement. In this way, I want to highlight that these considerations of possible attempts to link these artists to a queer—and perceptibly less militant—subject, did not manifest the intended results. Chileans both in and outside of the GDR generally continued to control their own political and geographic narratives. This resulted in both real and imagined forms of engagement and construction of geographic

alternatives through the sonic articulation of precarity. The appearance of Los Jaivas on the 1981 disc did not represent a meaningful component of GDR foreign policy. Instead, the analysis here of artistic mediation in the context of settler-colonial dynamics underscores a shifting dynamic and tension between an eroding East German foreign policy and the rest of the world. Over the next two years these discs would continue to manifest this tension before ultimately showing signs of political acquiescence to a failing international solidarity infrastructure.

### **Race, Folklore, and Space in the GDR**

The state-sanctioned discs documenting the Festival of Political Songs, while ostensibly functioning as sites for racial equity and mixing, may have served to exacerbate notions of racial “otherness” in the minds of East German listeners. Throughout each of the discs between 1970 and 1990, the racial and geographic representation of artists appears to underscore broader thematic elements that are discursively contained in the text, design, and imagery on the album jackets. These visual features supplement, and in some cases supplant, a more nuanced reading of the individual tracks and the social, political, and cultural context of which these songs likely indexed for the artists performing them. While we have demonstrated the medial staging of Chile and the Chilean population on these discs through their politicization, spatialization, and Indigenization/feminization, and how these processes of mediation we all framed within the complex racial politics of the GDR, we can now turn to a more direct analysis of the category of race and the role it played in the East German framing of this population.

The first track on the disc from the 1982 festival features the Chilean nueva canción ensemble Illapu performing the Afro-Peruvian folk song “Toro mata” (“The Bull Kills”). It is notable that in the preceding 12 years of the festival, this is the first instance to feature a Chilean ensemble or artist performing a song with such a clear “ethnic” or “folkloric” element. With the exception of “Indio hermano” by Los Jaivas, all of the songs featured by Chilean artists on the *Rote Lieder* collections up to this point are more closely related to political anthems. The song tells the story of an Afro-Peruvian slave who fights the bull of a European slaveowner. The man cannot escape the bull because it pursues his black skin instead of the red bull-fighting *muleta*. The song signaled a critique of the white slave-owning population by the Afro-Peruvian community during the era of colonialization (Ma 2012). While it is possible that Illapu may have had a translator for the actual performance, the disc makes no reference to the track nor contains any descriptive material such as that contained on earlier discs. It is more likely that this rendition of the song with its solely idiophonic accompaniment, syncopated triple-meter *landó* rhythm, and stylized vocal ornamentation would be heard by audiences as sexy and danceable.

The 1982 disc contains some of the thinnest visual imagery out of any of the discs produced up to this point (Figures 2.3 and 2.4). The front cover features two photographs: The first, a birds-eye photo taken from the back of the stage showing the backs of the heads of four musicians with guitars and the faces of large audience surrounding the stage; The second, also taken from the perspective of the stage, is rotated ninety-degrees and only shows the faces of audience members. These photos of audience members from

the vantage point of the stage seem to iron-out the line between performer and public, and indeed this point is directly addressed in a statement by festival organizers on the back of the disc:

*Wer in der Werner-Seelenbinder-Halle das Abschlußtreffen erlebte oder besser: mitgestaltete, wird noch lange von dieser ausgelöschten Trennlinie zwischen Bühne und Zuschaueroval reden.*

Anyone who experienced the final meeting in the Werner-Seelenbinder-Halle, or better: helped shape it, will talk for a long time about the erased line between the stage and spectator oval.



Figure 2.3: Front Cover of 1982 *Rote Lieder* LP, Image provided by Luis “Lucho” Briceño

However, while these photos do facilitate a form of integration of the viewer (listener) into the visual space of the artists, the backside of the album jacket appears to make a



It is further notable that both artists, in this photographic instance, are shown without instruments and thereby stripped of their artistic role to instead appear more militant in their presentation. Particularly the photo of Abdullah, shown here in profile with black beret, black background, and black shirt, seems to frame him and his black skin as a kind of racial archetype of Black militancy. This leveraging of racial imagery is consistent with the presentation and framing of racial subjects discussed by Gregory Witkowski (2015) in his analysis of East German philanthropic campaigns. It is lastly notable that Abdullah's track on the disc is the corresponding bookend to the A-Side that Illapu here opens.

Viewing the album design in the way, both in terms of its physical visual layout and the arrangement and selection of tracks, it becomes clear that, despite descriptions of unity and support, race is being communicated here in a very particularized way. By 1982, the GDR had been navigating a tenuous relationship with its aesthetic mobilization of African American music for several decades. Throughout the 1960s and 1970s, Paul Robeson received a number of prominent awards and commemorations in the East German state due to his personification of what Michael Rauhut has termed the “other America” (2011, 98). As a result of Robeson's political persecution by the McCarthy-era U.S. government and his championing of negro spirituals, his figure offered the Ulbricht regime an opportunity to mediate the officially recognized dissident characteristics of jazz and blues-inspired American popular music and instead represent the fight of Black America against Western capitalism and imperialism. Rauhut effectively demonstrates that Robeson, as well as other Black artists with ties to the GDR were politically

instrumentalized on the basis of skin color and were further artistically reduced to sanctioned representations of African American folk music. This cultural framing allowed GDR officials to construct a particularized racial subject that opposed the more “formalist” cultural products such as bebop or commercial ones such as rock and roll (Rauhut 2011, 96-102)

By the time of the 1982 Festival of Political Songs, the Honecker regime had already been in place for eleven years and some of its more permissive cultural policies had begun to take root. By this point, jazz had become fairly well-integrated into the SED's cultural agenda and there was an increasing fracturing of popular tastes appearing in the form of subcultures around music such as hip-hop and punk. However, the blues was still a highly contentious index for dissidence among the youth populations as young “*Bluesers*” increasing self-presented and aligned with Western European and North American hippies. Due to its increasing visibility as a reflection of African American struggle against imperialism, Black American music in general, and the blues in particular, began to take on an alternative semantic value in the minds of young GDR listeners (Furlong 2013, 448). In Alison Furlong's (2013) analysis of the East German “blues mass” genre, she documents the history how the Protestant Church, as a site relatively outside of the SED's political and cultural influence, drew on the Blues to create a space to foster a sense of pluralism among church attendees. The blues mass drew not only *Bluesers*, but punks, hippies, rap fans, and other groups to exercise a collective criticism through pluralistic action. In an attempt to instrumentalize African American musical idioms, GDR officials inadvertently established the foundations that

would allow this music to signal a wider range of discontent among increasingly diverse subcultures and situate the church as a site to foster countercultural dissidence (Furlong 2013, 455-6).

It is important at this point to step back and acknowledge the tenuous connection here between African American music and official attempts to “racialize” the music of the then Third World. It is not the intention here to elide processes of instrumentalization by GDR officials between two distinct environments of perceived cultural production. As we have demonstrated, efforts to harness an officially circumscribed resistance-potential of African American music against capitalist imperialism clearly backfired. Furthermore, efforts to strictly foreground the folkloric elements of African American musical culture did not serve to homogenize an ideological perception of this music or establish a broader identificatory singularity among the East German youth. From this understanding, it is therefore potentially useful to consider the above examination of Illapu and their performance of an African American folksong in the context of East German perceptions of *das Volk* in geographic terms.

After the founding of the East German state in 1949, German folk music became a highly restricted artistic form under the SED due to its strong connection with and instrumentalization under the Nazi regime. David Robb (2010) describes the process of “locating” an East German folk identity in the songs of the 1848 revolution. Similarly, Felix Morgenstern (2018) describes how beginning in the mid-1970s, GDR folk musicians began to slowly reintroduce folkloric genres to East German audiences through the performance of Irish vernacular tunes. This process of cultivating a folk identity

through music of other regions and eras frequently resulted in the appropriation of this music towards distinct—if not directly contradictory—aims. While clearly not drawing on any racial element, the permissibility of this music was deeply rooted in a particularized conception of “folk”—and here we might broaden our thinking to include race—as existing outside of the East German socio-political project. Whereas African American music in the United States ultimately proved untenable as a model for ideological homogeneity, the emphasis from the SED on vernacular styles reflected an effort to delink folkloric idioms from nationalist identity. Moreover, in the case of vernacular cultural products from the Third World, we can determine that the foregrounding of these products would have the effect of softening notions of borders, politics, and national identity for audiences engaging with these artists through the mediated formats of the *Rote Lieder* discs.

This tension over the geographical and national construction of folk music can be seen in another important album series, predating the Festival of Political Songs by several years. The *Lieder der Völker* (Songs of the People) series, which was pressed on the Eterna label between 1964–1968, clearly demonstrates efforts towards this de-spatialization and de-nationalization of folklore. Although Morgenstern identifies the revival of autochthonous East German folk music beginning in 1976, a number of these discs feature not only songs of continental Europe, but of Germany as well. With approximately twenty discs in the series, *Lieder der Völker* explores a wide range of song material ranging from music of the Arab world and Negro Spirituals (Paul Robeson was the first artist to be recorded in the series in 1964) to German, Italian, and English

madrigals from the sixteenth and seventeenth century. The examples of German folk songs recorded on this series are notable as they foreground regional as opposed to national identity and often highlight elements of the natural world. For instance, several albums are dedicated to the music of Bavaria, the Harz Mountains, and North Germany. Other albums highlight the passing of the seasons, Christmas, or love songs. What is notable here is that the albums featuring German folk music present a vague and non-circumscribed construction of space and borders. Following Robb and Morgenstern, we might identify this foregrounding of regional over national identity as a disassociation of German *Volk* from the nationalism associated with the Nazi era.

Somewhat conversely to the silencing of national boundaries in the folklore of Germany, these discs appear to deliberately circumscribe the nationhood of countries in the Southern hemisphere. Although the discs featuring music from these regions acknowledge national borders more directly, they make efforts to dissolve nationalist distinctiveness by foregrounding tropes of race and indigeneity to “regionalize” the countries that they highlight along tropes of exotic Otherness. Perhaps the most prominent example of this is on the disc *Süd- und mittelamerikanische Volksmusik* (*South and Central American Folk Music*—1965). Principally, the front of the album jacket features three Afro-Brazilian women wearing traditional dresses (Figure 2.5). It is worth mentioning that out of all the discs on the *Lieder der Völker* series, the only albums that feature portrait-style album covers are those by Paul Robeson, the African American musician Aubrey Pankow, and the one under present discussion. Following José Perez's comments at the beginning of this chapter, race (and in this case specifically Blackness)

is being used as a marketing strategy to entice listeners to buy these albums. In the case of *South and Central American Folk Music*, the exotic imagery buttresses the commentary on the back of the disc, provided by the German ethnomusicologist Jürgen Elsner, particularly highlighting the influence of African music on in South and Central America.



Figure 2.5: Front Cover of 1965 *Süd- und mittelamerikanische Volksmusik* LP, Image provided by Luis “Lucho” Briceño

It is therefore interesting to find on this disc, in addition to traditional Brazilian dances with roots in the Afro-Brazilian community, a collection of political songs and cuecas performed by Violeta Parra representing Chile and *mariachi* songs from Mexico. The examples here from Mexico and Chile reflect influences as much from European traditions like diatonic chord progressions, melodies, and instruments as it does from

Indigenous or African ones. Rather than highlighting the complex intersection of Indigenous, European, and African elements in Latin American music, this foregrounding of racially distinctive imagery and the emphasis on the ubiquity of African rhythms and melodic/harmonic features serves to construct a Latin American musical identity along lines of racial otherness. It also limits the understanding of distinctive national characteristics between each of these countries and “regionalizes” the part of the Americas below the Rio Grande in a way that coheres with the broader ideological tendencies in the Soviet and East German competition over the empty “space” of the Third World. In other words, deemphasizing national geographies in favor of a regional framing had the effect of facilitating an ideological and geographic mutability. Beyond distorting the understanding of national geographic identity in South and Central America, the disc goes further in eliding continental cultural distinctions between Africa, thereby encouraging a broader framing of the Third World. Although this disc appears several years before the beginning of the festival, it demonstrates just how deeply conceptions of race and racial imaginaries were ingrained into the consciousness of a purportedly raceless society.

The case of the 1982 *Rote Lieder* disc is therefore a prominent example of the racialization and de-nationalization of political space in Latin America. It is unlikely that Illapu, or any other Chilean artists for that matter, would have been so directly framed in the eyes of audiences along lines of racial identity. However, throughout personal contact with both Chilean performers and East German festival organizers, themes of the exotic sexiness of manly revolutionary Chileans has been a persistent theme. In the case of

Chileans highlighted alongside Black artists and in the context of African American vernacular idioms, this association not only served to exacerbate exoticist perceptions of artists, but further proved efficacious for establishing links between representatives of the Global South and a sanctioned form of folk culture, thereby disassociating this music from the national, geographic, and political contexts in which it was likely intended to be heard. Lastly, while it will be demonstrated later on that GDR officials, as in the case of instrumentalizing Black music of North America, were equally unsuccessful, this examination of racial mediation on this disc further underscores a perceived attitude of docility and manipulability of racial subjects from the Global South.

### **Chileans at the Festival Leading Up to the Fall of the Wall**

Beginning in the middle of the 1980s we begin to see a marked shift in the representation of Chilean artists on the *Rote Lieder* LPs. By this point, the energy around many of the more coherent international cultural projects was beginning to turn inwards as domestic pressure and tension continued to rise throughout the GDR. The final years of the Festival of Political Songs reflect a fragmented and desultory framing of international artists, particularly with respect to those from Chile. In keeping with the shift away from a more “anthemic” or “militant” representation of Chilean politics and music and the foregrounding of tracks that either racialized or indigenized the community, the 1983 disc featured Inti-Illimani performing “*La fiesta de la Tirana*” (“The Festival of Tirana”).<sup>8</sup> The piece is a wordless virtuosic display of instrumental and

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<sup>8</sup> Recording available at: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1HuTGt4-Prg&ab\\_channel=sssaabbiiiii88](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1HuTGt4-Prg&ab_channel=sssaabbiiiii88)

vocable fireworks inspired by the music at the yearly festival in La Tirana in the north of Chile. The festival has syncretic origins in both Indigenous and colonial Christian art forms. The track features rich vocal and instrumental textures, abrupt and contrasting section changes, and a distinct sense of pacing that gains and loses momentum in unexpected ways. All of these features would have indexed a foreign and exotic character for German audiences. Despite the song's strong historical context and association with Indigenous survival and resilience, in the context of the festival and especially on the disc, it would likely have been interpreted within a more exoticist frame that we saw with the *Lieder der Völker* series (see also Rodríguez 2018; Verba 2013). The album also features the song “*Canción para Violeta Parra*” (“Song for Violeta Parra”), an homage by the Basque group Oskorri.

By the early 1980s, the robust support around the solidarity movement against the Pinochet dictatorship had begun to abate. The 1983 festival was overwhelmingly marked by the premieres of the song cycle “*Cheretizimi*” by Mikis Theodorakis and the cantata “*Canto épico al FSLN*,” a large-scale work documenting the work and struggles of the Sandinista National Liberation Front. The “declaration of intent” printed on the back of the ‘83 disc is primarily occupied with critiques of the NATO missile program, which brought the world to the brink of nuclear war in 1983. Despite the severity of widely supported geopolitical causes against nuclear disarmament and civil wars in Nicaragua and El Salvador, the mainstreaming of “political song” in the GDR supporting these causes, due to its connection with the SED administration and the FDJ, did not serve to mobilize young people in the same way as the genre was able to in the 1970s for the

Chileans. Furthermore, by this point the political efficacy of the “political song” genre of the *Liedermacher* movement was similarly being overtaken by Rock, Punk, and New Wave, which spoke more directly to the way East German youths felt in the 1980s Cold War-era. These genres were recognized as crucial to the advancement of wider leftist causes despite the contradictions between them and the state-run media (Robb 2016; see also Bredemeyer 1983, cited in Kirchenwitz 2011, 31).

Writing in *Die Zeit* in February 1983, the West German journalist and author, Michael O. R. Kröher describes the “anemia” and “arthritic symptoms” of the 1983 festival:

Clichés of emancipation through reception, of freedom through free thinking ... Even the prestigious event...only reinforced the impression that the methods and modes of presentation of the music presented here are in a similar state to the West Berlin S-Bahn: outlived, half abandoned, rotten, and stubbornly retained ...

...The young GDR audience today is afflicted by the same romantic escapism as the West German audience at the beginning of the seventies...In order to compensate for this deficit of political explosiveness, the thirteenth festival had at least occasionally endeavored to expand the musical spectrum. By including radical current playing styles one demonstrated musical progressivity... (cited in Kirchenwitz [1983] 2011, 31).

It is interesting, therefore, to consider the overtly de-politicized presentation of a group like Inti-Illimani that only a few years earlier was a paragon of musical revolutionary identity. Instead, we see during the early period of the 1980s festival organizers and record producers toeing an uneasy line around the shifting tastes and understanding of political music. On the one hand, I have argued that the selection of the particular tracks featured by Los Jaivas and Illapu (both groups were some of the few regularly

programmed Chilean ensembles to appear at the festival in the mid- and late-1980s) introduced a kind of “alternative” element that might have resonated more with new musical innovations among East German youths. Simultaneously, the artistic presentation of these artists was wrapped up in a myriad of tensions around space, ideology, and the role that international artists like these would play in East German society. This dual-sided aspect to the programming and presentation of a group that, in many ways, was seen as an ideological and geographic threat to a number of SED policies, simply underscores the difficulties of fostering a progressive musical climate in a state of heightened surveillance and control. The inclusion of Inti-Illimani’s “La fiesta de La Tirana” as an index of exoticism and commercial appeal may have been intended to highlight precisely the kind of radicalism that Kröher talks about as a mark of progressiveness. The depoliticization, therefore, was intended to operate as a kind of commercial “hook” or soundbite, that might connect to or develop an aesthetic appetite for the more mainstream messaging surrounding the festival and the broader GDR musical climate. In this way, lastly, some of the specific tropes that pointed to various anxieties around international cartographies just a few years earlier, were now indexing a feeling of geographic instability at home.

Between the thirteenth festival in February 1983 and the fall of the Berlin Wall there were only two more appearances of Chilean artists on the *Rote Lieder* discs. In 1985 Quilapayún was featured performing “Luz negra” (“Black Light”), a dark and rather grim text, rich in its poetry, but markedly different from either the anthemic features of the early 1970s or the more exotic tracks of the nueva canción repertoire from the early-

1980s. The tenor of the song is ultimately optimistic, but reflects the immense work of a community surveying the wreckage after a period of intense suffering:

From “*Luz negra*” – Quilapayún:<sup>9</sup>

*Habría que decir que ya no estamos  
cantando por las grandes alamedas  
de nuevo la guitarra está llorando  
de nuevo nuestro canto es una herida.  
Habría que firmar valientemente  
que el mundo nos separa de ese mundo  
y un mundo es el que queda destruido  
y un mundo por hacer es la tarea...*

It should be said that we are no longer  
singing through the great avenues  
again the guitar is crying  
again our song is a life.  
One would have to bravely affirm  
that a world separates us from that world  
and a world is what remains destroyed  
and the making of a new world is our  
task...

In the East German periodical *Sonntag* in September of 1985, the member of the most prominent East German *Singegruppe* Oktoberklub, Regina Scheer, reflects a final expression of hope and solidarity around the members of Quilapayún, in what was arguably the last truly successful iteration of the Festival of Political Songs:

They search for different forms. They appeal not to the rationality of the people, but rather, above all, to their emotionality, to their unconsciousness...

Their program cannot be clearly defined by political messages...Only the singers in their black ponchos with their traditional instruments...are...symbols of a political reality: The Unidad Popular, its wonderful program, and its defeat...

If they no longer see the inflammatory function of art in the foreground, this is an expression of their situation, their search, their confrontation of the margin between reality and utopia (1985, Cited in Kirchenwitz 2011, 35).

The foregrounding of a text filled with uncertainty about space and the future, one cautiously optimistic but in no way clear about how life for either the Chilean or East

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<sup>9</sup> Recording available at: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cavr2yUqgXI&ab\\_channel=kojohnsonlol](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cavr2yUqgXI&ab_channel=kojohnsonlol)

German community would unfold, underscored wider challenges and changes in both official and private sectors of life in the GDR. The year of the 1985 festival and *Rote Lieder* compilation was also the year of the introduction of the *glasnost* and *perestroika* policies. These policies have often figured into wider conversations around political and geographic destabilization in the Soviet Bloc and are generally regarded as crucial stages in the ultimate collapse of the Soviet Union (Childs 2001; Dennis 2001; Maier 1997). Although this period marked a “final grasp” of intensity with regards to surveillance and efforts to control messaging around artistic production, it was likely clear to both those that defined their lives in the GDR through participation in the government, and those who felt increasingly alienated by it, that the material conditions of life were changing.

Through this destabilization of the state’s own political identity and borders, its geopolitical relationship to nation states around the world was invariably changed as well. In this context, Scheer’s commentary, and reaction to Quilapayún’s presence at the fifteenth Festival of Political Songs functions almost as a surrogate for internal anxieties among the East German public. Rather than functioning as a representative cultural product for a widely divergent systems of views and values about the relationship between the so-called Second and Third Worlds, here Quilapayún and their song “Luz negra” perform a therapeutic function, affording an artistic space through which the people of the GDR could examine their own political and geographic conditions. This possibility of a new kind of political future at the “margin between reality and utopia” and born out of destruction, fostered a continually evolving spatial relationship with Chile and its community in exile.

From “Luz negra” – Quilapayún:

*Habría que decir sin más remedio  
que el tiempo es más profundo que la vida  
la luz se Vuelve sombra en un instante  
la historia va cambiando los motivos,  
naufraga hasta la nave más serena  
la muerte se depierta con su espada  
la rubia miel en gris se va bebiendo  
y el día va naciendo entre las ruinas.*

It should be said without further choice  
that time is deeper than life  
light turns to shadow in an instant  
history changes the motives  
wrecks even the most serene ship  
death awakens with his sword  
honey blonde in gray goes drinking  
and the day is born among the ruins

The final appearance of Chileans on the *Rote Lieder* series before the fall of the Berlin Wall was from the nineteenth festival in February 1989 and featured Sol y Lluvia performing “Armas vuelven a casa” (“Arms Go Home”). This performance and the corresponding disc must be evaluated within the context of the dramatic political and geographic shifts occurring in both Chile and the GDR at the time. By the point of the 1989 festival, the people of Chile had cast their votes in a resounding “NO” in the October 1988 plebiscite against the Pinochet regime, marking the end of the dictator’s brutal reign. Quilapayún and Inti-Illimani, the two groups most prominently identified with the nueva canción movement and by the condition of their exile from Chile had, after seventeen years, returned to their homeland.<sup>10</sup> Other groups such as Aparcoa that had been instrumental in the politico-musical infrastructure across the European continent and around the world, had left irreparable fissures in the East German communities in which they participated in exile. In the GDR, tensions around *glasnost* and *perestroika* in the Soviet Union led to increasing attempts to manage the cultural sphere. Additionally,

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<sup>10</sup> Inti-Illimani did return to the GDR to perform in the twentieth Festival of Political Songs in January 1990, just two months after the fall of the Berlin Wall.

after decades of oversaturation and exhaustion from the public's integration with the "official" life of the SED in what Mary Fulbrook (2013) calls the "honeycomb state," many sectors of the East German population were simply overburdened and finished with the present configuration of political life.

Into this climate stepped Sol y Lluvia, a group less affiliated with the nueva canción movement that was more familiar to many East German listeners, and more connected with the *canto nuevo* movement that provided the clandestine, poetic, and subversive lyrics against the Pinochet dictatorship in Chile. Although instrumental in mobilizing support around the "NO Campaign" in the 1988 plebiscite vote, outside of Chile, and in the majority of scholarship in Chilean popular music of the 1980s, there is scant mention of the group and their role. Even Juan Pablo González's (2018) extensive collection of case studies on Chilean musical history makes no mention of the group. In *Canción Valiente*, Marisol García describes Sol y Lluvia as "the most important group in this current of song from the margins" (2013, 292). Notable among the group's song texts was the presence of their Christian faith, which, along with the influence of a more generic 1980s electric rock sound and traditional dance rhythms, placed Sol y Lluvia, along with so many other artists in the *canto nuevo* movement, in a much more opaque position regarding classificatory or genre identification.

Their invitation and highlighted performance at the 1989 festival therefore marks a palpable acquiescence to the failure of the rigidity of the East German system. The most notorious track on the *Rote Lieder* disc commemorating that year was "St. Valentine's Day" by Billy Bragg due to the controversy around his final performance in the GDR.

The artist had spoken critically about the Berlin Wall during the tour, suggesting that the policies of *perestroika* and *glasnost* would never work if it remained erect (Collins 2013, 204). His criticism was broadcast over East German television and airwaves and received thunderous applause in the stadium after which he was informed that he would never be invited to perform in East Germany again (ibid., 205).

Sol y Lluvia, featured alongside Billy Bragg, as Chilean representatives of a distinctive and less-familiar musical sound may have functioned as a referendum on the ubiquity of artistic undercurrents marking the erosion of the Socialist state. Their use of electric instruments, direct lyrics, and, in the case of “*Armas, vuelvense a casa*,” a more hopeful messaging, was actually more in line with efforts under the Honecker regime to harness the political potential and popular interest in a distinctly East German art form (Robb 2016).

From “*Armas, vuelvense a casa*” – Sol y Lluvia:<sup>11</sup>

*Pero el aire volverá  
La conciencia crecerá  
En el campo y en el mar  
Y también en la ciudad.*

But the air will return  
consciousness will grow,  
in the field and in the sea  
and also in the city

*Armas, vuelvense a casa  
Manos dsearmadas construirán la paz*

Arms come home  
disarmed hands will build peace

*Y la volverá  
Y también la libertad  
En el campo y en el mar  
Y también en la ciudad.*

And life will return  
and also freedom  
in the field and in the sea  
and also in the city

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<sup>11</sup> Recording available at: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ezNQCrecuow&ab\\_channel=carocabello](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ezNQCrecuow&ab_channel=carocabello)

The omission of Billy Bragg's powerful performance at the 1989 Festival on the corresponding disc would have struck audiences as an overt attempt at censorship. Whereas the British artist called for the tearing down of the wall, Sol y Lluvia's performance, removed from its context as an anthem of political upheaval at home in Chile would have an etiolated character in the midst of increasing outspokenness against the SED regime and preponderance of western generic diversity over state-sanctioned rock forms. Nonetheless, as a result of the return of many of the most prominent nueva canción artists to Chile between 1985–1988, Sol y Lluvia would have likely underscored the failure of East German leadership to develop a meaningful ideological and political presence abroad.

If the 1970s saw a much more direct relationship between East German political and geographic self-identification vis-à-vis its relationship with Chile, then the 1980s were a period marked by confusion, experimentation, and increasing anxiety. With so many Germans allied behind the Chilean solidarity movement in the years both during and following the democratic election of Salvador Allende and the *Unidad Popular*, it was less complicated to produce a representation of the Chilean people and the space they occupied through manipulation of the community's cultural products. In the 1980s, as interest in Latin America shifted towards civil wars in Central America, and the generally well-educated and professional class of Chilean exiles in the GDR either leaving for the West, returning to Chile, or developing integrated lives in the East German milieu, the government and its affiliates lost their grip on managing the lives and narrative around this community.

We see a reduction of the community's diversity and resourcefulness through the foregrounding of tropes intended to racialize and gender its national, political, and artistic identity. As representatives of one of the most prominent groups from the then-Third World, these tropes reflected a wider geographic framing and identification of sub-equatorial space. Despite these efforts to manage and contain interest and politics around these artists, decreasing presence and shifting strategies of emphasis around their music between 1982–1989 underscore the complexity, diversity, and innovation of this community.

## **Conclusion**

The Festival of Political Songs and the *Rote Lieder* LP series were crucial points of creative and cultural exchange across the otherwise rigid borders between the East and the West. They were instrumental in fomenting support against imperialist enterprises in the Global South and promoting solidarity campaigns for nations in need. They also reflected a system of complicated dynamics and values among the East German government and listening public. These dynamics were inseparable from wider efforts to develop geographic, political, and architectural projects in the Global South that were born out of tensions and anxieties around the relationship between space and ideology during the Cold War. Throughout this chapter, I have argued that the representation of Chilean artists in these events and albums can be understood alongside a wider government-led effort to disenfranchise the Chilean musical community in exile of a perceived geographic and political agency. The efforts were products of the geographic and political precarity of the East German state.

It must be emphasized, however, that these efforts were not ultimately successful. Rather than functioning to circumscribe this community physically and ideologically, the LPs ultimately underscored the continuing unease around it. Chilean participation and representation at the festival and on the *Rote Lieder* series simultaneously underscores both the precarity of East German geographic projects, and the way that this artistic community capitalized on their own experience of precarity to take advantage of and reconfigure real and imagined experiences of space in the GDR. Despite efforts to manage this group, we will see in the following chapters that Chilean artists and their diverse political roles actually deeply interacted with and in some cases shaped the political aspirations of young East Germans. Furthermore, although frequently framed as a cohesive artistic movement, artists representing what has broadly been acknowledged as *nueva canción* actually provided the German public with a wide range of artistic styles and ideas.

It lastly must be acknowledged that the observations presented in this chapter are not meant to support a Western notion of a vast conspiratorial enterprise by East Germany or the Soviets against a migrant community within their orbit. Systems of surveillance and censorship were undeniable parts of life in the GDR, for German citizens and migrant communities alike. To suggest that the album artwork on the *Rote Lieder* series was deliberately constructed to sway the minds of East German youth against Chileans would be an overstatement, and if there was evidence to suggest such a plot, it is likely that audiences and consumers of the discs, bombarded with propaganda on a daily basis, would have seen through the façade. Instead, I hope to have shown that

the representation of the music of this community could not be separated from the intense systems of government control and overreach. Even well-intentioned members of the various administrations and offices involved in putting on the festival, who wanted to construct a veritable environment of intercultural exchange, could not separate these aspirations from the myriad goals within the SED infrastructure.

This chapter does not argue so much for the consideration of the Chilean population in exile as instrumentalized, suppressed, or victimized—although I believe that some of the examples I have provided do show instances of this being the case—but rather that the community was organized and developed to a point of destabilizing the security of East German officials with regards to their political influence around the world. It is no wonder that artists representing this community were programmed with such frequency; officials, festival organizers, and listeners kept returning to this music with continued surprise, excitement, and fear. While it cannot be ignored that Chileans, among the many other migrant communities in the GDR, were frequently subject to attempts to control their daily lives, the energy dedicated to managing the cultural products of this community shows just how influential they were during this time.

### *Chapter 3: Antiphonal Soundings: Voicing and Imagined Exchange with Chilean Anthem Practice*

#### **Introduction**

The campaign and presidency of Salvador Allende (1970–1973) and the *Unidad Popular* (Popular Unity Party – UP) was marked by the presence of a notable campaign slogan: “*No hay revolución sin canciones*” (“There is no revolution without songs”). Arguably more than any other campaign in modern political history, the Allende presidency was truly defined by its relationship and exchange with the Chilean people through participatory musical practice (Rolle 2000; Tudela 2020). This revolution, and the songs that marked it, spoke out to the world in a heretofore unseen way that posed difficulties for the so-called “superpowers” of the world to categorize and evaluate. The resonance of the 1959 Cuban Revolution was far from abating and continued to maintain a crucial reference point for progressive movements, not only in Latin America, but in both the East and the West (Brown 2017). The “Chilean road to socialism” (Fleet 1973), arrived upon through democratically held elections and realized through wide restructuring and redefining of national resources and class identity, represented a complicated and heretofore unseen development in Soviet and U.S. framing of foreign policy in the region. In the midst of the wider anxieties felt by both superpowers surrounding the possibility of a distinctive form of national and political agency in the Global South, the songs of the *nueva canción* movement and their role in Allende's presidency could not be understood apart from their relation to alternative political possibility.

Through sites of diplomacy and international cultural exchange between Chile and the Soviet Bloc, artists representing the UP assumed a unique dimension of exposure and influence. In the case of the GDR, the most notable of these sites was the Festival of Political Songs, which attracted artists from all around the world each year between 1970–1990 (see chapter two), and the Tenth World Festival of Youth and Students, which took place in East Berlin in the summer of 1973. While these events were frequently conveyed as spaces of cultural equality and exchange, the geographic and political anxieties among officials in the GDR and the Soviet Union toward the developing world were inextricable from these projects. Chileans in these contexts were—at least officially—marked by their subscription to and affiliation with a recognizable form socialist militancy. In a 1972 interview in the *Fuldauer Zeitung*, Hernán Gómez, who was a member of the group Quilapayún, was quoted extolling the virtues of the East German musical community:

It is essential to talk with other groups, both those representatives from Western countries because they have the same struggles as we do, and singers from socialist countries so that we can learn from them... (cited in Kirchenwitz [1972] 2011, 9)

This description of a pedagogic relationship of exchange between East German artists and musicians from other countries certainly would have resonated with party officials. However, the Chilean community and their music was widely seen as an index of an alternative expression of socialism among East German music consumers. Instrumental members of the emergent GDR folk song movement, the *Singebewegung* (singing movement), like Reinhold Andert, remember how groups like Oktober Klub “especially admired their [Chilean artists] high professionalism” (personal communication,

September 2021). In this way, their presence, even in the context of global solidarity discourse within the East German capital, could not simply be reduced to a role of political instruments of the SED government.

Instead, this chapter attempts to meaningfully interrogate the role that Chilean artists in the GDR had in shaping not only musical tastes and expression, but even the discourse around politics among music consumers and festival participants. The period of cultural exchange and interaction between Chile and Eastern Europe leading up to and during the years of the Allende presidency framed the music that accompanied the “Chilean way” to the democratic realization of socialist politics. This owes partly to the fact that *nueva canción*, through its mobilization and functionality in Allende's presidential campaign and also in social contexts pertaining to workers' movements and human rights more generally, assumed a participatory role that invited listeners in, not only through collective singing or performance, but also through a meaningful integration into the political process vis-a-vis musical discourse.

In order to demonstrate the nature of this participatory relationship, I explore theories of voice and vocal transmission to identify how a form of political voice reverberated across space, time, and borders. The political voice here is not one understood within a bordered or nationalist frame, but, conversely, one specifically animated in its political power through its articulation and engagement with the precarity of a fixed national and political identity. The voices of Chilean political artists such as Víctor Jara, Quilapayún, and Inti-Illimani had broken through the Berlin Wall in the form of concerts and recordings over the course of the approximately 1,000 days of the

Allende presidency. However, I argue that this function extended in East Germany beyond the years of the UP and well into the period of dictatorship and Chilean exile in the GDR, thereby continually affording participatory spaces for East Germans and particularly GDR youths to interrogate, imagine, and engage with the political imperfections and precarity of the East German state.

If voice is the conduit by which political discourse was facilitated between and across national identities, then the material construct that allowed such identities to engage with one another and capitalize on a condition of precarity is what I here analyze as *anthems*. Drawing on Shana Redmond's (2013) work, I evaluate anthems, as a category, a mode of interaction, a relational process, and space-making procedure. Anthems have received significant attention primarily within conversations around national and cultural identity formation (Frolova-Walker 1998; Lambroshini 2000; Guy 2002; Daughtry 2003; Alvarado 2017; also Taruskin 2001 is an excellent resource on musical nationalism more generally that addresses the subject of anthems). These works all in one way or another acknowledge the tension and dynamism that anthems assume when framed or constructed to identify a static national subject. Instead, here, I want to explore the ways that anthemic texts in the nueva canción movement articulated a national identity that was much more expansive due to an evolving and dynamic political framework and thus more open for wider interpretation and adoption.

At the same time, Chilean musicians delivered anthems through various strategies of voice and were thereby never outside or excluded from processes of both the real and imagined production of space as exiles. Despite discourse around the disenfranchisement

of Chileans in exile due to their instrumentalization and politization in public life, I hope that this analysis will show that voice and anthems continually reverberated in the lives of this community in the GDR political soundscape.<sup>1</sup> While I do not intend to paint some sort of overly rosy portrait of bodily and political autonomy for a community ripped from their homeland, I hope that this analysis affords a more comprehensive evaluation about the way national and political identity was shaped and the way it interacted with a particular environment.

The term “anthem” implies a form of participatory engagement with a song's text due to its etymology in the term “antiphon” and the genre's original practice in call-and-response techniques between a congregation and a point of religious worship (Redmond 2013, 3). As we will see, national anthems implicate their political subjects with varying degrees of inclusivity and engagement. One characteristic that I argue for here is that eliciting participation in Chilean anthems through antiphonal practice only gained more complex and dynamic forms of political traction as the music's reception became increasingly divorced from the national context from which it was articulated. However, instead of considering the symbolic openness of Chilean political music as an appropriative gesture or one that denied voice to this community, their struggle, and their experience in exile, by examining the circulation of “voice” and the conditions of its reception and threading into the political fabric of the GDR, I hope to demonstrate how

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<sup>1</sup> I am thinking here of Arjun Appadurai's (1996, especially chapter 2) framework of the “-scape,” which posits a system of mutable and dynamic loci for cultural and political exchange.

these artists and their community were critical in the articulation of “sonic geographies,” which afforded alternative forms of spatial recognition and practice.

### **Chilean Anthems**

Chilean political anthems circulated through the GDR and the rest of the Eastern Bloc by way of albums, live performances, radio transmissions, and, of course, international music festivals. In Chile however, in addition to some of these more commercial or official media spaces, the *peña* was one of the central spaces for the development and diffusion of this music within the Chilean community. Peñas, which were grassroots musical events, occasionally with food and frequently featuring political discussion, were popular across Chile from the middle of the 1960s and continuing through the end of the Allende presidency. Although there were distinctions between a number of the peñas with regards to their political and artistic content, the most prominent gatherings such as the Peña de los Parra in Santiago or the Peña de Valparaíso either produced or became home to some of the most prominent names in the nueva canción movement (Mamani 2013). As Ariel Mamani notes, these types of politically engaged peñas became “a project that prioritized the word in the song form and that intended to form the peña as a privileged space for listening, reflection, and artistic and political discussion, a goal quite far from the more traditional and commercial musical events” (2013, 129). Although not necessarily triggering a discursivity predicated on anthemic (antiphonal) participatory dynamics, the reactive and engaged listening that Mamani describes as framing the early performances of Víctor Jara, Patricio Manns,

Rolando Alarcón, and Violeta Parra and her children, were clearly defined against, and in dialogue with, a listening subject.

This foundation in a mode of musical circulation and distribution largely apart from the commercial music industry, as well as the genre's integration with the avant-garde movement in Chile, facilitated the construction of a music with an expansive artistic and political character (González 2018, 114–6). While the musical and social foundations for nueva canción in the peña scene certainly extended to the circumstances of Chileans in exile, many of the more overtly anthemic texts, calling for a more direct antiphonic response, appeared to gain more serious semiotic traction than those which may have encouraged deep or engaged listening practices.

An important song that we will look at over the course of this chapter is Sergio Ortega's "*Venceremos*" ("We Shall Overcome"), which was composed in 1970 for the presidential campaign of Salvador Allende. This song was almost always a component of any Chilean performance in the GDR and was known to many East Germans. Its optimistic melody and narrow vocal range manage to sound simultaneously militant and cheerful. It is perhaps this duality and openness that encouraged so many East Germans to participate in the song during performances. Due to the specific political connotations under which this piece was frequently performed, it assumed a bilateral antiphonic exchange between a Chilean *pueblo* and the administration. In exile this participatory exchange between voice-and-listener or call-and-response, was displaced out of a national discursive frame and was overlaid on the experience of and ideas about borders and nationhood. The consequences for this reconfiguring of the voice and listening

energy produced a semantic expansiveness, simultaneously available to an East German public, but continually directed by the conditions and political circumstances driving its presentation for the Chilean exile community.

“Venceremos” is perhaps most exemplary of participatory potential of Chilean political song and indeed acquired a new political and social meaning after the Tenth World Festival of Youth and Students. The 1974 documentary *Wer die Erde liebt* (*Whoever Loves the Earth*) (Hellwig 1973) was produced to commemorate the festival.<sup>2</sup> The film features an array of narrative, experimental, and more traditional documentary techniques, frequently overlaying imagery of sites of exchange between artistic and political representatives from around the world with live musical performances from the festival. This method of layering the textual, musical, and visual appears as a saturated and collage-like representation of the festival's emphasis and foregrounding of racial and ethnic diversity. It is notable, then, that two Chilean artists feature as a prominent and singular intermission from some of the more layered textures that mark the rest of the film. Isabel Parra appears alone on stage with her *cuatro* performing “*En esta tierra que tanto quiero*” (“In This Land that I Love so Much”) (21:51-23:55) while the camera zooms in to a mid-shot holding the upper half of her torso for the entirety of the song.

The film follows with footage of three men standing on the same stage alternating the same statement before a jubilant, clapping audience in Russian, Spanish, and German: “Long live the antiimperialist solidarity for all progressive youths in the world!” (24:12–

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<sup>2</sup> Documentary available at:  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bZyWXn1ydSU&ab\\_channel=StanislavPalekha](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bZyWXn1ydSU&ab_channel=StanislavPalekha)

24:28). The Russian man then calls out in Spanish: “Viva Chile! Viva Allende!” The shot abruptly cuts to a soundless series of black backgrounds with white lettering: “11. September 1973: Militärputsch in Chile”; “Präsident Allende: ermordet”; “Verfolgungen”; “Erschießungen”; “Terror”; “Imperialismus”; “Faschismus.” After cutting back, we begin to hear the voices of Inti-Illimani performing the chorus of “Venceremos” in German and the camera starts to pan across the members of the ensemble. Abruptly, after the chorus, they stop performing and ensemble member Max Berrú exhorts the crowd: “*Okey, él que no canta es momio*” (“OK, anyone who doesn’t sing is a mummy!”) (25:20).<sup>3</sup> As they begin their performance of “Venceremos” once again alternating choruses between Spanish and German, the camera refocuses on the audience, alternating between images of indistinguishable faceless masses of concert participants, flags from various countries, and close-up shots of individual faces each responding to the song in their own way.

Javier Rodríguez Aedo argues that “the final objective of the World Festival was to transform itself into a space of resonance that could project the songs of the hundreds of ensembles and soloists around the world” (2017, 11) and that, in the words of festival organizers: “Many of these songs began their journey around the world [in East Berlin]. One of the most well-known: *Venceremos!*” (Cited in Rodríguez, *ibid.*). It may have been the initial intention that the Tenth World Festival of Youth and Students would function as a site of musical and political circulations between representatives from nations in the Global South under the supervision—or at least within the political space—of GDR

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<sup>3</sup> “Momio” (“mummy”) in Chilean slang is critical term for someone affiliated with the political right.

officials. The documentary does indeed seem to highlight spaces of interaction and exchange between individuals dressed in traditional clothing and with a clear index towards developing nations. Many of these scenes are overlaid with the recitation of text or songs in German, thereby signaling the encapsulation of this cultural circulation within an East German ideological or linguistic framework.

However, it cannot be ignored that, at least through the representation within this festival, that Chilean artists (and by clear association, the Chilean road to socialism and fight against the Pinochet dictatorship) were functioning in a manner markedly different than the representation of other artists from the Global South in this documentary. Principally, the offering of visual and sonic space to both Parra and Inti-Illimani, unadorned and desaturated with regards to the layering techniques seen throughout the rest of the film, seems to afford a form of artistic and political agency to the performers. Furthermore, Berrú's exhortation here to the crowd and the group's fostering of connection through singing in German appear to not only support Mauricio Gómez's point that Chilean political song became "a force of international projection, a capacity to convert itself into a representative of the struggles in any country" (cited in Aedo 2017, 11), but specifically as a political force in the local politics of the GDR. If the authorial gaze of East German documentary filmmakers such as Joachim Hellwig and Jürgen Böttcher unconsciously sought to palliate the reciprocal influence of representatives from developing nations on members of the East German youth, this effort is significantly undermined when the agency, singularity, and influence of these Chilean artists is taken into account. Lastly, the Chilean political struggle in the documentary is defined in this

representation, not as outside of the struggles of the East German audience, but as having a direct bearing on it. The progression of the textual frames from issues specific to the struggle for Chilean freedom (“President Allende: Murdered”) to much vaguer, albeit salient issues in the GDR context (“Imperialism” and “Fascism”), culminating in the Inti-Illimani's performance of “Venceremos,” not only create an elision between a Chilean struggle and an East German one, but position this music as a kind of open signifier to be freely used to assess and evaluate alternate political figurations.

### **The Political Resonance of Chile behind the Berlin Wall**

It might be surprising that the articulation of Chilean politics through song would be framed as so resonant within an East German political logic because Chile, even during the years of the UP, was not always viewed as compatible with Soviet and East German values for socialist organization. The “Chilean Road” to socialism was viewed by party officials in Moscow as a heretofore unseen phenomenon in Latin America and a validation of the possibility for a peaceful political transition in the region. In comparison with the militarization that characterized communist revolutions in Cuba and China, as well as increasing tensions between the Soviet Union and both of those nations throughout the sixties and seventies, Chile presented a model and affirmation of a peaceful path for other developing nations at the time. However, as a result of Khrushchev’s generally failed attempts a generation earlier to inject funding and infrastructure into nations in development, it “had produced in [Brezhnev] an especially acute allergy to the promotion of spectacular industrial projects in the Third World” (Turrent 1984, 93). This lack of support towards Chile was couched within a language of

reticence among the Soviets regarding the volatility and possibility for political reversion in the following election cycle, thereby seemingly undermining the East's more vocal celebration of peaceful transition (*ibid.*).

The transition to Socialism after the election of Allende was deemed as fraught with instability and challenges that furthered Soviet anxieties. In a report from the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union from October of 1970, secretary I. Yakovlev recounts the election struggles through a context of deep fracturing not only within leftist parties in Chile, but among centrist groups as well. Although acknowledging Allende's "steadfastness [in] defending the new line" (Centro de Estudios Públicos 1998, 409), a sense of instability and divisiveness marks the Russian secretary's characterization of the period of transition: "The reunification of political forces could create a good political base for the future, both to shut down steps towards counterrevolutionary steps and economic sabotage from rightwing groups, and so that the Unidad Popular government can realize its antiimperialist transformations" (*ibid.*, 410). Although reporting from the Soviet embassy was generally positive during this period, language like this continually undermined notions of stability and future in the country. A year later, in October 1971, a transcription of a conversation between ambassador A. V. Basov and representatives of the PS belies internal fears and rifts as the representatives note right-wing popularity growing around the country, "[a] result of the too slow advance...[of the]...revolutionary process" (*ibid.*, 417-8). The framing of the UP to party officials in the Soviet Bloc was thereby frequently lacking in populist security and stability.

This lack of support and ideological distancing from Chile on the part of the Soviets was also stoked within the context of the *détente* period between the United States and the Soviet Union during the years of the UP in Chile. The Nixon administration was deeply disturbed by the possibility of successful and peaceful transition to socialism in the Southern Cone and, although recognizing the results of the election, vowed to take “appropriate” action if any of the Allende administration's domestic or international policy was deemed inappropriate (Turrent 1984, 89). As it was in the Soviet Union's best interests at the time to maintain civil relations with the U.S., officials in Moscow unofficially shifted from a laudatory tone regarding the successes in Chile to a much more reserved one in an attempt to appease Washington (Turrent 1984, 70-72). This discursive shift, most exemplified through a form of classificatory vagueness regarding Chile's status as an “actual” socialist nation, was further marked by a series of “belt-tightening” policies from Moscow towards Chile.

Being therefore left “adrift” as both a developing nation and a nation attempting to define its own political identity, the UP assumed a greater deal of agency in its foreign policy, further exacerbating fears in both Moscow and Washington that the nation's politics could not be effectively managed on either side of the ideological divide. At the Twenty-Fourth Congress of the Soviet Communist Party, held from March 30–April 9, 1971, the General Secretary of the Chilean Communist Party, Luis Corvalán announced that Chile had officially resumed relations with Cuba and recognized the People's Republic of China (Sapiets 1972, 15).

The Russian interpreter (with a copy of Corvalán's text in front of him) said only: 'The Popular Unity Government has restored relations with

Cuba.' He then paused, and the 5,000 delegates rose to a man [sic] and cheered the reference to Cuba. Corvalán, rather astonished, read the whole sentence again, and this time the Russian interpreter translated the entire sentence, including the reference to China. This did not raise a single cheer in the Congress hall (ibid.).

Regarding foreign relations specifically with the GDR, the Chilean government, not only under Allende, but as far back as the Alessandri administration (1958–1964), had implemented strategic policies to sustain relations with both Germanys (Dufner 2017, 78–9). The liberal wing of the Christian Democrat party under President Eduardo Frei (1964–1970), sustained positive relations with the Willy Brandt government in the Federal Republic (West Germany – FRG), but also initiated policy measures with the SED at the same time without undermining the stipulations of the Hallstein Doctrine.<sup>4</sup> One of Frei's central initiatives was to pull Chile away from U.S. influence and a number of policies were pursued in socialist nations to serve this instrumental purpose (Dufner 2017, 92–5). The administration's effectiveness at pursuing this strategic agenda would have certainly unnerved political representatives in both the GDR and FRG.

During the Allende campaign, the UP and the more closely associated PS experienced a chilly reception from the SED. This may have been in part connected to the East German perception that Allende was not an effective candidate, that the PS was more of a populist movement than an ideological one, and the outspoken criticism by the PS against the Soviet military after its intervention in the 1968 Prague Spring (Dufner 2017, 94). Furthermore, after assuming power in 1970, Allende caused a number of

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<sup>4</sup> The Hallstein Doctrine was a policy in place in the FRG from 1955–1970 that held that the West German government would not have diplomatic relations with any country that recognized the sovereignty of the GDR.

political rifts with the FRG due to tensions surrounding his campaign promise to officially recognize the GDR and break the terms of the Hallstein Doctrine (Dufner 2017, 99–102). Owing to the fact that Brandt, while not pleased with this policy, did not withdraw aide or support from Chile, is a testament to just how crucial relations with Chile were perceived as a point of critical entrée into Latin America. Similarly, Chile's official recognition of East Germany would serve to shore up the state's wider recognition around the world and as a demonstration of its foreign policy aptitude.

Chile's autonomous foreign policy and decision-making as well as the instrumentalization of international alliances after the Second World War marked the nation as an unwieldy subaltern subject in attempts in both the East and the West to effectively manage or control its political development. The excitement and unprecedented characteristics of the Chilean path to socialism and this “experiment” framed the discourse and reception of Chileans and their music in the GDR during the period of flight and exile in the years following the putsch in a markedly different way than before. Engagement with this musical discourse through anthemic participatory practice reinforced a wider swath of political behaviors as “even critical and apolitical East Germans fell under the spell of Chile's exotic revolutionary appeal” (Dufner 2017, 109). “With [the GDR's] foundational myth based in the image of antifascist resistance,” as Olga Ulianova points out, “the theme of solidarity with the Chilean Left, as ‘antifascist’ solidarity (due to the characteristic of ‘fascism’ that the Chilean military regime immediately acquired in the Soviet Bloc countries), acquired a special sense in the GDR, contributing to reinforce the construction of its own identity” (2009, 3). In other

words, Chile, both before and after the dictatorship, had an enormous impact in shaping East Germans' relationship with their own political identity. The circulation and participatory nature of nueva canción anthems in this context was crucial in facilitating this process.

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The present framing of the Chilean exile community through and in relation to the music that has—both through historiographic retrospection and its contemporaneous political mobilization—come to narrativize this moment posits a unitary and distinctive political subject. This is partly due to the selective sonic foregrounding of *anthemic* musical expressions as a kind of sacred sound-tracking of Chilean political identity. Shana L. Redmond (2013), in her brilliant analysis of the role of anthems in imagining a system of political futures and alternatives among transnational groups comprising what she terms the “African descended,” identifies the role anthems have played in constructing a similarly unitary subject through antiphonal exchange between the word of God and a congregation and later between the State and those identified as under its influence (2013, 3). However, she acknowledges the imperfection of this process, noting that anthems “at best...speak to and for *most* of the people *most* of the time (more likely, they managed speech for *some*). In this respect, they are not unlike any other national anthems in that their communities are selectively imagined and exclusive” (2013, 6).

A necessary distinction to make between Chilean political anthems and Black anthems as framed through Redmond's analysis has to do with the kinds of social configurations and spaces they represent in their respective imaginaries realized through

practice. In the case of Black anthems, they performed a reimagining of transnational Black identity and alternatives to socio-political dynamics in a racist, patriarchal, and colonizer state. While we have seen how officials in the GDR viewed Chilean musical and political identity as requiring a form of paternalistic development, these power dynamics were not experienced in the same way as racist and colonial structures that marked the lives of Black Americans in the twentieth century. The legacies of slavery in the Jim Crow Era resulted in a different set of stakes for the implementation of imaginaries through vocality and antiphonal practice.

This notion of imaginary, the envisioning of alternative configurations of political and physical space, had real-life, non-imaginary effects in the experiences of practitioners of anthem. Redmond suggests that anthems are “projects of political accumulation” (2013, 7), where the depth, complexity, and dynamism of these texts builds on the shifting and manifold requirements of communities. Put differently, as anthems are put into play between sites of articulation and reception, they assume a broader active and participatory dimension as they continually index new political identities and possibilities. In this way, participation and exchange are integral processes in realizing anthems’ dynamic political power. Here then represents a crucial point of overlap between Redmond’s conceptualization of Black anthems and Chilean political anthems in exile: they both drew upon this process of political accumulation to thread increasingly wider swaths of experience and expectation into a vocal arrangement that placed these positions into dialogue against mainstream and oppressive narratives. In this way, the imaginaries presented in these texts became literal structures of support and change.

In the case of Chileans in political exile, anthems voiced a set of political alternatives and dynamics of resistance towards the Pinochet regime. The messaging of this exchange, occurring within a condition of stateless—and potentially borderless—political identity, could not be effectively managed by artists performing across the diverse political contexts on the European continent. As anthems were articulated from and towards an experience of precarity they accumulated new political meaning and exposed possibilities of dynamic spatial access as sonic geographies. Chilean artists in exile, calling out to their home country to voice this system of political alternatives, instead were frequently met with responses from European audiences receiving the political messaging of these songs as framed within their own political needs and conditions. Although deeply rooted in efforts to mobilize real and applied measures of support for Chileans fighting fascism at home such as fundraising for oppositional political groups, the role of Chilean music in exile underwent an unexpected form of Redmond's "political accumulation" (ibid.). Nueva canción, while never ceasing to be a symbol and index for Chilean national identity, adopted a palimpsestic political function outside of its national orientation. This process stemmed precisely from the genre's entrainment and affective potential through anthemic dynamics of call-and-response and mass participation (both real and imagined). These processes of anthemic exchange occurring between Chileans, each experiencing unique political and national circumstances, reshaped the conditions and possibilities within a more complex system of musico-political nodes than typically understood. Sites of exchange occurred not only between a stage and an audience, but across borders, through flows of recorded materials,

and even outside of the presence of Chileans (see groups like Oktoberklub, Conjunto Grenada, Dean Reed). Each of the groups involved in this process added to a complex system of valences surrounding a normatively framed bidirectional antiphonal process. These processes of sounding and reception were inscribed across multifarious experiences and articulations of precarity situating them within shifting and unstable spatial dynamics both because, and in spite of their interconnectedness (Simone 2018).

### **Anthems, Nationalism, and Critique in Eastern Europe**

Within the earlier consideration of Chilean national and political exteriority, as framed against Soviet political objectives for the “Third World,” it is useful to interrogate the circulation of Chilean political song beyond the Berlin Wall between a nationalist and ideological function. J. Martin Daughtry (2003) has discussed the semantic overloading and contradictions that arose as national anthems in Russia were repurposed and redefined in relation to the nation's past. In the case of Russia, the melody of the former Soviet anthem was overlaid with new lyrics in 2001, but for many Russians, the piece still indexed the traumatic and violent past of the Soviet regime. These observations follow Redmond's acknowledgement of the imperfection and selectivity of anthems as they attempt to speak to and define a “group” (2013, 6).

Both the Soviet and GDR national anthems assume a number of characteristics regarding the formation of a “people” and the type of space that they were expected to occupy. Daughtry has chronicled the circumstances surrounding the revisions to a number of lines between the 1944 and 1977 versions of the Soviet “Unbreakable Union.” Although the later version did undertake a form of de-Stalinization under Khrushchev

(Daughtry 2003, 48–50), a number of assumptions remain regarding the state of the Soviet Union and the role of the people (*narod*) involved. The first verse follows as such:

An unbreakable union of free republics  
Has been eternally welded together by great Russia  
All hail the united and mighty Soviet Union  
Created by the will of the people.

It is notable here that, within this framing, the constructive work of nation formation is already complete (“welded together”) and that the Soviet citizenry are complicit in this process whether they were aware of it or not (“Created by the will of the people”).

Particularly in the 1977 version with the removal of some of the more militant language (e.g., the final line of the 1944 version, “We will lead our fatherland to glory!” being replaced with, “We will always be selflessly faithful!” (Daughtry 2003, 49) removes any sense of individual future agency in collective nation-building. While this language is completely consistent with other anthems across the Eastern Bloc, this assumptive lack of participatory involvement in the national identity process could be determined as alienating within the national community.

Similarly, in the case of “Auferstanden aus Ruinen” (“Risen from Ruins”), the East German national anthem, even the song's title, presented using the past-participle of the verb *auferstehen* (lit. “to rise from the dead”), assumes a kind of zombie-like finality and lack of agency in this process. Although possessing a more future-thinking tone (e.g. “Old woes will be overcome/And we will overcome them together”; “If we unite ourselves as brothers/We shall defeat the people's enemy”), the text implicates particularly the rising generation of East German youth in a process in which they appear to have little agency (“A free generation rises up/German youth, best efforts/Our people

united in you [*dir*]/You will become Germany's new life"). This form of lyrical pressure appears to implicate the German youth community in a manner similar to the final line in "Unbreakable Union." Furthermore, this sort of determinism, imbricated within a cultural product intended to construct a politico-social consciousness, reflects an almost painful political tension when considered against the mantra that would come to mark nascent resistance movements (especially in the punk scene) in the GDR: "Too much future" (see Mohr 2018).

Under this analysis of the lyrical content of Soviet and East German national anthems, how can we therefore consider the circulation and reception of Sergio Ortega's "Venceremos?" In contrast to the more settled and pre-determined language previously discussed, "Venceremos" relies more on a form of future-oriented language. The title of the song itself is presented in the simple future tense ("We Shall Overcome"), thereby suggesting a national orientation that is processual, hopeful, and perhaps not fully clear or known. This language is especially potent in comparison with the East German national anthem, suggesting that the "revolutionary action" that brings socialism to life has already been undertaken. In this way the unofficial Chilean anthem under the UP may have offered a broader capacity for utilization and reimagining, not only as acknowledged earlier by festival organizers, but also for younger populations in "real socialist" societies such as the GDR and the USSR.

Similar future-oriented language occurs throughout the text: "A new dawn is announced"; "A thousand chains will have to be broken"; "We will sow the lands of glory/Socialism will be the future." It is notable throughout these statements that a wider

and collective “We” is implicated in this process of future-making. The song calls on a range of citizen participants to take action in this process including members of both worker- and middle-classes and women and soldiers; all framed within this more generalized first-person plural subject.

This appears to have broader implications outside of the Chilean context for two reasons. Principally, the song openly acknowledges the existence of class within a socialist society. The Allende administration worked to redistribute resources and provide living and workspaces for all Chileans particularly in rural regions (Steenland 1974), but the song seems to officially acknowledge the necessity of plurality of class actors in constructing this imagined future thereby standing in somewhat of a contrast to the more singularized and unitary class subject in the Soviet and East German anthems. It can only be imagined that this acknowledgement would have had a profound effect in a society in which there only existed one official class. Although many young East Germans and specifically members of the FDJ were supportive of the ideology behind a classless society, the realities of life under “real socialism” were not always reflective of official interpretations regarding the existence of class in the GDR (Maier 1997, 41–2). Secondly, this notion of a collective “We” involved in a processual exercise of nation-building could have inspired a wider affective engagement among the GDR citizenry when considering their own role in the political infrastructure. Unlike the “zombification” of a proletarian subject indexed within the GDR national anthem, or the preordained societal complicity assumed under the Soviet Union's, “Venceremos” specifically derives its

affective potential through its engagement with and invitation to a political subject to participate in a socio-political landscape.

A final point that seems to support the notion that the presence of Chilean anthems in the GDR supported a critical engagement with a wider lived political context has to do with what appears to be less of an emphasis on national identity and more on political ideology. With the exception of the first verse which ends with the line, “All of Chile begins to sing,” there is no other specific mention of Chile. Two lines do include the term “fatherland” (*patria*), but the form of nationalistic expansiveness and ideological richness contained within the song's text offer a different kind of transmissibility that may have also contributed to its circulation and impact in Eastern Europe.

It must be underscored here that “Venceremos” was never the national anthem of Chile, and that Chile's official “*Himno Nacional*” sounds much more consistent with the “generic” and “supranational” characteristics that Daughtry identifies within nineteenth century musical nationalism (2003, 44). He notes that most anthems “[are ascribed] a nationalistic aspect...because they sound familiarly ‘anthem’” (ibid). With this framing in mind, however, it must be posited that part of the success of “Venceremos” in engaging with a widely diverse group of socialist youth around the world derives from a similarly generic form of engagement, but on the ideological, and not national, level. As many young people were excluded from or forcibly implicated in official national-anthem discourse, the potential for this particular Chilean anthem to be ideologically retrofitted to serve a diversity of political motivations must have been intensely powerful.

Of course, it is not to say that individuals hearing Inti-Illimani sing this text at the Tenth Festival of Youth and Students in East Berlin were considering the future tense or the role of *obreros* and *campesinos* in their own political circumstances. However, the excitement and discourse around these ensembles, Allende, and the UP were inextricable from the songs that defined this context. This particular anthem and many others from Chilean ensembles at East German music festivals could not be performed without indexing this mediated system of possibility.

In a manner consistent with Daughtry's discussion of the Soviet National Anthem, Nancy Guy (2002) has examined the reception of the “Republic of China National Anthem” at the inauguration ceremony for the Taiwanese president Chen Shui-bian in 2000. She identifies three distinct scripts for the social and political reception of this anthem in this particular context. Drawing on Bakhtin's (1981) notion of “utterance” to describe the performance as “...the latest utterance in multiple discourses. As a potent political symbol, the anthem brought out in concentrated form those particular meanings and emotions thematic to each particular discourse” (2002, 113). In other words, and apt to the context under examination in the GDR, a musical utterance as such holds both its own voicing from the position of the enunciation as well as the social, political, and cultural circumstances in which it is received; the utterance is defined through the wholeness of this dialectic. In Bakhtin's own words:

The authentic environment of an utterance, the environment in which it lives and takes shape, is a dialogized heteroglossia, anonymous and social as language, but simultaneously concrete, filled with specific content and accented as an individual utterance. (1981, 272)

Taking this as a point of departure regarding the discussion of anthems, it becomes useful to consider the nature of this dialogue, this duality, and more specifically the denaturing of nationalistic content and ideological circulation within a participatory anthemic exchange.

What we have in this dynamic, between, for example, Inti-Illimani and the student audience at the Tenth World Festival of Youth and Students, is a discursive act of voicing of a denationalized, national cultural product towards a specific set of national circumstances. The act of voicing by Chilean musicians in exile towards the political and social injustice in their home country could not be heard or participated with in the manner in which these participatory musical texts were originally conceived. Many of the Chilean social and political songs which developed so much traction among GDR youths and other groups of critical and engaged young people around the world were intended to be “participated” with by similarly minded Chilean listeners responding to these texts with critical and engaged activity. In the GDR, these songs were necessarily listened to and engaged with differently, and this participatory dynamic directed itself differently, both from the point of enunciation and the point of reception (Lawy 2017).

### **Voice and Exchange**

The question of “voice” in anthropology has generated a number of important discussions surrounding issues of representation and the role of the ethnographer. Questions around voice and the postcolonial construction of a particularized subject are perennially renewed through the ongoing force of Spivak’s interrogation: “Can the Subaltern Speak?” (1988). Appadurai (1988) localizes questions of voice and

representation in his critique of the power dynamics between ethnographers and the places and communities from which they speak. Webb Keane (2000), following the influential work of Spivak, Appadurai and others, notes a kind of porosity in the voice where an articulation is cultivated and constructed through multiple agents participating in a vocality. In an inversion of Bakhtin's "heteroglossia," he proposes the idea of "participation roles" where "aspects of a single voice [are] distributed across several speakers" (2000, 272). There appears, however, within Keane's framework, the assumption of a univocality in an originary message, despite the numerous reshapings and readjustments this message undergoes in participation roles. The possibility here of a form of singularity of an articulation under-acknowledges how voice and message are framed both around the precarity of the conditions around their utterance as well as those unique precarities around their reception. This point brings us back to Redmond's "political accumulation" in anthem but precipitates the consideration of if and how an "originary" message changes in meaning as it reverberates through communities with different needs and voices of their own.

Vocalization of a national or political identity is situated within a network of enunciating and receiving points of contact. These points end up producing an "aggregating" function that continually overloads and destabilizes the message. The voice, as a carrier of enunciation, is never at rest. Instead, it continues on a path of randomized bouncing and rebounding between the various spaces and conditions that make use of it. A musical voice is something received, something appreciated, but it is also that is passed along, and its meaning and message are ascribed and created over

time. It is the deployment and realization of the precarity of individuals and communities along these paths of contact that allow for the possibility of this aggregation and reutterance to take place.

Considering voice as “something that carries” and something that moves and changes, it makes sense to reflect on its material dimensions. Drawing on Lacanian psychoanalytic theory, Mladen Dolar (2006) offers a useful definition of voice as “*what does not contribute to making sense...the material element recalcitrant to meaning*” (15; italics in original). When evaluating the stakes of musical vocal acts like protest songs, this materiality actually serves a crucial purpose. Rather than proverbially “empty words,” messages have a literal foundation of support on which they can travel and transmit themselves. However, Dolar’s framing suggests concern over the unwieldiness of the voice and the confusing dimensions of space, self, and other. Within his framework, the voice opens up a type of unregulated and unbounded exchange. “What is exposed...is not some interior nature, an interior treasure too precious to be disclosed...rather, it is an interior which is itself the result of the signifying cut, its product, its cumbersome remainder, an interior created by the intervention of the structure” (Dolar 2006, 80).

The distinction between materiality and message, or in Dolar’s case the corporal ambiguity of voice in the space between two bodies (what he calls the “object voice”), enables a point of access into the message, sifting out the sticky and unregulated mire of the voice. Annette Schlichter (2011) challenges this material framing of voice in the work of Judith Butler (and, by extension, Dolar) as seemingly incompatible with the

development of a theory of gender performance. She suggests that Butler's theorizing of voice and its Derridean foundations reduce it to a type of text that is necessarily inscribed on a physical body (2011, 48). Instead, while not rejecting the materiality premise entirely, she claims that the voice's presence is often the product of a set of technologies that contribute to making its circulation possible. In this way, Schlichter's theorizing about voice is not entirely distinct from Dolar's argument that there is something within the materiality of the voice that remains essential in its capacity to be received.

One crucial distinction for us in our consideration of the performance of political and national identity is how the consequences of voice and vocalizing are implemented and what are the technological conditions leading to this implementation. One problematic in a materialist theorization of the voice is that, and in a manner similar to Keane (2000), it is considered as being fully composed when it leaves the body. There is no consideration of how/if the voice's materiality is (in addition to the well-established message/meaning) a composite product. The anthropological critiques introduced earlier importantly look at the context and situatedness of vocal exchange but are less interested in the how voice moves about, shifts, and carries messages. Conversely, the "that which does not make sense" of Dolar is situated in a liminal space where it cannot undergo a process of meaningful aggregation. The consequences of this inability for a material voice to remain either unable to interact with other material conditions, or remain fundamentally affixed to an enunciating body, means that we are left without a critical means to evaluate the *literally* constructive elements of voice, enunciation, and anthem that the Chilean community implemented to reshape and redefine space in the GDR. In

order to arrive at a consideration for how voice is deployed through a mobilization and interaction of precarity to offer an alternative possibility of spatial engagement through what I here consider as “sonic geography,” it is necessary to think about how voice might operate simultaneously as a point of ideological contact and as a point of material exchange between an enunciating and receiving subject.

### **Antiphony**

In the shape-shifting climate of the Cold War, calling out to and from a national identity with continually evolving borders and meanings required technologies of political voice that were adaptable and mobile. A beautiful theorizing of this dynamic occurs in the work of Nina Sun Eidsheim. She argues against what she identifies as an ontologically problematic fixity or “ossification” of music and voice in what she terms “figures of sound” (2015, 2). Here, music and sound exist as referents against systems of knowledge, gender, race, and history and their material reception is inextricable from these frameworks. If sound is a text inscribed on an enunciating body as in Schlichter’s critique of Butler, or a message that uncomfortably wrestles off the materiality of its navigating vessel as in Dolar, Eidsheim would argue that both sides of the practice of legibility are proscribed within systems of knowledge where sound is predicated precisely on its knowability.

Instead, she posits thinking through music as a “vibrational practice,” a practice in which understanding voice, music, and sound is situated in communities of knowledge and subject precisely to the forms of rebounding described in an anthemic exchange:

What we observe and label as sounds in the figure of sound framework are considered simply as different points of transmissions in the practice of vibration framework. If singing and listening both constitute the process of vibration across material, they are always present—or, more correctly, always occurring. In short, listening to, making, and manifesting music is a vibrational practice (2015, 17).

This interpretation of listening practice has powerful implications; music and the understanding of music, is not subject to a system of knowledge that marks its legibility against other constructs like voice and sound. While deeply inspired by it, a vibrational understanding of music goes beyond Small's (1998) presentation of "musicking" in that it affords musical appreciation and meaning-making to sounds potentially not meant to be heard or understood. She argues that "a person who forms meaning based on a vocal utterance uses every aspect of that utterance in the process," and that "[vocal] utterances...signify...their ability to cause a shift in a given person" (Eidsheim 2015, 104).

In the context of our conversation on the voicing of Chilean political identity through anthems, Eidsheim's work presents us with a critical model for evaluation. It posits a form of material interaction that enables a meaningful exchange between performer and listener and between sound and space. It further suggests the possibility for the exchange of knowledge and political and national identity with a public without understanding language or having a particular experience. The music exchanged in these dynamics between Chilean artists in exile and East German youth intent on having a voice and a role in their nation did not need to be exclusive or misinterpreted to have meaning in one context or the other. Eidsheim is skeptical of "fidelity" as a benchmark

for musical identity, instead centralizing musical value around “charity” or “the material implications of our [musical] actions on others” (2015, 21). The communities involved in the “musicking” around Chileans anthems in the GDR participated in these exchanges with care and interest towards one another albeit sometimes misguided. The affordance of appreciation and meaning-making in imperfect ways contributed to even greater vibrations and reverberations of *nueva canción* throughout the world.

Shana Redmond (2020) uses the literal and metaphorical impact of vibrational technology to examine the impact of Paul Robeson in the twentieth century and up through today. She discusses how Robeson, through the power of his voice, instigated a series of vibrations that coalesced around participating listeners in the form of social movements and political identity. The particular iteration of this power in Robeson and the particular positionality from which he voiced is unique in Redmond’s analysis due to the multinational presence of his voice. However, Chileans voicing out against fascism and imperialism in the GDR offered the world a related vibration, one that “was often the call or catalyst that brought [humans] together, while theirs affirmed his recognition of a laboring world coordinated in its pursuit for unity” (Redmond 2020, 2). In other words, the vibrational impact of Robeson’s voice—and here I would extend to the voices of Aparcoa, Inti-Illimani and others, or still circulating voices of Víctor Jara and Violeta Parra through recordings and memories—was made impactful precisely by the reverberations and vibrations of the diverse audience members receiving. Audiences comprised of students, artists, functionaries, and politicians all participated in processes of vibrational exchange with different histories, aspirations, and future possibilities.

The central value around which a vibrational understanding of sound, voice, and music revolves is therefore a relational practice between artist and audience. Even further, these roles are expanded and complicated as they mutually and processually inform the status of one another through the exchange and interaction of their own precarious referents. Chilean artists reached out to the world through multiple strategies and nodes of contact. As revolutionary artists voicing a system of political action and alternatives, their messages were simultaneously received by fellow nationals in exile, by representatives of other nations in the then-Third World, by East Germans, and by countless others receiving calls to actions through the various filters of their individual and collective experience. Chileans in exile also voiced from a position of geographic uncertainty. With identities firmly enmeshed in a national identity, their songs were projected outward to a nationally defined context, but without certainty or security as to the nature of its reception. In other words, the antiphonal exchange, or the relation of vibrations between stage and audience, rebounded in ways that were unexpected and unpredictable, and reshaped the literal relationship between space and borders. In a manner akin to Redmond's description of Robeson, Chilean political musicians interpolated listeners in calls to action, but were simultaneously interpolated as their messages were reflected from unexpected directions and systems of needs. This process of exchange provided new spaces and grounding as place and geography became imbricated with the technology of political song.

Jan Fairley (1989) interrogates the role of voice and exchange between musicians and audience along spatial terms in the performances of the Chilean political ensemble

Karaxú. The group formed in 1974 in France under the direction Patricio Manns and was notable for being one of the most popular and impactful Chilean ensembles that formed as a result of their condition of exile. Fairley develops a complex system of relational dynamics where Karaxú's methodical construction of stage, presentation, and song order bring audiences into a state of *comunitas* with the artists as they voice the conditions of exile and calls for resistance to the Pinochet dictatorship both at home and abroad (1989, 10). Although she does not take these relational dynamics to the same point as Redmond or Eidsheim, dynamics in which voice and meaning are communally produced, she does emphasize the value of this collective space in transmitting a message. Rather than an antiphonal exchange where members of the ensemble co-produce space and meaning, Karaxú, in Fairley's framework, produced a series of linkages and juxtapositions, bringing indigenous, *campesino*, and student/political activists into dialogue on stage (1989, 12-13). Fairley argues that these juxtapositions of music from the communities of different regions serve as a literal mapping of Chilean—and more broadly Latin American—identity. This affords the ensemble to use voice and song to bring audience members into calls for solidarity and resistance by strategically linking between geographic and political identities:

Through the medium of the spoken introductions, the texts are placed in a context that facilitated the exchange of lived experience which is thereby mediated through music in the concert. Rather than being of any self-confessional nature, the experience of the individual is transformed into the inter-subjective experience of the collective group, for the individual is engaged in activity on behalf of the collective group (1989, 16).

Karaxú therefore, in the concert in England about which Fairley writes, used different forms of personal and collective voice to create connections between different

communities, all the while managing the boundary and space between themselves, a broadly represented national identity, and the audience. One productive aspect of this maintenance of a performance boundary is that it positions the members of Karaxú in a position where they manage the diffusion of their message. Audiences in the GDR, due to their own unique political needs, but also as a result of the intense managing of artistic performance by the FDJ and the SED, likely heard the music of Chilean artists within a different set of circumstances than those described by Fairley.<sup>5</sup>

Still, Chileans in the GDR, as we have shown, were imbued with a kind of political and artistic power in an anthemic exchange. Although voice may have reverberated in unexpected ways behind the Berlin Wall, as a technology of reshaping space, political songs were very much directed by the Chilean artistic community in the East. Fairley acknowledges the role of voice in the construction of space, or what she refers to as *ambientes* (environments), as widely proliferated throughout performances by artists both in the nueva canción tradition in exile and European groups inspired by them (1989, 12). This point, however, and her analysis more generally, both under-acknowledge the role of plurality and antiphony in Chilean performance in exile. Her framing examines the communal role of space in performance but appears to assign a unidirectional role to this. While demonstrating control over the performance setting is important in articulating agency and action among artists involved in the solidarity

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<sup>5</sup> Karaxú never performed at any of the Festivals of Political Songs in East Berlin. They did record a live album, *¡Karaxú!* on the West German label Verlag Arbeiterkampf (Worker's Struggle Publishing House), but it is unclear how this album circulated in the East. It is likely that Karaxú was not invited to the festival due to their affiliation with the Movimiento de Izquierda Revolucionaria (Revolutionary Left Movement) or MIR, which did not have positive relations with Chilean Communist and Socialist Parties or Allende's Unidad Popular (UP) who were more largely representative in the CHAF office.

movement in exile, it ignores the ways messages, meaning, and identity continued to be developed and challenged by all the nodes within and outside of the performance community. Although calling out to and from a specific set of national and political circumstances, the rebound of the voice was displaced and interacted with the material space in the GDR and beyond, ensuring an ever-changing and dynamic set of conditions for the community in exile.

There are few sources that describe the relationship between antiphonal exchange and the formation of political and geographic identities. In her examination of women's roles in funerary rituals in the Southern Peloponnese region of Greece, C. Nadia Seremetakis notes that the Greek concept of *antifonisi* (antiphony) “possess a social and juridical sense in addition to its aesthetic, musical, and dramaturgical usages” (492, 1990). Seremetakis’ use of “juridical” here refers to forms of social and kinship organization in the Mani Peninsula where women exercise an informal legal authority through these funerary rituals. Participants in this musical dynamic between soloist and chorus assume a diverse range of roles as they bear “witness” on behalf of dead passing through a last stage of judgement. However, as Seremetakis explains, the antiphonal act of “witnessing” need not be reciprocated through literal voicing or echo. Instead, “[t]he act of hearing carries the juridical value of the soloist's discourse. 'Hearing' in an antiphonic relation is not external to speech but in metonymic relation to it...Through the hearing of the chorus, the discourse is disseminated to the rest of society” (495, 1990). In other words, what she identifies as the ethical and juridical implications around various

elements of the antiphonal practice of mourning, continue to reverberate throughout the community; grief provides a space for the training of social and political critique.

Thinking here about this relationship between an antiphonic dyadic exchange between the performance of an anthem with an audience which feeds back a political message through voicing, and a similar, albeit distinct, dynamic in which messaging is not fed back to the performer, but internalized, witnessed, and disseminated, provides a powerful tool for considering the artistic geographies of Chilean exile. Something that is not meaningfully considered in academic discussions of *nueva canción* in exile is how these songs functioned in a larger grieving process. The collapse of the Chilean democratic experiment and the death of Salvador Allende at the hands of the Chilean military and with the backing of the United States government were effectively an effort to silence the role of voice, music, and songs that were so integral in his initial campaign. The presentation of these songs in exile offered artists a space to work through the grief of this loss and silencing with a global community bearing witness and participating in collective sounding and re-sounding of critical imaginaries. While many individuals and groups mobilized around the participatory and antiphonal dynamics of Chilean anthems in exile according to a diverse range of needs and circumstances, a Chilean political and national identity was central in driving voice and song and its reshaping power around the world.

## **Vocal and Ideological Exchanges between Chile and the East German *Singebewegung***

The emphasis on voice and the generative dimensions of antiphony between Chileans and an East German public produce a powerful and contradictory narrative to the more common understanding that Chileans in exile were simply political instruments of the East German state. Instead, we see how the political space of the GDR was shaped and co-produced through performance by bringing in a myriad of vibrations emanating from distinct identities, aspirations, and modes of resistance. Latin American revolutionary identity had been a powerful source for imagining political alternatives. Jaime Trnka notes that in the context of literature in the GDR “authors such as [Volker] Braun and [Heiner] Müller...committed to redirecting the socialist project increasingly turned to models outside of officially sanctioned German cultural traditions, including Latin American socialisms” (2015, 18). She makes the larger argument that within the typically understood impermeability of the Three-Worlds structure of the Cold War, Latin American artistic and political values deeply interacted with and influenced the thinking of German “revolutionary” authors. The idea of Latin America—and Chile in particular—was so powerful in artistic life in the GDR that it gave activists a real sense that they could participate and challenge politics in new ways (Trnka 2015, 22).

Although Trnka develops her analysis around exchanges in literary aesthetics between Germany and Latin America in the Cold War, her work underscores a co-constitutive development of space and identity through a form of antiphonal exchange. Authors called out across borders in the same way that musicians did. Their calls were answered: in direct and indirect ways. Chileans in exile used anthems to articulate a

political and revolutionary call-to-action on both sides of the Berlin Wall. These soundings were picked up by East German artists, inspiring the formation of song clubs, new compositions, covers, and even festivals that shaped the literal relationship between art and space. In this final section, I now want to look at a few examples of how anthemic and antiphonic exchanges between Chile and East German shaped the cultural and political environment in lasting ways.

Elke Bitterhof was one of the founding members of the East German group Oktoberklub, originally born out of the East German *Singbewegung*, which was a singing movement inspired by the Hootenanny Clubs founded by Perry Friedman in Canada, and which were part of broader folk music revival movements such as that of the Almanac Singers in New York City in the 1940s. Elke and I have communicated consistently over a period of almost two years by email in both Spanish and German and also visited in person in Berlin. Beginning around 1966, dozens of clubs were founded in East Germany in universities, community centers, and informal settings by East German youth who came together to sing songs affiliated with labor movements in both Germany and around the world. Oktoberklub was undeniably the most famous of these singing clubs and was closely aligned with the *Freie Deutsche Jugend* (Free German Youth - FDJ). The FDJ, which was the youth faction of the SED, bore the principal responsibility for programming and booking international artists for East German music festivals, as well as arranging performances for groups based in the GDR such as the Chilean ensembles Tienponuevo and Jaspampa. Elke worked along with other members of Oktoberklub to

arrange not only festivals, but sound engineers and translation services. Through this work, Elke came to form important artistic relationships with Chilean artists:

*En el verano 1973 vinieron los Inti Illimani al "Festival mundial de la Juventud". El tiempo estaba fantástico y yo animaba todo los conciertos en un escenario en Berlín Centro, donde actuaron desde la mañana hasta la noche grupos de música folklore o nacional de muchos países. Ya hablaba un poco español (gracias a los Quilas con su "duerme, duerme...") y nos pusimos amigos con los Inti desde el primer momento.*

In the Summer of 1973 Inti-Illimani came to the World Festival of Youth and Students. This time was fantastic, and I coordinated all of the concerts at a stage in Central Berlin, where folk and national [sic] groups played from the morning until the night. I spoke a little Spanish (thanks to los Quilas [sic] and their “Duerme, duerme [negrito]”) and I became friends with los Inti [sic] from the first moment. (Elke Bitterhof, Personal Communication, June 14, 2020)

In this case, we see not only the fostering of relationships, but a reshaping of East German cultural dynamics with broader implications for international exchange brought about through engagement with Chilean nueva canción:

*Yo, por ejemplo, decidí de estudiar español, después de escuchar la canción "Duerme, duerme, negrito" cantado por Hernán Gómez de Quilapayún. En este tiempo estudié en la Universidad en Dresde "Turismo" y propuse a la dirección de ofrecer a los estudiantes a lado de francés, ruso y inglés enseñar español. Facultativo. Con éxito!*

I, for example, decided to study Spanish after hearing the song “Duerme, duerme, negrito” sung by Hernan Gomez of Quilapayún” At that time I was studying “Tourism” at the University of Dresden and I proposed to the director to offer, in addition to French, Russian, and English, a Spanish option. It was a success! (ibid.)

While less overt in its political content, “Duerme, duerme, negrito” was well-understood by the FDJ as connected to Salvador Allende's UP and the “Chilean Way” to socialism. This notion that a work of music affiliated with an alternative vision of socialist politics than that experienced by citizens of the GDR would inspire participatory dynamics on the

part of even the most ardent supporters of the SED government broadens the understanding that East German engagement with Chilean political songs was rooted strictly in an exoticist impulse. Bitterhof, here, in her effort to broaden language offerings at an East German academic institution reflects a wider drive among East German youths to participate in their own lived political sphere and connect with artistic material that was seen as both inspiring and exotic.

This drive is supported by the observations of Ed Larkey, an American scholar of East German culture who lived in the GDR from 1978-1984 and in West Germany during the 1973 World Festival of Youth and Students. He describes the festival (July 28–August 5; just several weeks before the September 11 military coup) as the “big climax” of GDR cultural internationalism and exchange with the rest of the world (personal communication, December 10, 2020). The democratic elections, perceived openness, and participatory dynamics through campaign musicians in Chile offered East German youths the possibility, not plainly of political alternatives, but of political progress and dynamism. This spectrum of possibilities “pointed in the direction that GDR youths hoped the government would develop” (ibid.), and participation in these dynamics through learning the Spanish language and participating in Chilean musical culture offered both party supporters and skeptics opportunities to examine their own political culture from the outside. In this way, Larkey’s observations of a broad political desire with regards to the Chilean community in the GDR and Bitterhof’s efforts to develop greater opportunities for engagement and connection underscore the emphasis of Trnka’s

(2015) argument that aesthetic culture from Latin America was inseparable from the political.

As Bitterhof further notes referring to the 1974 Festival of Political Songs just several months after the coup:

*Con sus rojos ponchos cantaron "Venceremos" y el publico se puse a cantar con ellos. Así nació un sentimiento cariñoso por este país detrás de los Andes. En estos momentos nadie pensaba en un golpe, sino el ambiente en Berlín estaba caracterizado por alegría, solidaridad y amistad. Amistades, de los cuales algunos duran hasta hoy.*

With their [Inti-Illimani] red ponchos they sang “Venceremos” and the public was animated to sing with them. In this way an affectionate sentiment was born for this country behind the Andes. At that moment no one was thinking about the *golpe*, but instead the environment in Berlin was characterized by happiness, solidarity, and friendship. Friendships which have lasted to this day (personal communication, June 14, 2020).

It is important to maintain the critique here that, while for Bitterhof, “no [East German may have been] thinking about the *golpe*,” it is almost certain that for the members of Inti-Illimani, the other Chilean artists either backstage or in the audience, and quite possibly artists representing other nations from the Global South responding to oppressive and violent political configurations within their own nations, the presence and threat of political violence in their home countries were indeed central to any performance taking place. Bitterhof’s rosy depiction of “happiness, solidarity, and friendship” was indeed an element of the FDJ and SED political imaginary with regards to their relationship to post-colonial nations in development. However, this recollection also presents a kind of “script-flipping” potential similar to that seen in the 1973 Festival of Youth and Students: East German participation in the anthemic dynamics of exchange

of Chilean political music presented a set of alternatives to lived political space. As the East German artist and filmmaker, Gabriela Wojtiniak, described:

*Hemos tenido esperanza que se abre el país hacia fuera, hemos esperado cambios democráticos. Yo era una ‘buena niña’ de la RDA hasta este tiempo, pero me transformé por conocer otras perspectivas y reconocer errores, todo eso también por el impacto de la inmigración chilena.*

We had hope that the country [GDR] would open its doors. We hoped for democratic changes. I was a ‘good girl’ of the GDR until that time, but I transformed through other perspectives and recognizing errors. All of that was the impact of the Chilean immigration (personal communication, June 17, 2020).

It is clear that different individuals or groups may have responded with different sets of motivations and reactions to the events inspired by engagement with this music. This plurality of engagement, rather than seen as a process of cooption or of ignorance, can rather also be understood within Redmond's framework as a “process of political accumulation” (2013, 7), a process directed, managed, and in which Chilean artists functioned as musico-political agents, but understood within a diverse system of East German, and transnational, needs and motivations to reshape their environment.

A series of further problematics and opportunities emerges when considering the emergent spaces and conditions for musical interaction and exchange between East German and Chilean artists. Javier Rodríguez Aedo (2018) has provided a thorough analysis of the circulation and recording of the works of Violeta Parra in Europe between the years 1973-1990. He describes a process of “artistic singularization” among the recordings of European artists that covered the works of Parra after her death. “If Chilean musicians were interested in those songs with social content that held a tight relationship with Chile, European musicians translated and recorded, principally, songs that expressed

universal sentiments or values. The first group sought to *territorialize* a musical work that was *universalized* by the second” (Aedo 2018, 8; italics in original). However, while Aedo's analysis does briefly address East German recordings of Parra's work (especially her inclusion on the 1965 *Süd- und mittelamerikanische Volksmusik*; discussed here in Chapter Two), his analysis generally focuses on these processes of artistic singularization in Western Europe. While this analysis is consistent with the exoticist and ethnic framings of Chilean artists that I have argued that GDR officials and party organizers attempted to construct, it appears to under-acknowledge a climate of exchange and development that was taking place in the East.

Furthermore, the universalizing impulse that Aedo describes on the part of European artists, does not cohere with Redmond's argument that anthems undergo a process of accumulation and palimpsestic change. If we are to evaluate Chilean nueva canción as a site and forum for anthemic exchange, what may be lost here falls within the false dichotomy that the “territorial” and “universal” are mutually exclusive. For Redmond, it is precisely this flexibility and imperfection of a coherent geographic tethering that gives anthems their power and reach. It is important here rather to examine these dynamics of exchange, and also those of power between artists and nations, in order to determine the various forces and points of contact that shaped and defined this musical and political climate.

Within the difficulties and restrictions of the East German recording market, Chilean artists were facilitated in entering GDR musical discourse through other means. More than any other format, it was radio that determined the musical scene for the

majority of East Germans (see Larkey 2007). Many radio recordings (especially those coming from Central and South America) arrived in the GDR via informal means or were often recorded and produced at political festivals across Latin America and the GDR.<sup>6</sup> Similarly, festival performances by Chilean musicians, while vetted by the FDJ, offered a more flexible space for GDR concert-goers to react, participate, and engage with a form of artistic messaging that was well-known to be linked to an alternative vision of Socialist politics.

Elke Bitterhof has described a complicated process of musical and linguistic integration between the two countries:

*No podíamos pagarles un honorario, pero pagamos el viaje, el Hotel bueno y una técnica de conciertos excelente. Muchos conciertos se realizaron en salas de 4.500 o 2.000 sillas, transmitido en TV y Radio, así la población de la RDA conoció muchas canciones chilenas. También eran grupos alemanes, que copiaron las canciones o las tradujeron en forma poética al alemán, como el Oktoberklub. Así se desarrollaron al parte de la cultura alemana/chilena.*

We could not pay them a fee, but we paid for the trip, the hotel, and an excellent concert technician. Many of the concerts took place in venues of 4,500 or 2,000 seats and were transmitted on the TV and the Radio. In this way, the population of the GDR learned a lot of Chilean songs. There were also German groups that copied the songs or translated them in poetic form to German such as Oktoberklub. In this way, it became a part of a 'German/Chilean culture' (personal communication, June 14, 2020).

Similarly:

*En febrero 1974 vino también Joan Jara al Festival con los Inti illimani, y las canciones de Víctor Jara entraron al repertorio de muchos cantantes*

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<sup>6</sup> This claim is evidenced through work currently underway by Sydney Hutchinson at the Humbolt Universität Berlin. Although her work as yet remains unpublished, she has unearthed a cache of over 3,000 cassettes played on East German radio documenting a wide diversity of Latin American music.

*alemanes. Las escuchaba en muchos programas en Radio en español y en alemán.*

In February 1974 Joan Jara came with Inti-Illimani to the Festival [of Political Songs] and the songs of Víctor Jara entered the repertoire of many German singers. They were heard in many radio programs in Spanish and German (ibid.).



Figure 3.1: Front Cover of the DIY Festival Encyclopedia and Songbook *Intersongs* (1973)

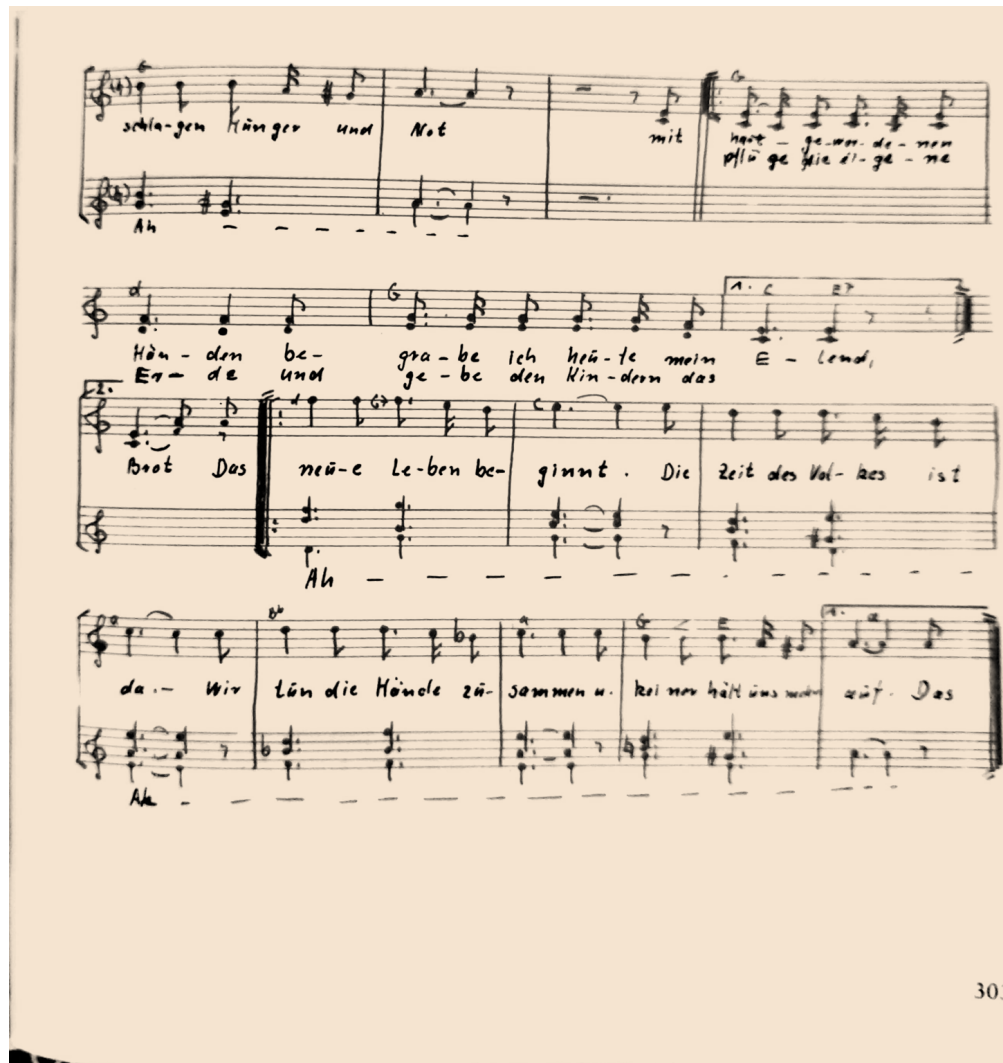
This notion of a hybrid Chilean/German cultural product does not lend to a tidy analysis or present clearly defined answers. On the one hand, products documenting Chilean *nueva canción* appeared to enter the East German market with some degree of flexibility and ease thereby affording broader opportunities to engage with and respond to a wider political dynamic. Song books (see figures 3.1 and 3.2) with lyrics in both Spanish and German featuring chords and musical transcriptions were freely adapted for circulation among GDR youths. These texts featured songs such as Luis Advis' "Comienza la vida nueva" and Daniel Viglietti's "Por todo Chile," songs which were undoubtedly familiar to audiences through the radio and festival circuit. However, these new formats may have enabled unforeseen opportunities as they provided spaces for individuals to reflect,

meditate upon, and participate with these songs and their political context more freely.

Similar to Schlichter's (2011) analysis of the role that technology plays in facilitating the materiality of the voice, songbooks documenting Chilean song texts and lyrics allowed individuals to receive the voice of these artists and participate in its politics.

**DAS NEUE LEBEN BEGINNT** Text und Musik:  
Luis Adria

Ver-schlas-sen war'n die Ge-sich-ter ach zer-schün-den die  
war das nur für ein Le-ben, bei so viel Unrecht-schaft und  
Hün-de, Was Schmer-zen. Das Le-ben hat sich er-ho-ben, zu kämpf-en gegen den  
Tod. Die star-ken Fäu-ste des Vol-kes zer-  
schla-gen Hün-ger und Not- Das Le-ben hat sich er-ho-ben zu  
Ah - - - - -  
kämpf-en ge-gen den Tod- Die star-ken Fäu-ste des Vol-kes zer-  
Ah - - - - -



Figures 3.2 and 3.3: German transcription of Luis Advis' "Comienza la vida nueva" (Ger: "Das neue Leben beginnt"), Printed in *Intersongs* (Mierau 1973, 302–303)

In some cases, works inspired by Chilean revolutionary character and causes resulted in very imaginative and unexpected East German songs and texts. Hartmut König was one of the most impactful voices in the Singebewegung and was instrumental in shaping political and social movements among East German youth through his songs. Although he deeply believed in the political system in the GDR, he was not immune to

the realities of the difficulty of being a young person in the 1960s and 1970s and acknowledged criticism against the state:

At a time when the Singing Movement was rightly struggling to find more complicated solutions to the presentation of more complicated facts, I somewhat misjudged the division of labor between the resounding agitprop song and the politically controversial chanson or the ballade. A division of labor that is still misunderstood in some places. Personally, I have...never lost my interest in the Agitprop and will continue to work here (printed in *Intersongs*; Mierau 1973, 172).

König here is referring to an increasing sense of disaffection among East German youth and a general allergic reaction to state-sanctioned cultural products (such as that of Oktoberklub) in the wake of the 1965 cultural policies and censorship established under the Eleventh Plenum of the Central Committee of the SED (see Fulbrook 2005, 130-1). Although it is overly simplistic to evaluate youth interest in accordance with official cultural policy (Fulbrook 2005, 253), the blacklisting of the chansons and ballades of the *Liedermacher* Wolf Biermann in 1965, and the stripping of his citizenship in 1976 had the effect of sanitizing some of the political heft of the artists like König who were associated with the Agitprop style.<sup>7</sup>

It is therefore not entirely surprising that König's song "Chile tanzt" ("Chile Dances") draws upon very specific Chilean geographic imagery and poetic details to encourage a kind of renewed energy and engagement with politics at home. This song is also notable for its inclusion in the book *Intersongs* (1973), which was a kind of DIY

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<sup>7</sup> Biermann also produced 7" disc in 1973, which has come to be known as the *Chile Single*. The A-side track "Ballade vom Kameramann" tells the story of a journalist that was murdered by Pinochet's forces during the failed coup attempt ("*Tanquetazo*") several months before the September 11 coup. Somewhat contrary to the disposition of Chilean-inspired texts in the Singebewegung movement that were more propagandistic, this song is more documentarian in style.

encyclopedia documenting the artists that participated in the first three years of the Festival of Political Songs. The song describes a literal shaking up of the earth through dance because the workers are so fed up with their conditions. The impact of this revolution will be felt around the world:

“Chile tanzt” – Hartmut König, Printed in *Intersongs* (Mierau 1973, 174)

*Chile tanzt das Pflaster zu heiß für die  
Herren der Gruben.  
Chile tanzt den Feldweg zu heiß für die  
Latifundistas...*

*...Allende zog ein in die Arbeiterstuben,  
Allende hat sich in Bauernhöfen  
verschanzt.  
Neben Gewehren atmet das Volk und  
tanzt...*

*...Vom Tanzschritt der Kumpels aus Lota  
Rieselt in Nixons Suppe der Putz vom  
Weißen Haus.*

Chile dances the asphalt is too hot for the  
mine owners.

Chile dances the field path is too hot for the  
*latifundistas...*

...Allende moved in with the workers  
Allende is holed up in the worker's huts  
Next to guns, the people breath and  
dance...

...From the dance steps of the fellows from  
Lota  
Plaster from the White House trickles into  
Nixon's soup.

# CHILE TANZT

Schwer rhythmisch

Text und Musik:  
Hartmut König

Ref.:

Chi-le tanzt, Chi-le tanzt, Chi-le tanzt Al- Len-de zog ein in die Ar-bei-ter-  
stüben; Al- Len-de hat sich in Bau-ern-hütten ver-schanzt Chile tanzt das Pflaster zu heiß für die  
Herren der Gräben. Chile tanzt den Feldweg zu heiß für die La-ti-fün- di-stas. Chi-le  
tanzt den Feldweg zu heiß für die La-ti-fün- di-stas. Chi-le  
tanzt den Feldweg zu heiß für die La-ti-fün- di-stas. Chi-le  
tanzt das Pflaster zu heiß für die Herren der Gräben.  
Al- Len-de zog ein in die Arbeiterstüben. Al- Len-de hat sich in

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Figures 3.4 and 3.5: Transcription of Hartmut König's "Chile tanzt," printed in *Intersongs* (1973, 175–6)

The text of this song is thrilling and also humorous. It manages to connect a geographically situated injustice in Chile with the desires of young people in the GDR. König and other artists heard musicians in Chile calling out to the world to denounce the conditions of workers in their country. Works like "Chile tanzt" responded with a form of

optimism and inclusivity that people could literally shake the earth and reshape political and spatial conditions through their participation as audience members. This song therefore became its own form of reverberation inspired and co-constructive with the nueva canción movement while simultaneously inviting young Germans to participate in an international geography. After the coup and the nearly 3,000 Chileans that arrived in GDR, “Chile tanzt” and other songs inspired by Latin American revolutionary identity would continue to produce new dynamics of interaction and participation in public space.

Apart from song texts that were inspired either by an imagined revolutionary or geographic quality, groups like Oktoberklub also produced nearly note-for-note covers of songs such as Inti-Illimani's “Chile resistencia,” albeit with modifications to the German translation to accommodate the meter of the text. However, the instrumentation, tempi, and polyphonic vocal arrangements characteristic of Inti-Illimani's sound in the early 1970s are remarkable in their closeness to the band's own recording on *Inti-Illimani 6* from 1977. In a different, albeit closely related context, the Moscow-based ensemble Conjunto Grenada similarly produced an entire album titled *Chile en el corazón* (*Chile in the Heart*; original, *Чили в сердце*), which features covers of artists like Víctor Jara and Sergio Ortega with near-identical arrangements and instrumentation to the appearance of these songs on other more notable albums pressed under the DICAP label (see Chapter Four) in the 1960s and early-1970s. These recordings in one sense appear to support Rodríguez's (2018) analysis that European covers of the nueva canción repertoire during this period were reductive in their voicing of a complicated set of political and artistic demands made by Chileans in exile; after all, these works similarly foreground exotic

sounds and instruments in a manner consistent with the more overtly fetishistic covers pressed under Le Chant du Mond in Paris. However, conversely to Aedo's observation that covers of Chilean music in general, and those of Violeta Parra in particular, tended to focus more on universal themes and less on the complicated issues of Chilean politics (2018, 8), covers produced in the Soviet Bloc (perhaps not unsurprisingly) almost exclusively addressed these issues.



Figure 3.6: *Чили в сердце* (*Chile en el Corazón*) – Conjunto Grenada (Melodiya – 1979)

There were lastly a number of textual and ideological hybrids produced and circulated throughout the GDR during the years following the military coup. Perhaps the most notable was the 1974 LP *Die Rose von Chile*, which featured twelve tracks by artists, not only from the GDR, but also from Italy, Finland, and Bulgaria. The tracks represent an incredible range of genre and language mashups and dedications to figures ranging from Víctor Jara to Luis Corvalán. The concluding track—also titled “Die Rose von Chile”—

was performed by the East German pop duo of Chris Doerk and Uva Shikora.<sup>8</sup> This song is a kind of light popular tune that gives a nod to the chansons of the East German Liedermacher, 1960s rock music, and the guitar-strumming techniques of Violeta Parra. Every other line features a refrain in Spanish referring to one of two groups: “*mineros y campesinos*” or “*estudiantes y compañeros*.” However, rather than some of the more forceful or critical language in other East German language and genre mashups such as Oktober Klub’s “Boykottiert die Mörder Chiles,” “Die Rose von Chile” addresses these communities less as point of revolutionary or political identity, and rather as a textual device to produce a particular rhythmic characteristic. The names of all of these communities make an appearance in “Venceremos” and it appears that the author of the text, Arnold Eisensee, received and interacted with the vocalicity of the text in a way markedly different from musicians more closely associated with the Singebewegung. Although the text ultimately feels a little anemic when compared with other texts inspired through an anthemic exchange with Chilean political songs, and especially against the Chilean songs themselves, the text is interesting because it relies on the phonetics of the Spanish language as a way express solidarity with the people of Chile.

From “Die Rose von Chile” – Lyrics by Arnold Eisensee

*Es kam aus sonnigen Chile  
mineros y campesinos.*

*Es sang für viele so viele  
estudiantes y campaneros.*

From sunny Chile came  
miners and farmers.  
So many sang for so many  
students and comrades

*Sie brachten die Rose aus Chile*

They brought the rose from Chile

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<sup>8</sup> Recording available at:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hQRWA0xMITs&ab\\_channel=VanillaMoments](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hQRWA0xMITs&ab_channel=VanillaMoments)

*mineros y campesinos.  
Und grüßten für viele so viele  
estudiantes y campaneros.*

miners and farmers  
So many greeted so many  
students and comrades.

*La rosa, la rosa de Chile,  
la rosa tinta está.  
Die Rose, die Rose von Chile,  
die Rose ist rot, so rot.*

The rose, the rose of Chile,  
the rose is red.  
The rose, the rose of Chile,  
The rose is red, so red.

## **Conclusion**

Each of the above-mentioned examples describes a process of dynamic interaction and exchange around Chilean political anthems. Anthems here function as a technology of the voice, fostering a series of reverberations between those enunciating and those receiving, and often revealing the precarity of the line between the two positions. East German artists produced a diversity of sonic material in response to the presence of voice, song, and bodies of a Chilean political community. The call to participation through the historical and ideological function of political song in Chile provoked an artistic response that could not be bound by the Berlin Wall. This exchange demonstrates that materials, concepts, and most of all, voice, continually shaped and reshaped the perception of insurmountable physical divisions within a Cold War context.

The response to Chilean song and voice in the GDR was imperfect, albeit generally well-intentioned. East German artists and youths, regardless of their proximity to the party, saw figures like Allende, Víctor Jara, Luis Corvalán, and Pablo Neruda as offering something that was both desirable and just out of reach in daily life. Political and musical figures circulated with a degree of currency and militancy that likely felt distinct in comparison with more mainstream or “official” political and cultural forces. These figures became part of an international hagiography that had the consequence of

singularizing Chilean political voice and song. In this way, East German artists and fans alike often approached the music they heard at festivals or on the radio from a vantage that may have ignored the divisions and complexities within Chilean political life. Nevertheless, it is truly remarkable that music that may have been singularly constructed through narratives and through scholarship, provoked such an unexpected diversity of creative and interpretive responses. I believe that part of the reason for this is because political voice, as a product of vibrational and reverberating exchanges, was transmitted through anthems as both a form of technology and discourse.

Shana Redmond beautifully describes the most hopeful function for anthemic exchange thusly:

Yet more than a physical gesture, anthems require subscription to a system of beliefs that stir and organize the receivers of the music. At its best this system inspires its listeners to believe that the circumstances of the world around them can change for the better—that the vision of freedom represented in the song's lyrics and/or history are worth fighting for in the contemporary moment (Redmond 2013, 2).

Members of the East German Singebewegung and Liedermacher movements were indeed subscribers to the belief that they could make their world a better place. These beliefs naturally diverged on details of the vision for a political future, but all of these artists envisioned a future where they could participate and—most relevant for our consideration—have voice. There is a parallel here to Daughtry's discussion of Boris Asafev's concepts of "intoning" and "re-intoning," where form, sound, and content are "intoned" to meet the changes that a society experiences (2003, 58–60). It is clear, however, that intoning is not something strictly determined from on stage but rather is part of a larger collective dynamic of voicing. It is this idea of voicing an identity and a

future that made the anthems of the nueva canción movement so appealing and provoked the community to re-intone these texts in light of their own hopes and dreams for the future.

## *Chapter 4: The Limits of “Rucksack Approaches”: “Political Capital” and Soundings of Historical and Geographic Difference*

### **Introduction**

Framed within efforts to neatly divide the space between the First and Second Worlds, nueva canción has frequently entered conversations on its global circulation as a singularity, a weapon to be wielded against dictatorship and fascism around the world. This strategy has and continues to be effective in discussions on how the movement folded in with other political and creative progressive movements. As described in the previous chapter, many of the singularizing tendencies framing the movement actually allowed a diverse range of East German artists and citizens to identify with it and use it as a means to voice and critique their own experiences of life in the GDR. Constructing nueva canción, however, as a singular entity with artistic representatives exiled in various countries around the world, ignores much of the diversity within this movement and the ways that artists developed and drew on its themes to effect unique ends.

In this chapter, I explore the creative, political, and historical diversity among a group of Chilean artists with different relationships to the GDR. I situate their backgrounds and their development in exile as contingent and related to cities in which they lived and the circumstances under which they entered the East German state.

Although frequently framed as a monolith East Germany provided a range of experiences, possibilities, and obstacles for Chilean nationals depending on their background and political status. Similarly, many of these artists came into their musical lives through different tracks and with particular goals based on their personal

experiences. These differences in background, style, and geographic and urban identity after being exiled all contributed to an artistic community in the GDR that challenges the creative singularity and identity of this genre as a product both of scholarship and the conditions around the “World Music” market in Europe in the 1970s and 1980s.

In addition to regional differences in the GDR, many of the artists that lived and participated in the sonic-spatial fabric of the GDR came from Valparaíso and were viewed as somewhat exterior in comparison with some of the more central groups and figures in the movement from Santiago like Quilapayún, Inti-Illimani, and Ángel and Isabel Parra. Silvia Rühl, the first wife and widow of the Chilean *cantautor* Osvaldo Rodríguez (see below), described to me this perceived exteriority of several prominent artists in the GDR due to the fact that they hailed from Valparaíso. She lives in the city today and has been deeply connected to the nueva canción movement for decades. In an email she described to me her perceptions of this distinctiveness:

*La diferencia está en que ya en los años de la UP tanto Osvaldo como también Payo Grondona y el grupo “Tiempo Nuevo” insistían en su autonomía regional y nunca se sumaron al movimiento en Santiago: si participaban en las peñas, Osvaldo mucho en la Carpa de Violeta hasta su suicidio. Eso tuvo como efecto que no eran tan conocidos en el exterior como “los de Santiago”, también hace una diferencia que seas solista o que sea un grupo. De hecho, yo me consideraba una buena conocedora de la Nueva Canción Chilena, pero no tenía idea en aquellos tiempos quién era Osvaldo Rodríguez. A eso se suma que Osvaldo se fue de la RDA sin el permiso oficial del PC, lo que le valió casi la expulsión y no tuvo mucho apoyo por el lado “oficialista.”*

The difference is that already in those years of the [Unidad Popular], as much for Osvaldo as for Payo Grondona [see below] and the group “Tiempo Nuevo” [sic – see below], insisted on their regional autonomy and never joined the movement in Santiago: Of course they participated in

the *peñas*, Osvaldo was many times in the *Carpa de Violeta*<sup>1</sup> until she took her own life. That had the effect that they were not as well known as “those [musicians] from Santiago.” It also made a difference if you were a soloist or in a group. In fact, I considered myself very knowledgeable about the Chilean nueva canción, but I had no idea at that time who Osvaldo Rodríguez was. Add to that that Osvaldo left the GDR without official permission from the [Chilean Communist Party], which almost cost him expulsion and he didn’t have much support from the “official” side. (personal communication, June 22, 2020)

As will be demonstrated over the course of this chapter, the distinctive backgrounds and perspectives, as well as different forms of “official” status or relationships of the Chilean musicians in the GDR interacted in equally unique ways with the spaces and cities in which they sonically participated. Rühl’s description of her own perceptions of the movement reflect larger circumstances of singularity and forms of political “stardom” that we will see driven by the Chilean recording industry. Here, instead, I focus on exploring the diversity within an artistic community that has historically received less attention in nueva canción scholarship.

In order to examine this diversity, I draw on Bourdieu’s “Forms of Capital” (1986) and other critical studies in theories of migration to introduce the concept of “political capital.” Through this term, I develop a model for examining the different ways Chilean musicians were received into the political fabric of GDR society based on perceptions of their “revolutionary” character. This analysis and emphasis on plurality within the movement reveals a precarity to its political singularity. This precarity was mobilized through the articulation of distinct and plural subject positions creating a

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<sup>1</sup> The *Carpa de la Reina* was a kind of school, performance space, and community center established by Violeta Parra in Santiago. She intended for the school to function as a kind of “university” for Chilean folklore.

productive form of fragmentation within the movement. I also use the term to show how Chilean artists used their political capital to strategically interact with and develop within their distinct geographic and social environments. Drawing on archival and ethnographic work with four artists representing distinct tracks and experiences in the nueva canción movement, I demonstrate how each of these individuals drew on their own unique political capital to forge uniquely dynamic artistic identities within and against the East German state.

### **Regional Differences Across the GDR**

The experiences of Chilean exiles in the GDR varied widely in relation to a range of important criteria often outside of the control of the individuals whose lives were, in many ways, defined by them. The principal factor that determined the experience of Chileans in exile had to do with their rank within their own party's infrastructure and the role that many of these individuals assumed within *Chile Antifascista* (Chile Anti-Fascist Office - CHAF), headquartered in East Berlin. Olga Ulianova has noted that:

The highest officers of the [Chilean Socialist Party], in particular, [Carlos] Altamirano [Secretary General of the Chilean Socialist Party], were assimilated as officials of high rank within the German classification, receiving housing, official car service, and access to their own supply of goods at a level to which they were awarded. The rest of the exiles, whose entry and placement in East Germany were decided by their party within agreed quota with the [Socialist Unity Party], were assimilated as ordinary citizens with respect to the social services provided. (2009, 4-5)

Within this arrangement, Socialist Unity Party (SED) officials were able to foist certain unwelcome responsibilities pertaining to the management and placement of Chilean exiles on to Chilean Socialist Party (PS) officials in the CHAF. These duties included

determining visa and travel permits, assigning work, living arrangements, and even “the smallest expressions of daily life” (Ulianova 2009, 6).

This manner of management and supervision over the lives of rank-and-file party members became, in a sense, an additional layer in the culture of surveillance determined by the Stassi. However, it was not the case that high-ranking officials were entirely pressured into this arrangement. On the contrary, a number of internal reckonings were taking place within the ranks of the Chilean Left over the perceived failure of the “Chilean way.” “When political leaders realized that the bourgeois identities of their own political militants, so distant from the workers, had contributed to the failure of the revolution, actions followed” (Pieper Mooney 2014, 284).

This process, known as “proletarianization,” involved the placement of highly-skilled and educated members of the Chilean exile community into positions in factories, assembly lines, and other labor sectors intended to foster a proletarian identity. This arrangement exposed the significant contradictions underlying the tension between the ostensible benevolent intentions of the GDR as a refuge for fleeing Chileans, the wider internationalist anxieties within the SED, and the role of the PS in mediating the space in between. Although short-lived, the forced placement of Chilean intellectuals in manual labor positions became the mark of a large segment of this community’s experience, causing many to apply for visas to other countries or to return to Chile even as early as the late 1970s.

Another important factor in differentiating the experiences of Chilean exiles in East Germany had to do with where in the country they were placed by the government.

Beyond simply the regional differences across the GDR, many labor assignments were determined by the cities or towns in which members of this community settled. The geographic and regional identity of East German communities had a huge impact on the lives of these individuals. Despite an intense effort towards centralization of resources and control over labor forces, investment in rural, underdeveloped, and war-torn parts of the state varied widely across the fifteen *Bezirke* (regions) that had been established in 1952 (Fulbrook, 2005 62-5). East Berlin, as the capitol and headquarters of the PS and CHAF, was the central hub of cultural and political life for all occupants in the GDR. Chileans seeking visas, marriage certificates, and other official documentation would have to journey from their respective cities to the Berlin to petition before the PS officials ostensibly working on behalf of the SED. Many goods and services, though scarce anywhere across the state, were completely unobtainable outside of urban hubs in the communities and small cities established by the government to support certain forms of production across the country (ibid). Following these disparities between availability of goods and access to cultural and educational programs, the experiences of Chileans in between cities like Berlin or Leipzig in comparison with the former Karl-Marx-Stadt (today, Chemnitz) produced dramatically different responses to the SED regime.

Cirilo Adiazola, one of the original members of the ensemble Tierra del Fuego, which later joined with the student group Jaspampa to form the ensemble Alerce, described his personal opinions to me over a Zoom call regarding the cultural and political divisions across the country in relation to his own experience as a burgeoning musical artist:

*La comunidad Leipzig tenía que ver con muchos intelectuales. Que trabajaban en la universidad...en la parte ciencias sociales había un grupo de investigación de chilenos y alemanes y entonces era más como “genio” la cantidad de la gente de Leipzig, por ejemplo, en comparación a otras ciudades, por ejemplo, a Rostock. Por ejemplo, en Rostock había solamente artistas. Pero en Leipzig había intelectuales...profesores conectados con las ciencias sociales, con investigación del tema de Latino América...Y en Berlín era todavía mas distinto. Y en otras partes como Karl Marx-Stadt o Magdeburg, Zwickau había mucha gente que eran usada en la producción directa.*

The community in Leipzig has to be viewed in relation to intellectuals that were working in the university. . . . [I]n the social sciences there was a research group of Chileans and Germans, and so it was a much more “intelligent” group in Leipzig in comparison with the other cities. For example, in Rostock there were strictly artists. But in Leipzig there were intellectuals, . . . professors connected with the social sciences, with research on Latin America. . . . In Berlin it was something even more distinct. In other parts like Karl-Marx-Stadt, or Magdeburg, or Zwickau, there were people who were used in direct production (personal communication, December 9, 2020).

Beyond the conditions of employment and social identity, we will examine below how the conditions of geographic placement in the GDR may have determined certain aspects of the experiences of artists and musicians with regards to their development, exposure, and opportunities. These factors ultimately determined the conditions under which many groups developed in exile and led to a number of important differences in style as well as artists’ individual or group relationships with their art.

### **“Political Capital” as an Alternative form of Migrant Capital**

One dimension crucially underexamined with regards to the circulation and reception of Chilean political music, both in the East as well as more broadly across Europe, has to do with the social and political capital the exile community brought with them to their new homes. Even in 1973, the legacies and trauma experienced across the

continent during the Second World War continued to mark a wider sense of political identity. Within this context, and particularly in Western Europe, an outwardly public expression and foregrounding of liberal democratic values extended to a number of official policies regarding migration throughout the 1950s and 1960s (Poutrus, 2014). Political refugees, migrants, and guestworkers coming from nations representing the then-Third World, and especially those coming from nations under military dictatorship, were thereby conditionally primed to be received as a testament to Europe's overcoming and defeat of fascism. In other words, migrants in Europe in the post-War political climate were constructed as an ideological synecdoche for mid-twentieth century Liberalism.

However, although migrant and refugee communities in Europe during the middle of the twentieth century had historically been considered by the governments that received them largely as a singular political unit, the international movement of peoples across Europe reflected a wide range of motivations, positions, and identities. In the case of West Germany, for example, migrants representing contradictory political positions (sometimes even arriving from the same country) deeply affected the FRG's policy towards these communities (Clarkson 2013). Political conflicts between community members, public demonstrations and protests over issues in home states, and general failures of host governments to provide transition and integration infrastructure for migrants created circumstances in which individuals and groups constructed heterogeneous societies within an equally heterogeneous social and cultural infrastructure. These manifestations took shape differently between the Eastern and

Western Blocs, but Chileans on both sides of the Berlin Wall were integral in pushing the boundaries of policy—in West Germany Chileans allayed Cold War anxieties over extreme leftism, and, in the East, the Chilean solidarity movement disrupted an effectively capricious official attitude towards a “nationalistic migration policy [based] under the notion of a homogenous German Population” (Poutrus 2014, 126).

Works such as Klaus Bade’s (2003) detailed and extensive historical examination of migration in mid-century Europe, support singularizing, nationally differentiated, and state-oriented narratives of human movement rather than the heterogeneous, flexible, and transnational experiences that actually marked the lives of individuals arriving across the European continent. Furthermore, and as Meredith Oyen (2015) has described in terms of U.S.-Sino international policy during the Cold War, the acceptance and support of migrant communities in the mid-twentieth century was often part of larger diplomatic and policy-directed machinations between states. Both models of evaluating migrant communities frame processes of integration and engagement against and within the fixity of the Cold War nation-state. Instead, I examine here how borders and nationally based framings of movement during this era obscure the complexities and intricate nodal relationships between different background experiences and conditions in exile. In this way, I hope to reveal that notions of singularity and boundedness in migrant and refugee groups and the nation states in which they settled during this era actually avoid how the precarity of these concepts produced a much more dynamic complex form of engagement between individuals and communities.

Narratives of migrant adjustment or integration have typically been at the forefront of policy discussions, but these terms mean different things within the consideration of the diverse experiences of migrant and refugee political formation and their impact on an increasingly dynamic and malleable political space. It is common to evaluate the strategies of these communities in host countries in terms of their ability to assimilate into the “parent” culture. The relative success or failure of migrants as far as their “incorporation” into the host society has often been viewed in terms of the skills or forms of “capital” that they bring with them (Nee and Sanders 2001). The Chilean exile community in East Germany arrived with distinctive social and political tools, and, expressed through aesthetic products like music, these tools fostered a particular dynamic of interaction within their respective communities and with the state. Particularly in the years directly following the 1973 coup, this group cultivated an alternative measure of social and cultural evaluation due to their role in a social economy based on an ability to index a political orientation bearing traction and value in East German socio-political discourse.

Following Bourdieu’s (1986) framing of social and cultural forms of capital, I introduce here a more specific notion of *political* capital, which appears to support a more flexible and mobile economy in an— at least ostensibly—anti-capitalistic environment. Beyond the mere circulation of political capital within this economy, Chilean artists further responded to their respective conditions and artistically shaped the economic circumstances in which their political capital was received.

In his essay, “The Forms of Capital,” Pierre Bourdieu (1986) criticizes the “economistic” obfuscation of capital production in forms other than those directly connected to financial or monetary value. In addition to the more widely understood *economic* capital, he identifies forms of *cultural* and *social* capital as well, which translate and reduce with their economic counterpart in a more surreptitious way. In East Germany, a state—at least ostensibly (officially)—defined by an absence of free-market exchange and class stratification, the notion of *political* capital, a link in this case between the two latter forms of capital in Bourdieu’s framework, functioned as another system of currency exchange and circulation. Political capital here extends in two directions. On the one hand, it reflects the perceived instrumentality of a community in exile as political subjects and how the political affiliation and identity of a community materializes and circulates for the host state. Conversely, it reflects the internal division, reconfiguration, and presentation of a community and how the political identity of a community reshapes within and against a host. The tensions that exist between these positions comprise what I would like to consider as political capital. In this way, this form of capital is not a fixed product that community members possess or not in specific measurable quantities, rather is it something that dynamically shifts in value and allows for the manipulation of and interaction with other forms of capital.

Regarding cultural capital, Bourdieu describes three manifestations at the embodied, objective, and institutionalized level (1986, 17-21). While each of these “states” brings a unique system of criteria and understanding they each inform and stratify the conditions and markers of cultural capital in the other states. Chilean exiles

and their music entered into a space of political evaluation, one in which their music, their bodies, and their cultural products would be understood within a distinct system of criteria. Markers ranging from traditional ponchos and quenpas to scars and warped fingernails produced under torture in detention in Chile, became indicators of a form of *habitus*, simultaneously resulting in a singularized and universal body, circulating within a schema and economy of political capital.

Bourdieu privileges the education system as the provenance of institutionalized cultural capital. Social capital, particular in its institutionalized state, emanates from the networks in which an agent is imbricated and the access to the respective forms of capital that these connections foster (1986, 21). Social capital, in this sense, works as a form of translation, or an amplifier for the forms of cultural and economic capital to which an agent already has access. It is difficult to evaluate the circulation of these forms of capital in a “real socialist” political formation. However, building on the argument in the previous chapter that examines how Chilean musical idioms were seemingly coopted and repurposed to serve an unmet set of political and social needs, particularly among GDR youth, we can see how a migrant community learned to trade and circulate in alternative forms of capital. This framing of an economy and marketplace for political capital and *habitus* is a productive means for broadening the understanding of how political music was ascribed a social and cultural capital within leftist networks of recording and listening on both sides of the Berlin Wall.

However, this framing fails to acknowledge the manifold contributions and reshaping of the conditions for receiving and interpreting political capital: namely how

migrant populations shape and redefine these conditions through their own forms of capital contribution. Unlike Bourdieu's notion of social capital, in which representative power is maintained through in-group concessions to representative authority, the political capital of migrant communities has the potential to decenter the evaluative criteria for membership and capital standards. In her examination of Turkish immigrant communities in Germany and the United Kingdom, Umut Erel challenges the limitations to what she terms "rucksack approaches" to migrant cultural and social capital (2010). This definition assumes a more universalizing stance toward the cultural "baggage" that migrant communities bring with them. Instead of considering an economy in which migrants produce a plurality of capital forms, the "rucksack approach" singularizes this economy to one of adaptation with markers of a singularized ethnic or migrant identity (Erel 2010, 645; Zhou 2005).

For migrant and refugee communities, advancement and success within host countries have been shown to derive from a confluence of capital investment (Nee and Sanders 2001). Many models of success acknowledge the tension between balancing of human capital as a means of integration and acceptance with social capital support from family units (Anthias 2007; Nee and Sanders 2001; Sumption 2009). However, while difficulties around integration and incorporation are crucial challenges to the migrant experience, challenges which may be ameliorated through familial networks of social capital, these models privilege expressions and economies of *human* capital as avenues for molding within the capital infrastructure of the host system.

Erel instead argues that migrants—and here she is specifically talking about “skilled” migrants—develop not only new forms of capital by synthesizing the tools from their own “rucksacks” with other tools acquired in the host country, but also establish new systems for the evaluation and validations of migrant capital (2010, 649). For example, in the context of the Chilean exile community in the GDR, artists articulate sonic markers of a political capital through their musical association with the UP. Even if they lacked other forms of human capital (e.g., language fluency) or an infrastructure of social capital (e.g., extended family), this political capital facilitated an integration into a political system that was officially at its core anti-capitalist and anti-fascist. Due to the music’s strong indexing of political alternatives and hopefulness towards the future, the economy in which this music circulated was continually refined to establish new protocols and criteria for its validation. In this way, the music and the community that produced it reshaped the conditions for interpreting and trading in one of the few acceptable and alternative forms of capital.

We might take Erel’s foregrounding of intra-community differentiation one step further. Considering her argument that just as migrants bring many different tools to the new countries in which they settle based on their prior geographic location, gender, professional status, and other social markers, similarly, migrants enter into many different socio-political environments in which those tools are evaluated. In the case of the GDR, as we have seen, there were a number of regional differences that framed the experiences of the diverse group of Chileans within each of them. In the case of individuals in a city like Rostock with a strong cultural and artistic climate, artists were able to experiment

more with genres and techniques outside of a more mainstream nueva canción soundscape. In Leipzig, artists affiliated with the university were employed as GDR cultural functionaries which had an impact on the sounds and styles that they drew upon. In Dresden, a city more oriented towards industry jobs, the musical culture may have underscored a wider culture of disaffection and disengagement from the political system in which it was produced.

### **Social Conditions of the Arrival of Exiles in the GDR**

By bringing a diverse scope of capital from their personal experience as well as having background connections to a range of positions across the political Left, the final factor to consider in recognition of the plurality of Chilean artistic expression is the legacies and socio-political circumstances into which these groups emigrated. The official stance of the SED following the end of the war was an end to the discriminatory and racist practices that marked the period of National Socialism (see Slobodian 2015). However, as we have seen in the discussion of post-war international policy, the self-identity of the East German state was fundamentally rooted in a conceptual homogeneity and nationalism. Despite the animated feelings of many young GDR citizens over the political progressiveness of their new guests, their integration into these communities was frequently framed by their exotic identity or by the racist legacies of the National Socialism era that marked the perspectives of many East Germans. Although acts of racially motivated violence against Chileans were not reported with the regularity of those against, for example, Vietnamese or African guestworkers, it is impossible to evaluate the evolution of Chilean artists without consideration of this context.

In the GDR, the unspeakability of tensions between political progressives and the *Mitläufer*, or those that experienced prosperity under Hitler, produced a frequently divided and complex national and political identity (Fulbrook 1999; 2005, 24). While official commitments from party leaders were firmly anti-fascist, “colorblind,” and socially engaged, many GDR citizens considered the Third Reich as a period that approached the apex of German values (Fulbrook 2005, 24-29). The War may have officially ended in 1945, but military occupation in the Soviet Zone continued in an unofficial capacity for years. East Germans were terrorized by Soviet troops, especially in rural areas, further conditioning animosity towards the Stalin dictatorship. After the war, both Germanys needed to develop policies surrounding the admission of refugees and, although the GDR established an arguably more liberal and generous policy, its roots in German nationalist tendencies encouraged racist and xenophobic sentiments in the general populations (Poutrus 2014, 125-6). Between complications and mixed messaging around refugee admittance policy and wider insecurities among the population over losing jobs to immigrants (Zatlin 2007), Chilean exiles in East Germany faced a complex and often conflicting series of reactions to their presence.

### **Chilean Exiles and “Revolutionary” as a National Characteristic**

In his analysis of revolutionary themes in Central American political music Fred Judson positions the notion of *el pueblo* (“the people”) as the principal construct in a form of Marxist revolutionary discourse (2002). Following Almeida and Urbizagástegui’s (1999) discussion of “collective action frames” in the shaping of revolutionary identity through music, his conceptualization of a pueblo is founded on shared markers of

political solidarity. Collective action frames can be defined as “action-oriented sets of beliefs and meanings that inspire and legitimate the activities and campaigns of a social movement organization” (Benford and Snow 2000, 614). These frames are predicated on Mancur Olsen’s (1965) observation that “there is little incentive for individuals to act collectively to achieve common interests” (cited in Caraway 2018, 11). What this form of framing therefore presupposes is that the “frames” (Goffman 1974) that mark the experiences of individuals and small groups must be brought into a space of attractive and dynamic compromise with organizers of a social movement so that a new frame is produced that fosters a more comprehensive and varied relationship to a social movement.

Snow and Benford (2000) identify a number of conceptual strategies for incorporating divergent or competing frames into a larger movement. For Judson, in formatting a political identity inclusive to a wider range of subjectivities and themes, his project positions a *pueblo* concept as directly tethered to *la patria*. One of the strategies here for diversifying the frames through which Chileans came to identify with, what has in retrospect come to be viewed as a “revolutionary” political identity, was therefore in connecting a revolutionary frame with a national one. Using Snow and Benford’s terminology, this form of ideological elision becomes a “strategic process” in a model of socio-political mobilization through song (2000, 624). In Chilean *nueva canción*, instruments, sounds, and other markers of national identity established a marketplace for political participation through song in spite of—rather than based upon—a particular political affiliation. Due to the mainstreaming of the discourse around national unity (i.e.,

*la patria*, “fatherland”) during the days of the Popular Unity coalition, *nueva canción*, even in its early days of national, continental, and global circulation, brought listeners as participants into a *pueblo/patria* frame. In this way, the notion of *la patria* was expanded, but also simultaneously softened beyond a national circumscription and replaced with a perceived “revolutionary” attribute accessible to a range of communities wanting to denounce injustice.

This participatory and political inclusivity was, in part, what gave these works a deeper internationalist traction, particularly in their circulation in Europe. This was crucial in encouraging support for Chile among the widest possible audience. Similarly, and as seen in the previous chapter, it facilitated a point of *entrée* and instrumentalization of Chilean political music in producing political imaginaries or alternatives. However, this framing served in the divestment of a complex and varied political and national identity in exchange for a singularly revolutionary one. Smaller, regional, and independent acts of political and revolutionary reckoning produced through musical expression seen through a collective action frame or *pueblo/patria* frame, actually result in a reduction of recognition and imbuelement of political capital. In the case here, this contributes to singularizing narratives of Chilean political exile and the cultural products that framed it. The dispossession of political capital within migrant communities, whether at official or discursive levels, will continue to singularize their experience and the tools that nations consider when generating policy about them.

It might therefore be worth considering Pablo Vila’s important and critical adoption of the qualifier “militant” over the more commonly used “protest” song.

Speaking specifically of the Southern Cone iterations of mid-century political song, he states that “the Latin American militant song movement did not generally protest *against* a given situation (although in some cases it did so); instead, it *denounced* (in the double sense of making public and alerting about) a situation” (2014, 3; original italics). The Gramscian analysis of Almeida and Urbizagástegui (1999) in developing a revolutionary musical subject encourages a binary insider/outsider dynamic and an oppositional dynamic of the collective action frames. Vila’s “militant” here, however, captures the flexibility and diversity within the frame around the revolutionary identity of Chilean *nueva canción*. Through this characterization, we can begin to get at the ways this revolutionary movement came to signify a range of political and musical activities and continues to resignify political movements and identity in contemporary Chile. Before looking at some examples of Chilean artists and their manifold revolutionary identities in the GDR, it is lastly necessary to examine some of the conditions surrounding the “world music” industry in Europe during the Cold War and how they contributed to an oppositional and binary framing of Chilean music.

### **Historical Conditions for the Reception of “World Music” in Europe**

We have discussed a number of dimensions and strategies for an East German framing of Chilean political music in exile with roots and affiliation to the Salvador Allende presidency and the legacies of *nueva canción*. This framing was a complex and heterogeneous process, indexing simultaneously a system of potentially oppositional and alternative politics as well as a foil for reflecting the success and stability of the East German political system. A third point, however, is the process by which Chilean

music—and its corresponding role in Chilean exile—was turned into a commodity in the European cultural space. Nueva canción came to index a revolutionary political identity during the years of the military dictatorship through an intensely mediated process that began during the years of the UP and continued through the various channels of reception and circulation in the East and the West. This understanding has been supported retroactively by scholarship that has continued to position this music on binary and oppositional terms. While undeniably productive in the cultivation of awareness and resistance to the Pinochet dictatorship, the singularization of this music at the time in European recording markets was a product of the genre's absorption into an environment primed to receive it, much in the same way that the above-mentioned "rucksack approaches" presume a prepackaged set of migrant techniques for integration into a particular political system.

There were a number of factors surrounding the political mobilization associated with the Chilean artistic community, but one condition driving international music reception, both in the GDR and in Europe more broadly, was the development of a commercially legible musical product bearing markers such as "political," "exotic," "authentic," and "revolutionary." Although we have pointed to examples of framing around one or several of these terms within the context of the GDR, the narrowing of the index around nueva canción was initiated even earlier in Chile and was deeply connected to the cultural and political activities within the UP and the Chilean Communist Party in the years leading up to and during the Allende administration.

Chilean nueva canción developed as a cultural and political enterprise in Chile through its association with the record label *Discoteca del Cantar Popular* (DICAP), which was founded by the Juventudes Comunistas or La Jota (Young Communists) in 1967. One of its first releases was Quilapayún's 1968 album *X Vietnam (El Mostrador 2006)*, which was "an album characterized by its explicit political commitment...and by the group's desire to link diverse traditions and examples of popular and revolutionary struggles" (González, Ohlsen, and Rolle 2009, 305). Nueva canción never represented a significant part of the commercial music market, but due to the strong mobilization around the label, both by members of La Jota and the dozens of artists that recorded for it in the first six years of its operation in Chile, the songs of the nueva canción movement permeated a wide swath of leftist listening communities in Chile and around the world. Its foundational principles, championing the fight against imperialism and other leftist causes, gave the genre further traction in such a period of global upheaval in the 1960s and 1970s.

The label "was recognized not only for the quality of its artists and the efficiency of its distribution, but also for the design of its album covers that privileged the musical and ideological content over the figure of the artist" (Biblioteca Nacional de Chile). The album covers and posters were primarily designed by the graphic artists Vincente and Antonio Larrea who imbued artwork with images inspired by themes ranging from the hippie movement in the United States to political murals of the social realism movement in México (González, Ohlsen, and Rolle 2009, 375). The visual components produced in association with DICAP served to "create a corporate image of DICAP [which] delivered

an added value to the disc, which was considered more of a cultural object than a commercial product” (ibid.). This effort was designed, in part, to establish a culture around the burgeoning nueva canción movement and give it a competitive edge against foreign pop and rock imports. Codifying the genre through a set of visual revolutionary tropes served to diffuse the spirit of political music and promote accessibility, replication, and creative expansion in a wider sector of Chilean society (ibid.). However, it simultaneously served to mark the political and ideological border of the movement in a legible form that was not necessarily predicated on Spanish language comprehension. This move was—and remained—crucial in the centralization of the movement and in side-stepping corporate barriers to artistic distribution (González, Ohlsen, and Rolle 2009, 110), but also aided in the continued perception of the genre as an artistic and ideological monolith.

The individuals involved in the circulation of this music in the late-1960s and early-1970s were driven by political and ideological challenges to a flawed system. This form of anonymization/depersonalization in favor of foregrounding the ideological function of the music, has and continues to contribute to the incompleteness of narratives surrounding the role of nueva canción in exile. As Patrice McSherry has claimed, “[n]ew song escaped the control of the commercial music industry, which reinforced the hegemonic system in Chile, and the political vision of the songs presented challenged the structure of power relations in Chile and Latin America that resulted in the immiseration of millions” (2017, 18).

Statements such as this one from McSherry seem to support a transnational understanding of “political music” that was specifically enabled through global and commercial networks of circulation. It is not my point here to suggest that, in the context of its global circulation, *nueva canción* was denuded of its political efficacy and content. In fact, it is specifically the movement’s “folding in” to a wider array of international leftist movements that allowed it to maintain its continued traction as a point of mobilization and support for Chileans still living under the dictatorship. Instead, however, the genre’s imbrication in global commercial music networks predicated its reception on its ability to demonstrate a “political currency” that became one of several global benchmarks for political music. The ascription of this currency to certain ensembles over others, has facilitated the historiographic singularization of this music’s political function and a kind of hagiography around the movement’s principal actors. Claims that the genre shirked the singularizing tendencies of western commercial control overlook the other economic factors (social, cultural, political), which defined the meaning of the music beyond the years of the Allende administration. They further ignore the importance of the movement’s evolution encapsulated in Marisol García's assertion that “at the end of 1973 a composition was born from this uprooting whose texts and new turns of sounds deserve a separate analysis from that of the period of the Unidad Popular” (2013, 167). The analysis here goes a step further to interrogate the diversity of Chilean *nueva canción* and its continued evolution in exile.

## **Shifting Values in the Cold War World Music Market**

The nature of the recording industry, with respect to the framing of “world music” communities, varied in marked ways in the East and the West, but neither side was immune to the cultural constructions produced in the other. In addition to AMIGA records, the state-run East German record label responsible for the distribution of the LPs associated with the Festival of Political Songs, the Soviet Union released a number of albums by Chilean artists including Víctor Jara and Aparcoa on its own Melodiya label. These state-run productions inspired various Soviet and Slavic groups such as Conjunto Grenada in Moscow, who were influenced by *nueva canción* due to the strong leftist associations of the music. Of course, albums such as these, in both the GDR and the Soviet Union, were imbricated within a number of political tensions, imaginaries, and aspirations. These cultural products were crucial components in the articulation of a Chilean political identity in Eastern Europe. However, similar recordings coming out of Western Europe, particularly in France, drove much of the larger “pan-European” discourse surrounding Chilean solidarity, but with different emphases on its social and cultural function.

Chilean music had already been defined in terms of both style and content in Western Europe between the early tours of Violeta Parra and later with Quilapayún and Isabel Parra in tours in 1968 and 1971 (Rodríguez 2016, 77–8). This paved the way for a mode of reception that would greatly delimit the potential for artistic experimentation among Chilean artists in the post-coup era that took such a central role in fomenting the solidarity movement. After the coup, the DICAP label relocated to Paris and, along with

the French folk music label, Chant du Monde, became the central driver in the European world music market. In the case of Violeta Parra performing in Paris in the 1960s, she entered into a complicated nexus of assumptions and expectations regarding her own “authenticity,” which continually shaped and informed her own presentational style (Verba 2013). The conceptions of Latin American musical authenticity were already at this point deeply connected to an intensely mediated expression of “Andean” music that had been imported over a decade earlier by Argentine musicians (Rios 2008). This environment has therefore been more recently understood, less as a process of non-Western artists contributing to and shifting tastes in a kind of processual relationship with listeners, but rather a product of a kind of cosmopolitan “imaginary” towards the Global South (Turino 2003, 74).

When DICAP was reestablished in Paris, the movement for solidarity against the dictatorship was pervasive throughout the continent. Many of the master recordings that were released in Paris were also made earlier in the studios in Santiago before the coup, so many of the early releases produced in the mid-1970s reflected the overtly political themes of the UP period. As new recordings entered the scene in a period of heightened political awareness, notions of authenticity in the Southern Cone, which for at least a decade had been associated with Andean folklore, gradually came to be indexed by “political” music. At the same time, this created a kind of commercial standard and name recognition where artists like Inti-Illimani, Quilapayún, the Parras, and posthumous compilations of the works of Víctor Jara tended to dominate the Western and Eastern representation of Chilean artists into the 1980s.

Whereas Chileans entered into the French musical market under a shifting tide of evaluation from folklore to political music, the recording scene in the GDR and the listening public had been primed since the late-1960s performances of groups like Aparcoa, Violeta Parra, and Quilapayún to receive these artists as political militants. Guido Bimburg (2004) in his discussion of the reception of Cuban music and music research in the GDR, has noted how artists from both Cuba and Chile appeared on stages with a strong historical and ideological association to a German understanding of “*Kampflieder*” (“Songs of Struggle”), regardless of the lyrics or genre forms it presented. However, this was largely driven by a kind of discourse of revolutionary normativity in framing the then-Third World among party elites and the newspaper industry. While political and revolutionary tags circulated freely in reference to political music from Latin America from the 1959 Cuban Revolution to the fall of the Berlin Wall, the political heft of these terms was progressively denuded over time as cultural consumers experienced a disconnect between official messaging and lived experience. In fact, by the late 1960s and early 1970s, terms such as “revolutionary” and “*Kampflieder*” may have functioned in a coded way to discredit and poke fun at the widely perceived failings surrounding the SED (Bimburg 2004, 492). As public interest in the Chilean cause among GDR citizens increased over a period of growing disaffection with the East German government, this artistic community may have ironically arrived in an environment fostering a greater degree of experimentation and individuality than in the West due to changing criteria in the evaluation of popular and political music. Furthermore, many of the ensembles that ended up in the GDR were less well-known in the *nueva canción* movement during the

years of the UP, so many injected unexpected sounds and themes into a commercial market marked, in one way or another, by forms of cultural and political currency.

In this way, insistence on anti-commercial and revolutionary tropes around the proliferation of World Music recordings in general, and those from Chilean artists in particular, from labels like Amiga, Chant du Monde, and Melodiya neglect some of the more discursive dynamics between various forms of social and political currency. In the case of Andean music viewed through a lens of “authenticity,” the political mobilization and the music associated with these activities is seen as disconnected from an “authentic” pueblo identity. This view ignores the more meaningful and political points of exchange between nueva canción artists and Indigenous peoples. Similarly, the notion of “folklore” in this context is disenfranchised of its political militancy. Discourse around and between distinct geographic regions or groups like campesinos or pobladores and their respective folklore traditions are not seen as political issues within in a liberal and cosmopolitan view from the European Left. In the case of the GDR, any serious discussion of class dynamics was woefully under-developed due to the official non-existence of class difference, especially when these ideas were extended to comment on contemporary life in the GDR.

Javier Rodríguez, following François Chaubet, has described two modes for the circulation and reception of Chilean music in Europe. The first, “exterior cultural action” (para-diplomacy), involves a cultural expression limited in its scope and influence on the environment in which it takes place. The other mode is “musical diplomacy,” which implies a more long-term and deeply felt dynamic of political exchange by way of

musical encounter (2016, 65). While Rodríguez importantly acknowledges that these forms of reception are not mutually exclusive, McSherry's (2017) framing of the music in possession of a kind of pre-packaged political identity ignores the significant artistic changes that we can see among artists in both the East and the West. In other words, musical diplomacy fosters a more meaningful approach to considering how—and following our earlier conversation on migrant strategies for integration—international artists can, and do, respond critically and actively to cultural conditions with dynamic strategies. Furthermore, this model might imbue a greater degree of artistic and creative agency to artists acting on behalf of the solidarity movement, without ironing out the creative differences they may have individually contributed and how these techniques changed over time.

### **Patricio Castillo in the GDR**

Patricio Castillo was an early, albeit short-lived, member of Quilapayún (he left the ensemble in December of 1970) and later performed with his partner, Isabel Parra across the European continent in the years following the coup. I connected with Patricio over email, and he has generously filled out several questionnaires over the course of this project. Castillo and Parra had been forcibly expatriated in late 1973 and were invited to perform at the 1974 Festival of Political Songs (about five months following the coup). Following their performance at the festival, they were invited to stay in the GDR for “as long as [they] needed. That time extended several months until almost the end of the year” (personal communication, September 30, 2020). Castillo's memories of his time in East Berlin reflect a much more complicated picture of his artistic integration and

reception in this community. He describes having lived in “comfortable and modern hotels...until receiving an apartment equipped with all the amenities necessary for their stay” (personal communication, September 30, 2020). During this time nearly all of his musical activity was oriented towards the solidarity movement with Chile, and he and Parra were supported by the East German artist representation (*Kunstler Agentur*), which allowed them to perform not only in the East but in FRG, France, Holland, and other countries in the West as well (ibid.).

In the context of Chilean political exile in Europe, in addition to the political narrativizing surrounding the genre among the wider international Left, the artistic infrastructure also became a determinate factor in the defining of political currency. The DICAP label, which was relocated to Paris after the coup and remained in operation there until 1982, became a kind of political measuring stick for many artists caught between their commitment to supporting resistance and anti-fascist movements around the world and developing their own personal artistic identities. Patricio Castillo has noted that although he self-identified and positioned his compositions firmly within the fight for Chilean solidarity, he often found that his music, particularly in France, “occupied a very reduced space,” and that his music “[was] very distinct [in comparison with] that of [his] *compañeros* and that sometimes placed [him] in a disadvantageous situation because the sound of the Chilean cultural movement had a much more folkloric tint and [his] music sometimes disoriented the listener” (personal communication, December 15, 2020). In this tension between the more folkloric orientation of Chant du Monde and the more political orientation of DICAP and the internal aesthetic machinations of both, it is

notable how certain artists were subject to scrutiny not only from labels, but from other artists in the nueva canción movement as well. However, it is not the intention here to describe Castillo's relationship with other Chilean musicians in exile in Europe as an antagonistic one. Indeed, he performed alongside many of these artists and performed compositions by composers like Ángel Parra and Patricio Manns on his albums *Vientos del Pueblo* (I Dischi Dello Zodiaco – 1975; featuring Isabel Parra) and *La primavera muerta en el tejado* (DICAP – 1975).

Although DICAP had been the proverbial cultural wellspring for leftist music in Chile during the years of the UP, any notion—such as that espoused by McSherry—that nueva canción existed in an economical vacuum outside of any commercial parameters is an incomplete one. There have been a number of valuable studies that have demonstrated the way that musical constructions of Chile, as a political, authentic, and/or exotic subject were defined within a complicated nexus of political and commercial requirements (Rios 2008; Verba 2013; Rodríguez 2018). Chilean artists arriving in Europe after the coup found, as Castillo testifies above, that much of the criteria for being read as a musician was circumscribed by prescribed spaces for Chileans in the nascent “world music” market in France. In the case of DICAP:

*Aquí los discos se hacían en estudio y esta casa se comprometía en la producción y difusión de nuestra música. El inconveniente de esta empresa era el estilo impuesto según criterios político-comerciales en donde una vez más lo que primaba era el evento sobre el concierto. Pero esa producción tú debes conocerla. Muchos discos de Quilapayún, de Isabel Parra y yo, de Inti Illimani, y otros tantos. Ellos comercializaron a todo el mundo nuestras producciones y otra vez sin que nosotros tuviéramos conciencia de royalties o dineros que produjera y donde. A tal punto que yo encontré mucho más tarde discos míos editados en México de los cuales no tenía la menor idea de su existencia.*

Here the discs were made in the studio, which was engaged in the production and diffusion of our music. The downside of this business was the imposed style according to the political-commercial criteria, which prioritized the event above the concert...They commercialized everything we made for the whole world and, even more, without our knowing of the royalties or where they were produced. Once, much later, I found my discs edited in Mexico, of which I had not the slightest idea of their existence (Patricio Castillo, personal communication, December 15, 2020).

Although he goes on to indicate that this form of commercialization was practiced by other labels even after DICAP disbanded in France in 1982, he identifies a stark distinction in climate and activity between his work in Paris and East Berlin. Whereas with DICAP, the image and sound were highly curated in studio, all of Castillo and Parra's recordings in the GDR were recorded in live performances. "I would say that we didn't even know that we had been recorded. For that reason, these recordings have the merit of the absolute truth of what we were and how we were. There is no trick on those records" (ibid.).

He was further able to develop projects in Berlin with considerable freedom. He has described himself as "a frustrated jazzman" (personal communication, December 15, 2020) and he performed numerous jazz-related programs at the sponsorship of SED-connected cultural institutions. For example, he and Isabel Parra both performed with the Berliner Ensemble on numerous occasions during their stay in the GDR. He also set Pablo Neruda's only stage work, *Fulgor y muerte de Joaquín Murieta* for the Volkstheater Bautzen, "a modern version and one whose music was performed by German jazz musicians and that had nothing to do with political song" (personal communication, September 30, 2020). Between spontaneously produced musical artifacts

in front of a German public and experimental projects foregrounding his eclectic musical background, Castillo, though likely received in the GDR under a revolutionary evaluative rubric, was able to bring his unique skill set and expand the understanding regarding what activities could be considered revolutionary. By bringing his unique style into the cultural discourse around the solidarity movement, without concern over how folkloric or political his music would be viewed, he contributed to a form of Pablo Vila's "militant song": a form that denounced injustice, stimulated ongoing consideration, and avoided simplicity and singularization.

It is unclear if and how Castillo would characterize his own sense of artistic freedom between these two distinct cultural spaces. Indeed, he would go on to do some of his most experimental work with the group Las Jaivas and make one of his most groundbreaking albums *Provincias* (Le Chant du Monde, 1977) two years after leaving the GDR for Paris.<sup>2</sup> In a YouTube video featuring the last two tracks on the album, "Interludio" and "Provincias II," Castillo left a comment saying:

It's curious to hear these tracks after so many years, and in Chile. When I recorded it, in the studio "Resonances" in Paris, with Robert Proudon at the helm of the machine, I knew that it was very strange for the time, but with the wisdom of time, it seems to me a sort of ballad in which love and disaster are strongly intertwined. (Castillo, 2017)

This comment does not necessarily support such a restrictive commercial environment as the one periodically described in relation to recording with DICAP. Still, this album was made at a highpoint for the circulation of new "world music" in France and the energy

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<sup>2</sup> Recording available at:  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Go24YFsUPyI&ab\\_channel=P%C3%A9rolasdoRock](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Go24YFsUPyI&ab_channel=P%C3%A9rolasdoRock)

surrounding resistance to the Chilean dictatorship in Western Europe was by this point beginning to subside.

Although he continued to develop and experiment artistically well into the 1980s, it does seem clear that the lack of recording infrastructure and the unique commercial-political environment in the GDR in comparison with larger international record labels in Paris may have actually facilitated wider flexibility and spontaneity in both artistic messaging and content. In this way we can consider his reception and that of the uniquely creative tools he brought with him in the context of place and space. While not necessarily geographically framed, as we will see with several other artists in the GDR, the environmental conditions into which he arrived were shaped by, and shaped, his artistic and political identity. For someone who remained deeply committed to the fight for solidarity with Chile and who viewed their creative output as inextricable from their politics, his work offers an important means of widening the form and function of Chilean nueva canción in exile.

### **Julio Alegría and Aparcoa**

One of the most interesting Chilean ensembles that settled in the GDR was the group Aparcoa. The ensemble initially formed in 1965 among a group of architecture students at the University of Chile. The principal members were Miguel Córdova (guitar), Leonardo Parma (charango), and Rodrigo Zorilla (guitar). Julio Alegría (winds) joined shortly after, and in 1969 the group began to assume a more professional profile with the addition of Felipe Canales (guitar) and Jaime Migueles (percussion). The members of Aparcoa were committed members of the Chilean Communist Party (PC), but were also

extremely engaged folksong collectors, in the mold of Violeta Parra, Margot Loyola, and Atahualpa Yupanqui, learning new song forms, rhythms, and instruments through travelling in the Andean region and from older LPs and documents. Nueva canción is generally characterized by its merging of popular, Indigenous, and folkloric elements and the way these elements coalesce around the demands and experiences of various leftist communities like students, workers, and peasants. I developed a relationship with the Santiago-based journalist Jorge Castillo over email and he has generously shared several years of interviews and research on the group. In his extensive 2014 journalistic survey of the group, originally published in *El Meollo Cultural* (now defunct), he argues that members of Aparcoa arguably foregrounded a more direct form of “pure folklore” (Castillo Pizarro 2014),<sup>3</sup> thereby marking them in a somewhat ambiguous space between the “political” and “popular” with regards to their positionality in the nueva canción movement.

Julio Alegría, who was the musical director of Aparcoa from 1965–1972 has acknowledged this tension in what he views as a distinction between “political” songs and “social” songs. He and I have spoken numerous times over Zoom and, while I do not expect that his voice alone speaks for the experience of all members of the group, he has been very generous and humble when talking about Aparcoa’s experience in the GDR. For him, there were even national and regional considerations to this classification as he has noted that whereas countries like Uruguay, Nicaragua, and, of course, Chile had more

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<sup>3</sup> This piece is no longer published, but the author has shared it with me along with several other documents that have informed my work on the group Aparcoa. He asked that I cite his work, which I do in the text. I also just want to acknowledge his support here and express my gratitude.

direct ties to what he calls “political song,” music associated with leftist movements in Brazil and Argentina displayed themes addressing circumstances of daily life over direct calls to political action (personal communication, February 4, 2021). This perspective stems from the decades-long framing of the movement as having swept across South and Central America responding to the particular social and nationalistic concerns of the respective nations out of which it emanated (Carrasco 1982, 15). However, like many Chilean ensembles of the time, Aparcoa drew from a wide range of musical resources and despite their activities in connection with the PC and the Allende Campaign, they did not view their music along the historically drawn borders around the movement, whether it was the political, the social, or the folkloric:

*Cuando vivíamos en Alemania era un grupo reconocidamente de una postura social y política contraria a la dictadura de General Pinochet. De manera que eso solamente eso ya te ubicaba en un plano de comprensión—aquí grupo se iba a ver. Y nosotros no teníamos ningún problema en eso en cantar, tanto nuestras cuecas, como otras canciones que eran propiamente de la tradición popular o folclórica, pero como siempre nosotros elegimos temas que tenían contenido social.*

When we lived in Germany [Aparcoa] was a group with a recognized stance against the Pinochet dictatorship. In this way, we were located within a field of comprehension—the group was going to be seen as such. And we had no problems in singing songs whether they were *cuecas* or of the popular or folkloric tradition. But we always chose songs that had a social content (Julio Alegría, personal communication, February 4, 2021).

Although closely aligned with Chilean leftist politics and the UP they maintained an ideological and aesthetic distance from the more central participants in the UP’s cultural milieu (Castillo 2021). The group never recorded with DICAP, instead releasing two albums on the Philips label in 1970 and 1971 respectively. The first LP, *Aparcoa*, “[includes] huaynos, tarqueadas, cuecas nortinas, urbanas, de banda [and] chilotas. They

were the first group in the [nueva canción], that, in one album, extended their repertoire between Perú and Chiloé” (Castillo Pizarro 2014). As a result of their work with a more expansive folkloric repertory, the group enjoyed wider artistic success in their early years in public performances as opposed to recordings.

Because Aparcoa displayed such interest in folkloric traditions found in communities across South America, their music was not necessarily received as bearing the same “militant” flavor as other groups associated with the nueva canción movement and the UP. It would be wrong, however, to characterize the ensemble’s affinity for the folklore as a reflection of their political provincialism. Compared with distinctly folkloric Argentine groups like Los Chalchaleros or Los Fronterizos, or even with groups marked by their militancy like Quilapayún, Aparcoa adopted an urban and cosmopolitan sound and style. Regarding the omnipresent ponchos worn by so many groups of this period, Alegría noted:

*Grupos que tenían una apariencia como los Chalchaleros, los Fronterizos, que tenían un poncho. El poncho era un símbolo de américa latina. No era símbolo solamente campesino...por eso todos nuestros grupos aparecen siempre con poncho primero. Después, mucho mas tarde, nos sacamos el poncho. Mi grupo Aparcoa se sacó muy luego el poncho, porque nosotros queríamos ser mas urbanos, pero manteniendo el espíritu latinoamericano.*

Groups that had the appearance of Los Chalchaleros, Los Fronterizos, groups that wore a poncho. The poncho was a symbol of Latin America, not just a symbol of the peasant [*campesino*] class. For that reason, we all appeared with the poncho at first. Afterwards, much later, we took off the poncho. Aparcoa took off their ponchos much later because we wanted to be more urban while maintaining the Latin American spirit (Julio Alegría, personal communication, February 4, 2021).

This model of experimentation, therefore, not only with sound, but also with physical presentation, set Aparcoa in an unusual middle ground, neither fully political nor fully folkloric, thereby allowing them to explore new themes and instruments according to their own prerogatives. While always foregrounding Indigenous instruments and dances typical of nueva canción ensembles, they also incorporated things like the piano and nods to jazz music, which positioned them as unique actors and representatives of Chilean political music in exile. This distinction should not be over-determined though, as folkloric practice was never entirely seen as separate from political activity (Rodríguez 2016, 66).

There are few critical sources that examine the impact of Aparcoa's music on the nueva canción movement and later in the solidarity movement in exile. However, one theme that seems consistent across most historical mentions of the ensemble is their separation, distinction, and uniqueness with regards to some of the more prominent ensembles and artists representing Chile in exile such as Quilapayún, Inti-Illimani, and Isabel and Ángel Parra. Marisol García argues, "from their birth in the womb of the Nueva Canción movement until their separation in exile in the middle of 1977, Aparcoa was an atypical group of autonomous decisions and going against the current of the formal decisions of the political song movement" (2013, 210). Similarly, Jorge Castillo suggests that even regarding their passion and adherence towards folkloric and indigenous content, "Aparcoa demonstrated from their birth a certain detachment from the ritualism that would mark them for better and for worse" (Castillo Pizarro 2014).

This characterization of the group's outsider status is, in part connected to the circumstances of their employment and location in the GDR. Aparcoa held a contract with the Volkstheater Rostock, in the northern port city where they lived during their period of exile. Rostock was a city, in many ways culturally and socially primed to receive Chilean artists and musicians. It had a strong cultural center and university, which housed a center for studies on Latin American literature. Aparcoa was contracted to give weekly concerts in one of the small halls connected with the theater in exchange for housing, salary, and certain other benefits:

*Se llamaba 'Kleines Haus'. Que era un teatro muy antiguo del siglo 14 mas o menos. Un teatro de 400-500 personas. Era muy cómodo, prácticamente nuestro teatro. Y también tenía la capacidad de organizar el grupo en conciertos de solidaridad hacia otras provincias...el contrato también decía que la organización de los chilenos en la RDA también podía solicitar al grupos para sus propias actuaciones. Pueda dentro de la RDA o fuera de la RDA y cosas que se normalmente sucedía así.*

It was called the “*Kleines Haus*,” which was a very old theater from around the fourteenth century. A theater of 400-500 seats. It was very comfortable, practically our own theater. It also had the capacity to organize the group in solidarity concerts in other provinces...The contract also stated that the organization of Chileans in the GDR could also request groups for their own concerts. It could be in the GDR or outside and things normally went forward (Julio Alegría, personal communication, February 4, 2021).

Despite this ostensible freedom, the members of Aparcoa experienced a degree of restriction as a result of the political and cultural direction specific both to Rostock as a cultural scene and to the theater administration. Due to the strong cultural history in the city and the existence of the Latin American Institute, the population was predisposed to be welcoming and curious towards members of the Chilean exile community. At the same time, the theater saw its role in sponsoring Aparcoa and other Chilean artists as

connected with a broader project of communicating a message of anti-imperialism and demonstrating the success of the socialist system. Despite several notable international performances, including a 1976 concert at Madison Square Garden with Pete Seeger and Joan Baez and a 1977 concert in Barcelona to celebrate the return of the exiled poet Rafael Alberti after the end of the Franco dictatorship, the group's professional activities were, therefore, largely limited to the needs of the theater and its perceived role in developing a community consciousness (Julio Alegría, personal communication, February 11, 2021).

This restriction in movement should not be viewed entirely as an oppressive government stomping down the political aspirations of a group of artists in exile. Certainly, members of the group experienced frustration as they saw their role in an international movement and not in a regional one:

*Pero como grupo el objetivo era 'cubrir' — como se conversó en la Juventudes Comunistas — cubrir el norte de Europa. Quilapayún y Inti-Illimani cubrían Europa y otros países. Entonces nuestra actividad asignada era actuar en Finlandia, Suecia, Noruega, Dinamarca, RDA, RFA, y eventualmente en la Unión Soviética de entonces. Y eventualmente otros países.....nuestra misión, como entendíamos nosotros, por la que habíamos salido de Chile, no solo por seguridad, era de cumplir ese trabajo.*

As a group the objective was to 'cover'—as it was discussed in the *Juventudes Comunistas*—to cover the North of Europe. Inti-Illimani and Quilapayún covered Europe and the other countries. So our assigned activity was to perform in Finland, Sweden, Norway, Denmark GDR, FRG, and eventually the then Soviet Union. And eventually other countries...our mission, as we understood it, why we had left Chile, was not only for security, but to fulfill this work. (Alegría, Personal Communication, February 11, 2021)

Still, the group managed to travel widely (perhaps not as widely as ensembles in the West), to produce a distinctive sound, and develop a unique idiom for musical expression.

In addition to the well-known political anthems of the nueva canción movement like “Venceremos” and “El pueblo unido,” Aparcoa took on a unique project early in their career that would continue to be redefined and reshaped as a politico-folkloric magnum opus in exile. Their second recording, also on the Philips label, was an adaptation of Pablo Neruda’s *Canto General* featuring the spoken vocals of Mario Lorca. This work was produced with support from Neruda himself as well as composers Sergio Ortega and Gustavo Becerra and is the poet’s (re)telling of the history of the Latin American continent. The album highlights folkloric and experimental themes and instruments and, in many ways, became the apex of the ensemble’s repertoire. The work features Indigenous instruments not frequently seen in the nueva canción repertoire, such as the Mapuche *trutruca*, but it also features a *cueca urbana* (an “urban” version of Chile’s emblematic national folk genre) and the appearance of an electric guitar performing psychedelic jazz-inspired riffs. The sounds and instruments reflect a teleology of movement through Neruda’s historical text, but the piece ends with a *tarqueada* (an Indigenous Andean wind consort tradition) signifying the return of the land to *el pueblo*.

After the group’s exile to the GDR in 1974, the work took on new meaning in relation to the oppression and terror carried out by the dictatorship. It was translated in multiple languages and performed across the European continent between 1974–1977. Aparcoa had to make changes to *El canto general* in front of German audiences. A work

of the length and depth such as Neruda's poem was already difficult enough to present in its totality in front of Chilean audiences and, as noted by Julio Alegría, "had to be much more forceful for a foreign public further separated from the verses that would be difficult for them to understand" (cited in Castillo Pizarro 2014). It appears as though this performance approach afforded broader flexibility and with the presentation of content. It allowed for a more complex narrativizing around themes, such as denouncing the dictatorship and more broadly addressing the legacies of imperialism around the world.

*Canto General*, in its realization by the group, was ostensibly a cantata, displaying the same level of political, artistic, and conceptual integration as that seen in Sergio Advis' *Cantata Santa María de Iquique* or Las Jaivas' *Alturas de Macchu Picchu*, which also drew on Neruda's text. Additionally, the group became famous for their setting of the final words spoken by Salvador Allende, which were broadcast to the Chilean people during the bombing of La Moneda presidential palace. "*Las ultimas palabras*" became essentially a "third political hymn" alongside "*Venceremos*" and "*El pueblo unido*." The song, which was highlighted on the 1975 *Rote Lieder* disc after the Fifth Festival of Political Songs, features the same polyphonic singing techniques popularized by Quilapayún such as oblique motion in the vocal lines and fixed melodic figures moving against stepwise ascending or descending lines on vocables.

Lastly, the group also was engaged on a number of film and theater projects directed by both Chileans and Germans. The recorded the scores for *Der magere Preis* (1975), based on the work by the Cuban writer Hector Quintero and directed by Hanns Anselm Pertan; and also *Roter Poncho von Chile* (1976), which was an experimental

work in collaboration with the experimental Chilean group Teatro Lautaro led by Patricio Bunster in Rostock and directed by Henry Riedel. Alegría also wrote the score for arguably the most controversial East German film about Chilean themes, *Isabel auf der Treppe* (1984) by Hannelore Unterberg, due to its exploration of migrant struggles in the GDR and suicide.

This success in musical styles between *el folclor* (folklore) and *la música docta* (art or classical music), while simultaneously engaging with and resisting norms more commonly recognized as paramount in the nueva canción movement signifies a reshaping and resignification of the “political” in the context of the movement for Chilean solidarity and East German cultural space. Although the group was restricted in their ability to tour as extensively as other groups in both the West and also the East, their position of relative creative freedom at the Rostock Volkstheater allowed them to draw from their diverse and expansive musical backgrounds and construct a much more complex framing of their music around their political activity. This is most clearly demonstrated in their final studio album recorded during their exile in the GDR, *Chile* (Amiga – 1975). This album positions political anthems like “*Grandiola, Vila Morena*” and “*Las últimas palabras*” alongside *huaynos* (an Andean genre), *cuecas urbanas*, and jazz-inspired arrangements of compositions by Ariel Ramirez and Víctor Jara. In this way, the members of the ensemble served to reshape the political landscape into which they were thrust and establish a complex dialogue between their own musical backgrounds and the nueva canción movement.

## Roberto Rivera and Tiemponuevo

A somewhat contrary consideration might be applied to the group Tiemponuevo. Whereas Aparcoa was determined in some ways to be peripheral to notions of the “political,” Tiemponuevo (sometimes, Tiempo Nuevo) was firmly legible within the mark of *cancion comprometida* (“committed song”) or even *canción protesta* (“protest song”). Roberto Rivera was the lead singer, guitarist, and principal composer of the group Tiemponuevo, which formed in Valparaíso in 1965. I spoke with Roberto only once during this project over the phone, but he offered a wealth of knowledge and background that would not have been available otherwise.<sup>4</sup> Although having grown up in a middle-class family speaking English with his mother who was a primary school teacher, he has described the climate of intense poverty that surrounded his childhood, which profoundly marked his political development from an early age. As a young man in Valparaíso, he was an ardent member of the Chilean Communist Party (PC) and worked as a dentist as well as contributing to public health initiatives in the community. He came into his musical life somewhat by accident through his connections as a teenager with Payo Grondona (see below) and Osvaldo “Gitano” Rodríguez (both of whom were also in exile in the GDR) with whom he became friends and formed *La Peña de Valparaíso* (personal communication, July 13, 2020)

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<sup>4</sup> I want to acknowledge the support I received from Luisa Quezada in transcribing this complex and detailed interview. I also want to express my gratitude for Antoine Sextier who shared his own extended interview with Rivera that he used for the podcast *Perspectivas a través de la Nueva Canción Chilena*.

Rivera, who has been based in Berlin since the time he went into exile in the early 1970s, is not unaware of his role in carrying on the legacies of these other musicians and the nueva canción movement in general.

*Se murieron todos los que fundaron la Nueva Canción Chilena. El Parra, todos ellos, los que trabajábamos juntos. De todos, el único que está quedando soy yo. Esa es la verdad... Hay que cuidarlo para que pueda contar algunas cosas que sean importantes.*

All of the founders of the *nueva canción chilena* died. [Ángel] Parra, all of them with whom we worked together. Of all of them, the only one still around is me. That is the truth ... It must be guarded so that I can talk about those important things (personal communication, July 7, 2020).

Upon arriving in the GDR, authorities determined that Rivera and his bandmate Sergio Sánchez who was also a dentist would be deployed to work in a hospital in then-Karl-Marx-Stadt (today Chemnitz). Payo Grondona, who arrived with them, was deployed in his now-notorious experience as a worker on an assembly line as part of the “proletarization” efforts between the CHAF and SED. During this time, the group managed to continue performing despite their placement in the GDR labor machine. As Rivera recalls, “If [they wanted] me to pull teeth from the mouths of Germans that [was not] going to beat Pinochet. No. I [came] to fight for solidarity with Chile” (ibid.).

In their early days performing in the Peña de Valparaíso, members of the group periodically experienced strife with other artists in the vanguard of the emerging nueva canción movement in the Peña de los Parra. This was due to the fact that the ensemble was deemed by some as not reflecting some of the more “folkloric” values that were associated with the work of Violeta Parra. However, according to Rivera, this was not seen as an issue even by Parra herself:

*Nosotros conocíamos a la Violeta Parra de hacía algunos años y ellos nunca se preocuparon de eso. Gilbert cantó en la peña y quería que nosotros fuéramos con él a Europa a cantar. Decía que los otros no tenían vida y como era el jefe de la cuestión, entonces esas cosas, por ejemplo, ayudan a uno y teníamos la gran ventaja y desventaja, porque éramos de Valparaíso, entonces no estábamos en las discusiones que había en Santiago.*

We knew Violeta Parra from a few years before and they never cared about it. Gilbert [Favre] sung in the peña and wanted us to come to Europe with him to sing. He said that the others did not have life [*no tenían vida*] and as he was in charge of the matter. So those things helped us. And we had the great advantage, and disadvantage, because we were from Valparaíso since we were not part of the discussions that they were having in Santiago (ibid).

Although not universal, Rivera notes that among the most prominent founders of the Peña de Valparaíso, the emphasis on folklore as a prevailing aesthetic and conceptual idiom did not bear the same significance as it did in Santiago:

*Nosotros cantábamos no más y no peleábamos y cuando empezábamos a pelear en la peña de Valparaíso fue porque se empezaron a meter unos que decían que nosotros no éramos los folclóricos. Entonces el Payo dijo: ‘Mira, folclor acá [para acá] y folclor allá [para allá]. Vámonos de aquí, dijo.’*

We sang and that was it. We didn’t fight. And when we began to fight in the Peña de Valparaíso, it was because a few started coming that said we were not “folklorists.” So Payo [Grondona] said: ‘Look, there’s folklore here and there’s folklore there. Let’s get out of here’” (ibid.).

We can consider this this approach to a localized sense of composition based in the circumstances of the group’s formation (the poverty they witnessed, their particular musical development, and the physical and ideological separation from the scene in Santiago), as distinct from the formation of a group such as Aparcoa, which from its conception was dedicated to the preservation and presentation of Andean folklore.

While no evidence exists to suggest that these groups experienced tension, either in Chile or in the GDR, the distinction between the experience of these two ensembles demonstrates two significant points. Principally, it challenges any notion of a singularized nueva canción song movement with a shared set of political or ideological tenets. This complexity surrounding aesthetic narratives in the groups cannot, therefore, be homogenized, even in the case of exile. While all of the Chilean artists exiled in all parts of the world certainly shared a core value set aligning around Chilean solidarity, they did not approach this movement from a universal evaluation of what exactly constituted nueva canción or what should be its core repertory.

Secondly, efforts to “folklorize” or provincialize Chilean music in exile through venues like DICAP in the West, international political song festivals in the East, or other modes of aesthetic appropriation (Rodríguez 2018) seem to miss the way that these groups evolved musically in exile. It is notable that these groups, not only developed musically and deployed increasingly experimental and transnational idioms, as in the case of Aparcoa and Patricio Castillo, but also that this music strategically adapted to the tastes and circumstances of the communities in which it was received (Verba 2013; Rodríguez 2016; Gavagnin 2019). We therefore see, even in such a small case as the Chilean diaspora in East Germany, an increasingly heterogeneous movement and exploration of diverse musical idioms.

In the case of Tiemponuevo, one of their most popular songs in the GDR, “*Será pa major*” (“It Will Be for the Better”), was actually in the style of an urban criollo waltz from Perú. This track was released on the group’s first album *Tiemponuevo*, which was

pressed in 1970 on the Asfona label (1960-1970), which was based in Santiago. The album makes no reference to the wider nueva canción movement despite the actual disc being emblazoned with the logo of the Peña de los Parra. The album cover instead is clear to distinguish the group as formed within its own unique artistic and political stream. The album jacket labels the group as “*conjunto de música popular de Valparaíso,*” further including a poem by Domingo Maureira A. stating:

*La Canción de Lucha es la transformación  
de los instrumentos musicales en armas de  
combate.*

*La Guitarra estandarte de Justicia.*

*Las Notas musicales proyectiles que  
atraviesan nuestras conciencias  
mezquinas.*

*Las voces zumbido de balas que nos  
producen terror ante la realidad.*

Song is the transformation of musical  
instruments into weapons of combat.

The guitar is the banner of justice.

The musical notes are projectiles that  
traverse our petty consciences.

The voices are buzzing with bullets that  
terrify us in the face of reality.

Perhaps not surprisingly then, this song was extremely popular with a number of musical groups in the GDR and also the Soviet Union who certainly viewed the members of Tienponuevo as in possession of a great deal of political capital. Not the least of these groups was Moscow-based Conjunto Grenada and who recorded a cover of the track on their 1979 album *Chile en el corazón* under the title, “*Viva la revolución.*” It is not difficult to evaluate the reasoning for Grenada’s selection of this track as its lyrics speak to a revolution already underway and extending to all corners of society regardless of profession or class:

From “Sera pa’ mejor” – Tiempounuevo<sup>5</sup>

*Mira que ya viene  
la revolución.  
¿Para qué se asustan?  
Será pa’ major.  
Es el pueblo entero  
el que ya está gritando:  
“¡Viva la revolución!”*

Look the revolution is coming  
What are you afraid of?  
It’s going to get better.  
All of the people  
are already shouting:  
“Long live the revolution!”

Songs such as these were happily embraced by government officials and youth alike as they underscore a wider understanding in the East that Chilean artists in this context were primed—as a result of their previous work and sound—to be viewed as revolutionary in the broader Soviet orbit. However, it is interesting that this track, which gained so much traction in both the Soviet Union and the GDR, would have been less associated with the life of obreros, pobladores, or indígenas, but more with a middle-class lifestyle. The repurposing of the waltz as a call to arms among the widest swath of the population actually serves to frame this piece as a kind of invitation, rather than a point of antagonism. When they therefore say the lyric: “*Que vengan las policías a escucha esta canción. Y todos saldrán gritando: ‘¡Viva la revolución!’*” (“The police will come and hear this song. And everyone will leave shouting: ‘Long live the revolution!’”) it seems possible that the police will also file out with the rest of the audience united in political action.

In the GDR, the ensemble recorded *Rumbo a la Libertad* (Büchergilde Gutenberg -1989) in Studio III of the East German broadcasting network. Eight out of the twelve tracks on the album are original compositions by Roberto Rivera which feature a strong

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<sup>5</sup> Recording available at: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cavr2yUqgXI&ab\\_channel=kojohnsonlol](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cavr2yUqgXI&ab_channel=kojohnsonlol)

presence of folk instruments like the charango, quena, and zampoñas. Many of the tracks are either sung in both German and Spanish and there are a series of German-language interludes between songs in which Rivera describes feelings of unity, longing, and persisting connection to Chile and the Americas. At this point, he and the other members of the ensemble had been living and touring in the GDR for approximately fifteen years and were well-integrated into East German culture and politics. The group's use of distinctly folkloric idioms here serves almost as a kind of trope in which Rivera navigates ideas about earth and land, of community and connection, of yearning and identity. Appearing just six months before the fall of the Berlin Wall and at a moment of deep discontentment among a large segment of the population, the connection between shared experiences of geographic and political identity would have likely resonated deeply with many East Germans.

The use of folklore here may have served to provincialize and even personalize a political representation of a unitary subject in the GDR. Whereas many individuals understood their roles as instrumental in building a unique socio-political system, the lived experiences of many East Germans varied across the state. The members of Tiempnuevo, long based in cities where populations were suspicious of foreigners and many harbored xenophobic or racist views carried over from the period of National Socialism, repurposed ideas around the distinction between folklore and politics to connect the two in a manner legible to many citizens that felt like the project they had labored for was crumbling around them. The music of Tiempnuevo was never separate from their lived experience and political activism. Their ability to index a singular unitary

public without class or professional distinction gave their music political potency for decades. However, they also connected their own experiences of loss, longing, and hope to the specific conditions of those who felt instrumental in ever-shifting project that was the GDR.

### **Payo Grondona**

Payo Grondona is the last artist in this discussion that appears to have brought a unique set of sounds, perspectives, and circumstances to his period of exile in the GDR. Grondona fled Chile in 1974 and passed briefly through Argentina before arriving in the GDR, where he remained for a number of years. Eventually, he left the GDR and moved to Italy where he completed a graduate degree in journalism. He was acknowledged as the first of the exiled Chilean musicians to be permitted back into the country where, after a brief period of transition in Argentina, he returned to his home in Valparaíso in 1983.

Grondona was one of the founders of the Peña de Valparaíso along with the members of Tiempounuevo and Osvaldo “Gitano” Rodríguez. It is notable that all three of these artists were, at least, initially exiled to the GDR in comparison with some of the more prominent artists based in Santiago. It is not the intention here to overstate the distinctions between two geographical or aesthetic milieux as there was a great deal of exchange between the two most prominent peñas in Santiago and Valparaíso. However, it also should not be overlooked, and as we have seen, that the coastal cohort were frequently viewed as possessing a degree of exteriority, whether in style or political motivation, when compared against their colleagues in the Metropolitan Region.

Beyond his opting for lyrical themes and musical styles at the time considered distinct from the nueva canción movement, a further element that provided Grondona with his unusual and distinctive signature that continually required evaluation was his use of the banjo as his principal instrument. Underlying many of the motivations in the nueva canción movement, especially those regarding the weaponization of song against imperialism and the interstices between folklore and nationalism in Latin America, was a rejection of influence from the United States. As we have seen, there was a degree of discord between musicians that wanted to keep the genre as closely aligned to the “authentic” folkloric activities associated with artists like Violeta Parra, Atahualpa Yupanqui, and Margot Loyola. Payo Grondona instead cultivated a distinctly urban aesthetic that he felt would be best served by the sounds of the banjo. This sound was a reflection of the sights and sounds of his life in Valparaíso:

*¿A que le canto? Empecé a cantar a lo que yo veía. Y lo que yo veía eran los ascensores, las conversaciones de la gente, la lucha por la vida – por sus derechos, los amores juveniles. Y todo eso con un ritmo. Primera era folklórico: como cachimbo, como chapecao, era como refalosa. Creo que después, por influencia “X,” entre ella, Donovan, Dylan, Beatles, Elvis, se fue degenerando, o regenerando, en ritmos urbanos chilenos.*

What do I sing about? I began singing about what I saw. And what I saw were the elevators, people having conversations, the struggle for life and for rights, young lovers. And everything with rhythm. At first it was folklore: the *cachimbo*, the *chapecao*, the *refalosa*. I believe afterwards, for the influence of some “X-factor,” whether it be Donovan, Dylan, the Beatles, Elvis, it was degenerated and regenerated in urban Chilean rhythms (Grondona, 2009, *Payo en serio*).

He certainly could not be considered apolitical during the years of the UP, especially with songs such as “Elevar la producción también es revolución” (“To increase production is also revolution”) and “No meteremos las manos, quizás los pies” (“We

won't get our hands dirty, maybe our feet") However, his work always straddled the "political" line, frequently instead opting for songs with humorous or satirical content. The radio DJ Sergio "Pirincho" Cárcamo, who continues to be one of the premiere voices in Chilean popular music to today, says Payo was a "singer-songwriter, but a drifter, but more than anything what he contributed was a visión totally distinct from the propagandistic song, from the protest song. Payo was a chronicler —a reflection of this era" (*Payo en Serio* 2009). Cárcamo's commentary therefore offers a unique insight into how we might view Grondona's legacy in the context of the NCCl movement. We might consider his role as a documentarian one, both inside and outside of the movement, all the while offering creative, cryptic, and frequently humorous insight into his life in both Valparaíso and in the GDR.

Upon arriving in the GDR, Grondona was set to work in a "nut-and-bolt factory" for the first year of his of his period of exile "until he took off his overalls and went on with his guitar and his charango in various performances with huge success (*a tablero vuelto*)" (cited in García 2013: 220). He had only performed once at the Festival of Political Songs in Berlin in 1973 as part of a larger tour in both Eastern and Western Europe, but was never invited back after he became an exile in the GDR. Still, he managed to develop a career as a performer and frequently toured with Tienponuevo on both sides of the Wall (García 2013, 220). He ultimately registered in a postgraduate program at the Karl Marx University in Leipzig in 1978 where he studied journalism. Upon his return to Chile in 1983 he continued with his journalistic occupation but continued to perform and record.

Having never produced an album in the GDR, his two post-exile cassettes *Canto de nuevo* (1984) and *Cultura de vida* (1987) recorded on the Alerce label provide a kind of time capsule and insight into the artistic figuration of *el retorno* (Rebolledo González 2012). Furthermore, returning to Chile at this time, Grondona found himself in a distinctive musical environment, one marked by the sounds of *Canto Nuevo*. At this point, the artistic and cultural requirements of the next generation of young Chileans that had grown up under the dictatorship were very different than those of the generation that came of age artistically during the period of the UP. Being the first of the exiled musicians to return and, due his more urban style and themes of daily life and humor, Payo was able to integrate into the musical scene in Chile to communicate the experience of exile for a community that may not have fully understood it. Songs such as “Volverán” (“They Will Return”), “Balada doble” (“Double Ballad”), and “Regresa el trovador” (“The Poet Returns”) were able to communicate between life in exile and life under Pinochet. As Grondona states:

*Estaba todo el Canto Nuevo. Con un repertorio muy específico. Muy críptico. Y te dijo con un lenguaje muy directo, muy cotidiano, muy abierto. Y caigo parado haciendo en el labor en que el Canto Nuevo...y eso fue muy bonito porque fue reconocido por los chiquillos, o por los cabros de la época.*

Everything was Canto Nuevo. With a very specific repertoire. Very cryptic. And it spoke to you with a very direct language, very mundane, very open. And I fell happily into the work of Canto Nuevo...and it was really nice because I was recognized by those guys, by the kids from that period (Grondona, 2009, *Payo en serio*).

As Marisol García has mentioned, these later recordings from Payo Grondona and also later from Julio Numhauser and Illapu were “a musical register of personal redefinition in a homecoming, but also of the questionable comforts of the transition” (2013, 229):

From “Volverán” – Payo Grondona, 2006:

*Este canto es por los que han quedado  
La semilla y la arena serán  
Son la mina que da fortaleza  
A la lucha que se armarán.*

This song is for those that remained  
They will be the seed and the sand  
They are the mine that gives strength  
To the fight they will assemble.

*Recuerda tú joven chileno  
Tú que ahora no puedes creer  
La historia, iré muchas vueltas  
Las masacres suelen suceder...*

Remember young Chilean  
You cannot believe now  
The history, I will go around many times  
Massacres usually occur...

*... Volverán, Volverán  
a tener en sus ojos la estrella  
que sigue la huella  
de la libertad.*

... They will return, they will return  
to have the star in their eyes  
the mark of liberty follows

Tracks like this demonstrate a kind of state of agitation found within not only Grondona’s period of artistic “dormancy,” but a wider insight into how nueva canción in exile continued to evolve and develop overseas in myriad ways even beyond the understanding of the artists that produced it. It is unlikely that nueva canción artists writing music in the late-1960s and early-1970s would have foreseen the ways that their music has continued to evolve in meaning to the present day. Chilean nueva canción is all too often framed as a singularity, or as a cultural monolith that spoke against oppression at a particular moment in time. Grondona’s music shows just how far the music wavered from its perceived aesthetic center and still resonated around the world. Whereas many of the accounts we have explored here have examined the ways that Chilean artists brought a diverse range of artistic material in their “rucksacks” and ways these materials indexed

political capital, Payo's continued exploration of his own creative resources would ultimately serve to cultivate a new meaning and form of ambassadorship to the next generation of Chileans. In this way, his music further underscores how Chilean nueva canción continued to dialogue with and evolve in exile, producing unexpected meanings based on shared encounters in unique spaces.

## **Conclusion**

In 2010, the Third Ibero-American Conference of Culture met in Medellín, Colombia and produced a publication entitled, *A tres bandas: Mestizaje, sincretismo, e hibridación en el espacio sonoro iberoamericano* (Recasens and Spencer 2010). The scope of this conference was not strictly on *música popular*, and indeed many of the papers delivered by some of the most preeminent scholars in the fields of Latin American musical history trace genres and styles back well into the sixteenth century. However, it is notable that within the twenty-three articles published in this collection, there is only one singular substantial mention of nueva canción (González in *ibid.*, 212), and minimal mention of the musical culture in Chile more broadly (see Spencer in *ibid.*). While the articles published in this volume may only represent the apex of scholarship presented in this conference, they also underscore nueva canción's historiographic impermeability to considerations of fusion and exchange between regions and nations. Beyond the traditional tropes that the genre was born out of a mixing between popular, rural, and Indigenous styles in the late-1950s and early-1960s, the genre has been largely immobilized despite clear and public disjunctures between artists over meaning and history.

The artists discussed in this chapter all contribute to a more complex understanding of the history of nueva canción, its evolution, and processes of mixing and exchange with the musics in other parts of the world. Each of these artists drew upon both perceived and applied aspects of political capital to facilitate their integration, develop artistically, and maintain connection to their own respective political identities. Their distinct deployments and instrumentalizations of political capital ensure that they would be received and understood within the different socio-cultural communities into which they entered. This same ability to strategically draw on and implement political capital also enabled these artists make changes and experiment with their creative and artistic identities in exile. In contrast to “rucksack” approaches to migrant capital where communities are universalized and must fit into an inflexible and established socio-economic order, political capital provides a point of critical intervention into the ways this artistic community in exile interacted and engaged meaningfully with their host nation.

Lastly, it provides a much more useful way to evaluate diversity and even disagreement within a musical movement frequently presented as singular. Suggestions that nueva canción was “protest music” or anti-commercial tend to mitigate and ignore the diversity of activity undertaken by artists in the solidarity movement against the Pinochet Dictatorship. Wielding nueva canción in this way, as a metaphorical cudgel in a world where a potential socio-political organization was either fascist, or anti-fascist, ignores the plurality of experience and the motivations for weaponizing these “militant songs.” Even in a state as small as the GDR, the experiences of Chilean exiles varied

widely depending on the conditions and the location in which they lived. Political capital, described in this chapter in just a few out of many expressions, ensured this community's political and geographic engagement with these conditions, and affords our retrospective consideration of some of the complexities of East German state and the music that circulated within it.

## Chapter 6: Memory, Shifting Architecture, and Disappearance

### Introduction

Anyone familiar with the history and legacy of the German Democratic Republic will likely have come across the term *Ostalgie*, which describes a kind of trauma and loss that East Germans experienced as a product of reunification. The term, which often refers to an acute form of material nostalgia for GDR, was and continues to be used as a means to fetishize and commercialize East German life and products for many tourists and West Germans. Dominic Boyer (2006) argues that Ostalgie for most East Germans describes a much more modest relationship to the past than many of the more fanatical discourses around the topic might suggest. For him, Ostalgie is as much—if not more—a product of West German anxiety over national identity as it is a symptom of East German longing. As “a symptom less of East German nostalgia than of West German utopia,” writes Boyer it results in “a naturalizing fantasy that creates an *irrealis* space, literally a ‘no-place,’ in which East Germans’ neurotic entanglement with authoritarian pastness allows those Germans gendered western to claim a future free from the burden of history” (2006; 363, italics in original). In other words, Ostalgie, from a western lens, inscribes a form of pastness without future onto East Germans that continually mediates their identities and lives since reunification.

In this chapter, I want to examine this idea of *fixity* as it pertains to narratives about the GDR’s historical and spatial development. Rather than a “no-place,” I argue that the state was defined by an ontology of shifting and disappearance and that, instead of being without future, from our vantage point in the present, it continually shook off

traces of itself, which resonate today in unexpected ways. This process is a product of the former state's construction around a dynamic and experience of precarity. Disappearance, here, is not a synonym for precarity, but rather a collectivity of processes and experiences enabled by it. Just as I have argued that precarity was strategically mobilized through song to engage and shine light upon a myriad of other precarities in the GDR in the form of sonic geographies, here it is similarly mobilized to participate in an experience of space marked by disappearance and change. Many of the buildings, spaces, and geographies of the GDR have since disappeared, but if understood as continuing through their disappearance, rather than being victimized by it, we might find ways to evaluate its ever-evolving sense of futurity.

As a point of orientation towards an ontology of disappearance, I propose tracing aspects of the musical soundings of Chileans in exile. By its condition, exile necessarily positions those who experience it within and against ideas of geographic, national, and institutional fixity. The Chileans who arrived in the GDR, found themselves in a context undergoing profound change and their status in between the rigid circumscription of past, present, and future, between “here” and “there,” marked them as powerful interlocutors across the invisible space of the GDR's future. Their musical traces anticipated this future and provided insight into the way that it would resonate in space long after the Berlin Wall came down. As Edward Said has written:

Most people are principally aware of one culture, one setting, one home; exiles are aware of at least two, and this plurality of vision gives rise to an awareness of simultaneous dimensions, an awareness that—to borrow a phrase from music—is *contrapuntal* (2001, 186; italics in original).

Chilean music in the GDR, as a *literal* counterpoint to the daily life of East Germans and the community in exile, became therefore a narrative procedure marking invisible forms of change. The memories and soundings of this group provide grounding for GDR's continual state of becoming, undoing, and disappearing.

This chapter offer several small and ephemeral fragments of musical activity in space rather than some the more recognizable cultural products described in previous chapters such as discs, tours, or festivals. Music that existed on the margins or hidden within larger activities that centered around cultivating a sense of futurity and place-making articulated and engaged with the instability of space in this context. These traces linger around the omnipresent possibility of disappearance in the GDR and, in this way, serve as geographic and architectural counterpoints to spaces with which we can no longer interact. I discuss here three traces from various “texts” that engage with the exilic capacity to look back and forward through a particular space's evolution. The music of the Chilean community in these texts provides critical alternatives surrounding the plurality and complexity of place-making in the GDR as well as contemporaneous insights into the creation of its history and its continuation.

### **Geography and Architecture Before and After the Wall**

Speaking of the continually evolving architectural and developmental tension in Berlin after the period of reunification Andreas Huyssen has claimed that “[t]his city text has been written, erased, and rewritten throughout that violent century, and its legibility relies as much on visible markers of built space as on images and memories repressed and ruptured by traumatic events” (2003, 51-2). This palimpsestic layering and

competition over memory, as an approach to construction and reconstruction in Germany has notably led to a form of architectural discomfort around the remnants of the GDR. Caught between, on the one hand a perceived impetus towards the “critical reconstruction” of a legible nineteenth-century city and more globalist imperatives to reflect “the city as image and design in the service of displaying power and profit” (Huysen 2003, 63), the often-described cold and grey structures that comprised the environment for millions of East Germans’ daily lives do not fit into either of these architectural narratives. Huysen importantly notes that by the turn of the twenty-first century, many of the initial post-unification “urban tabula rasa fantasies” had been replaced by a more practical approach (2003, 81). Even so, the conceptual emptiness and malleability of East German space continues to be point of powerful conflict, perhaps best encapsulated in the ongoing debates around the Humboldt Forum, the new museum in the resurrected Berliner Schloss, which was during the existence of the GDR, the Palast der Republik, which housed the East German parliament.

There have been numerous valuable studies on the geographic tensions that arose after the collapse of the Berlin Wall (Berdahl 1999; Borneman 1991; Glaeser 2000; Gook 2015). Many of these works demonstrate a people often feeling left behind and not involved in the proposed and implemented changes as their country became subsumed under a capitalist rubric. However, critical discussions around the changing façade of the former GDR resist simple binary explanations around state-sponsored erasure effected against the disappearing ways of life of an entire population. The artist Sophie Calle interviewed former East Germans for a work titled “Is It Better?” and found that many

were happy to see the destruction of the Palast der Republik as they never felt like it was a space that belonged to them (cited in Gook 2015, 122). Ben Gook has identified this theme of “belonging” as crucial in how former GDR citizens felt engaged to participate in the structural changes to the GDR’s architectural iconography (2015, 123). Just a few hundred meters away from the Palace, the increased commodification and commercialization in the Alexanderplatz was met with massive resistance due to the fact that this was perceived as a much more participatory space that “belonged” to the people.

This represents only one such perspective about the meaning of shifting spaces and architecture in post-unification Germany. John Paul Kleiner (2016) has written about the changes and removal of the neon signage in Leipzig that was such an important aspect of the of the city’s visual landscape. Initially dark and bleak in the evening hours due to the perceived decadence of US and western advertising culture, after the 1953 Worker’s Uprising, Leipzig and other cities were bedecked with neon (ibid.). Unexpectedly, a number of the dozens of neon structures created in the GDR were actually influenced by the highly commercialistic façades of the Las Vegas Strip, although with the expressed intention to give the city a kind of socialist facelift. The notion of “learning from Las Vegas” was a stark point of critique among architects in post-unification Berlin such as Hans Stimmann (cited in Huyssen 2003, 62), and though clearly taking from the polemical post-modernist architecture treatise of the same name (Venturi, Scott Brown, and Izenour 1972), it seems that the affinity for neon, not only in the former GDR, but in other parts of the Soviet Bloc as well may have underscored this critique in Western Europe. The neon signage was heralded by a young generation of

artists after the fall of the Wall, and in some instances were rescued through crowdfunding efforts. These artists, both from the East and West were insistent that their interest in the signage was not a product of *Ostologie*, but rather a kind of reification of a geographic, political, and even commercial identity that was progressively being erased (Kleiner 2016).



Figure 5.1: Small traces in the form of signage from the Palast der Republik. The building had a bowling alley and concert and lecture halls that were open for use by the East German public, Photo by Jesse Freedman

The historification of the contemporary Humboldt Forum—a sanitization and ensnaring of an unruly architectural *telos*, the Disneyfication of sites of urban public belonging around structures like the Fernsehturm in Alexanderplatz, and the de- and reilluminating of markers of daily life for millions. These are only three arbitrary, albeit

recognizable, examples of palimpsestic approaches to managing a divided country's history. What do they have in common? They underscore an irreconcilable fissure in our historiographic relationship to the GDR: a society at once imbricated in state-led materialist production of all aspects of life, and simultaneously—in light of retrospection—ephemeral, passing, and in many ways absent. Structures have given way to modern cities and historical imagery has been repurposed. The GDR today lives on largely through a network of disconnected objects that assume testimony of its existence.

We have seen the value of certain of these objects in walking this line between a series of shifting and unstable geographies. LPs were pressed with the intention of marking ideological spaces and borders only to be continually resignified. Texts in the form of anthems and songs were used to cultivate spatial and geographical alternatives. Musical communities marked new spaces through tours and creative exchange with environments in which they experienced exile. Still, it is impossible to measure the impact of materials, objects, and texts—whether existent or long gone—on how they marked the evolution and development of space in the GDR.

Conversations around pre- and post-unification perceptions, arguments, and imaginations of space are rarely seen through the vantage point of the exile or the “Other” in this environment. The framing of East Germany as an island, walled off from the world only to be eventually submerged into the sea of the capitalist West, has propagated a failure of understanding regarding how migrant communities participated in the construction of space. However, Christina Schwenkel (2022), for example, has convincingly explored the ways that Vietnamese migrants in the GDR established

alternative networks of material circulation and attachment, thereby decentering narratives of Ostalgie and involving historically “othered” actors in the state’s material and cultural history. As traces continue to disappear and experience active and passive forms of resignification, the products produced by these communities deserved a renewed examination in a shifting and evolving Europe. Music, as the object of methodological orientation for this study, possesses a rich capacity to inform our examination of space-making in an historical context. However, beyond the records, beyond the discs, performance schedules, and texts around artists, music is often ephemeral as are the lived, performative, and architecturally dynamic aspects of the former GDR. Following Diana Taylor’s (2003) examination of the materials and knowledges in the archive versus those of the performed repertoire, I want here to critically examine what materials that approach the fleeting and everyday experience of music among migrant and exiled communities in the GDR can—and cannot—say about the geography and environment in which they were produced. As we cannot capture those performative moments that are unhoused in the archive, we must look to those objects that express their unspeakability. Through the traces of these unspeakable threads, it is my hope to uncover new corners and structures of an island overtaken by an archival ocean.

Jane Tumas-Serna (1992) has applied performance theory and the performative role of Chilean *nueva canción* concerts as a model for considering the movement’s resistance to homogenizing tendencies in mass-media. Writing just two years after the fall of the Berlin Wall, her discussion of *nueva canción* is marked by a palpable anxiety over the mass-mediatization of music around the world. The idea that *nueva canción*

possessed some form of exteriority that allowed it to shake off control from the commercial music industry, or even draw “mass media and mass culture into uniquely specific functions such as clandestine, revolutionary political protest” (1992, 150) is simply overstated. Such an analysis hinges precisely on the kind of monolithic representation of the genre that this work specifically seeks to reject. However, Tumas-Serna does seem to suggest that we can look at the performative intersection of music, identity, and politics in *nueva canción* as extending beyond the material context in which it took place (1992, 142). The diversity of influences and the genre’s active distribution around the world as a result of the exile of many of its practitioners, suggest that we might not only consider live events from a performative context, but the more general development of the movement. In East Germany, *nueva canción* did not simply come into contact with a system as a source of resistance, but actively engaged and shaped this system as a part of larger performative practice.

This form of historical examination of the shifting material and architectural conditions of the former GDR is not without precedent. Dominic Boyer (2001), in his ethnographic research with former East German journalists, has described a dialectical procedure between narratives of erasure and “becoming.” He juxtaposes the incomplete shifting memories of his interlocutors with descriptions of a city—quite literally—changing under the feet of those that walk it. Arguments over the *meaning* of history and the political legacies of the East are found inseparable from the parallel dialogues occurring around in space and infrastructure. For Boyer “[r]emaining true to the phenomenology of transformation has seemed to preclude analytical ‘depth’” (2001,

422). The changes and contributions by Chilean exiles to this landscape and to a sense of East German cultural identity cannot precisely be revealed through more mainstream attempts to narrativize the relationship between these communities. Instead, their sonic contributions must rather be woven haphazardly with the attempt of shining light on the dark and fleeting corners of an unstable memory.

### **Dialogue and Engagement Between Memory and Space**

This chapter take this haphazardness as a point of departure for the examination of memory and history in the GDR. The threads of identity, history, and place are delicately woven in what Boyer recognizes as a form of memorial discourse against the state (2001, 438). The fragility of these threads and tensions around space and history in contemporary Germany are not unlike what Pierre Nora (1989) refers to as *lieux de mémoire*, or the subsuming of local and individual memories to state and/or national processes of history-making. Many of the musical products discussed, particularly those that reflect the activities of state identity construction, are inextricable from the limitations of this history/memory tension. Instead, I examine here those moments of musical production and exchange that are fundamentally external to discourse around state identity creation. Processes of memorialization and historicification of the GDR in contemporary Germany include many efforts to inure its legacy to its own geographic instability. Reproducing here moments and instances of music-making, inconsequential, fleeting, and ignored in history projects are precisely the points of insight and evaluation for this unstable environment.

The question then is how to dialogue with and identify forms of musical activity that participated alongside, rather than against, East German narrativizing about legacy and memory. The present analysis operates from the assumption that we might glean the greatest insight from spaces where music is not the center piece of cultural orientation. The role of musical activity in textual or descriptive activities reveals precisely how it passes through, circulates around, and shapes an environment rather than how it is framed by it.

Discussions of memory and its role in the musical and/or sonic conditions of space and space-making often center around the affective dimensions or the experience of sound. Carolyn Birdsall (2009), for instance, following R. Murray Schafer and Elias Canetti, uses the term “earwitnessing” to describe how the markers of sound during traumatic experience inscribe modes of sensory memory long after the experience of a traumatic event. She draws this framing from Ben Anderson’s (2004) analysis of memory and recorded music. Here Anderson develops the spatial-affective dimension even further, suggesting that practices around recorded music consumption are oriented around distinctive “skills” based on the environment and conditions of our engagement with sonic objects. He argues that “through remembering, ‘the past’ comes to be implicated or explicated in the ‘now’ of domestic time-space through the organization of affect (2009, 4). The affective dimensions of musical participation and experience in space also extend through inter-generational imaginaries and exchanges as in the development of Marianne Hirsch’s “postmemory,” which “strives to *reactivate* and *reembody* more distant social/national and archival/cultural memorial structures by

reinvesting them with resonant individual and familial forms of mediation and aesthetic expression” (2008, 111).

These analyses oriented around affect are crucial in examining the conditions and the legacies of musical and/or sonic activity and experience, and how these elements continue to have a bearing on the bodies and memories of those individuals and communities that experienced them. However, in a conversation on the exchange of music and geography, these analyses all notably place musical participants and activity *within* a spatial framework. While not arguing against the value of this orientation, I am less interested in how musical activity was affectively entrained by the conditions of urban experience, and rather how seemingly inconsequential and memorial fragments of music in East German space serve as historiographic counterpoints—and even referenda—to unstable narratives of East German music and space. By orienting my analysis on the margins, precisely *not* at the center of memorative discourse, I hope to reveal elements that demonstrate how music was co-constitutive with space and how it highlights those invisible and fleeting spaces at the edge of shifting geographic dynamics.

My choice to examine musical products that describe the role of music in a particular geography derives from longstanding considerations about how music informs and is informed by its relationship to the architectural conditions around it. In Adam Krims’ (2007) *Music and Urban Geography*, we find a number of diverse case studies in places like Curaçao and Amsterdam that he uses to extrapolate certain dimensions of the relationship between music and urban space. Through the work, he attempts to reveal what he terms the “urban ethos” which is “not a particular representation but rather a

distribution of possibilities, always having discernable limits as well as common practices...distill[ing] publicly disseminated notions of how cities are generally” (2007, 7). The implications of this definition are powerful, in that they demonstrate a similar form of co-production that simultaneously restricts and informs the ways that music and space produce one another. While some of the more singularizing elements of the urban ethos as they relate to genre and commercial influence are less convincing, particularly for the purposes of the present discussion in the GDR, the idea that musical activity, its memorialization, and its depictions can tell us something about how it spoke to its environment is extremely relevant.

The most unexpected among his various case studies and development of the Marxist framework of his argument, is an analysis of Paul Thomas Anderson’s 1997 film *Boogie Nights*. Without losing track of the present discussion, what Krims accomplishes with this analysis is determining how music as represented in and intertwined with other forms of media functions as a “distancing frame” (2007, 65). In the case of Krims’ study of *Boogie Nights*, disco is deployed as a distancing frame to underscore broader anxieties about urban space and sociality and the limitations of the types of practices available to urban denizens posed by the freedom of the genre. Here, I take Krims’ evaluation of the relationship between music and other forms of media as a serious intervention into how space and imaginings of space are experienced over time. The socio-spatial influence that he ascribes to media representations of musical memories and activities inform the possibility that textual representations of Chilean music-making in exile possess in considerations of space, geography, and architecture in the GDR. Beyond recordings and

concerts, Chilean artists make dozens of appearances in written and visual sources. These works, both by Chilean nationals themselves and East German observers, reveal the ways they interact with the memorialized dimensions of space rather than being affectively proscribed by it. Furthermore, these works demonstrate inconsistencies and limitations to the idea of the urban ethos and the importance of the contributions of migrant and peripheral voices and soundings in shaping it.

In a recent work by Chilean musicologist Christian Spencer (2021), he provides a broad overview of the forms of interaction between music and place in contemporary urban areas. “The city,” he writes, “is the context for music locality, the space where the nexus between sound and place occurs” (2021, 64). This sense of locality, then, that one finds in the city in general, or its smaller nooks and corners in particular, is a form of imbuing *space* with activity (in this case musical) of the experiential and participatory elements that reveal it as *place*. In this way, we see yet another dimension of how music informs our sense of space; it informs the ways that we use and move about a space as we understand ourselves as members of a collective locality. This framing provides a powerful guide for considering how musical practice contributed to and was informed by the spatial conditions in the GDR.

Spencer’s framing, however, though useful in its consideration of how musical activity conditions a community’s utilization of place and vice versa, presents a fundamentally bounded conception to site-based analysis. His analysis of the festival (2021, 69-73), for example, does not afford a musical or vocal resonance beyond the co-constructed conditions that define it. While this understanding of place relates a

fundamental dynamism of participation and engagement, this dynamism occurs in something that is stable and bounded. Therefore, in an environment such as the GDR, one subject to a particularly unstable and shifting cultural and political geography, we need to come at the relationship between space and sound from a different orientation.

We have seen the ways that festivals, recordings, and the performance of political anthems exposed a number of tensions and limitations of the musical production of space in the GDR. Instability, shifting, destruction, and palimpsestic change are thereby necessary methodological conditions in evaluating spaces of disappearance. Cultural products centering musical activity *perform* the space of their environment both in that they are a performance of the conditions of local grounding and in that they reveal the *performative* dimensions of collective and group-based musical imbuelement of space with place. What they do not show, however, is how place itself is also performing its relationship to us as it continually shifts and evolves under our feet. Texts that place music at the margins of experience, that embrace dimensions of its ephemerality rather than its fixity, offer traces of the ways that space performs its own change. This change can only be revealed as a trace as the moment it is revealed is precisely the moment it disappears. Markers of ephemerality, trace, and fragmentation then become critical points of intervention and evaluation for the ontology or disappearance that marked the life, space, and sound of the GDR.

## **Disappearance**

In *The Aesthetics of Disappearance* (1991), Paul Virilio identifies a postmodern condition of losing time, which, for him, is a product of the increasing speed of

technology and contemporary cities. This absence of time—or what he terms “picnolepsy”—is marked by a form of spatial engagement or acknowledgment forming the nodal bookends to that which remains unrecognized. Virilio tangentially addresses the way these nodes form around indeterminate senses of space and time depending on the positionality of those who experience it:

If you admit picnolepsy is a phenomenon that effects the conscious duration of everyone...anyone would now live a duration which would be his own and no one else's, by way of that you could call *the uncertain conformation of his intermediate times*, and the picnoleptic onset would be something that could make us think of human liberty, the sense that it would be a latitude given to each man to invent his own relations to time. (1991, 21-22; italics original)

It is important to comment here that Virilio appears to be extending the individuality of a picnoleptic experience to a particular form of agent—one with a defined history of nodal attachment to a space. For the purposes of our discussion here, the consideration of the picnolepsy of individuals in exile would not likely figure into his narratives of individualistic (un)making. Invisibility, as a product of increasing speed, appears here as a kind of luxury (1991, 25).

Virilio's framing, however, still offers us a valuable point of intervention into how we might read a community in exile and their translation of a historical making-invisible of space. In the case of the city, the rapidity of technological innovation and its corresponding redefining of the realms of the visual has produced a sort of anesthetization of publics in the modern cityscape. Where a sense of picnoleptic agency may have once existed, now an imposed fictitious spotlighting produces a sense of disconnection from spaces of occupation: “an un-habitual motility is successor to the

habitudes of the city...an immense darkroom for the fascination of the mobs where the light of vehicular speed...renews the glare of solar light; the city is no longer a theatre...but the cinema of city lights” (1991, 64-63).

What here remains unconsidered is how, in Virilio’s privileging of the detachment and fictions of a particular form of urban denizen, the in-betweenness of those with already destabilized connections to an imaginary urban infrastructure allows for exploration and observation of the dark spaces between this fragmented spotlighting. Although exile represents “an unhealable rift” and “a condition of terminal loss” (Said 2001, 173), this fragmenting affords sight and exploration to spaces otherwise obfuscated by the displacement of familiarity. This invisible exploration does not string on or compound upon the staging of architectural and geographic performance, but rather exists backstage, ever aware of place’s partiality. As Julia Kristeva notes, “the distance that detaches [the foreigner] from the others as it does from himself...gives him the lofty sense not so much of holding the truth but of making it and himself relative while others fall victim to the ruts of monovalency” (1991, 7).

The products of exile, therefore, do not propose an authoritative view, but rather an expansive one, one that captures a contrapuntal bringing together of spaces of loss, memory, loneliness, and observations (Said 2001, 186). In sites of exile subject to the making-invisible both of space, and of the circumstances around the condition of exile itself, it is only through traces that we can consider how these shifting counterpoints continue to mark and erase experience. I should say, though, that we can only *consider*, we can never sit in these experiences because of their fragmentary nature and the internal

rifts of those that chronicle them. They go up through the cracks and leave their traces, but these traces remain unstable, manifold, and ever-shifting. It is through this condition of invisibleness and ephemerality that we can most reasonably intervene in the contemporary invisible conditions of memory and place in the GDR.

In *The Practice of Everyday Life* (1984), Michel de Certeau develops a productive set of strategies for informing how we might “read” the configuration of a city. Indeed, reading and legibility are critical aspects of how cities reveal themselves as sites of interaction, as it is with the enunciative and inscriptive participatory relationship with a city that it comes to exist. For de Certeau, the city is essentially a “nowhere,” a placeless environment illuminated through temporary and stochastic utterances brought about through—in his case—walking as a speech-act. He states, “[t]he moving about that the city multiplies and concentrates makes the city itself an immense social experience of lacking a place—an experience that is, to be sure, broken up into countless deportations (displacements and walks), compensated for by the relationship and intersections of these exoduses that intertwine and create an urban fabric” (1984, 103). Here he underscores a broader condition in Kristeva’s (1991) formulation of “foreignness” as a symptom of an ever-fragmenting relation to our own selves. It is because this act of producing (walking) the city is precisely to be in between a sense of home and a destination; a discursive act that remains unfulfilled. To mark this discourse is specifically to recognize a shifting set of reorganizations produced by the rhetorical conditions of “synecdoche” and “asyndeton” (de Certeau 1984, 101). The former suggests how urban practitioners condenses and compartmentalize vastness into dense bites of information. The latter

fragments and elides spatial experience “whose gaps mesh with the social practices it symbolizes” (1984, 102).

Between de Certeau and Virilio, we have two necessary considerations for how cities and geography shape (and are shaped) around a series of unstable conditions. For Virilio, the technology of the city produces a sense of speed where individuals lose time. Individuals find themselves framed in spaces marked by a kind or rhythm or pulse in their own relationship to their environment. However, although this fragmented temporality reflects a condition of equally fragmented embodiment, he never indicates how these fragments of bodies and experience are made manifest in physical traces. On the other end, de Certeau provides us with considerations of a participatory impact on the physical environment. This impact, however, is ephemeral. Despite his examination of urban participants at the “ground level,” we might suggest his relational considerations as “vertical,” whereas Virilio’s are “horizontal.” This three-dimensional portrait of a shifting relationship over space and time will support the framing of a group, in many ways defined without a sense of place, and their impact on an unstable environment continually replacing and erasing its own legacy.

What is it, then, about this instability that is revealed through a “reading” of musical activity and its contributions by way of a wider diversity of cultural products? The in-betweenness of language as a product of memorialization underscores the ineffable emptiness and isolation of producing space in between these fixed nodes on the three-dimensional diagram of the GDR. The texts that I examine in the following pages demonstrate three different depictions of musical relations with shifting space. In the

first, music is woven into the landscape and orbits around Osvaldo Rodríguez's journalistic musings on the composition of the world of his exile. In the second, Juan Forch, drawing on fiction, uses fleeting traces of musical activity by the Chilean community to describe and sustain the invisible marks that this group made on the possibilities of a disappearing future. Lastly, I examine an East German film directed by the American artist Dean Reed about the life of the Chilean singer Víctor Jara. Although this film does not address the condition of exile, it underscores the impossibility of fixity in East German space and unwittingly reveals how the soundings of the Chilean community in exile dialogue with and contribute to this impossibility. These three examples are distinct and were produced in vastly different settings and time periods, but they all reveal different ways that this group left markers on an environment that continue to bear trace and embrace its ontology of disappearance as a condition of its futurity.

### **Writings of Osvaldo Rodríguez**

Osvaldo Rodríguez Musso's experience in exile was arguably the most mobile and unstable of any artist in the Chilean diaspora. During the years of the dictatorship, he bounced through Argentina, the GDR, France, former Czechoslovakia, and Italy fervently producing songs, recordings, and other writings. Although his time in East Germany was his most brief, we can glean insight about the physicality of the state through the memories and connections that the appositely dubbed "Gitano" produced through a series of literary reflections. Rodríguez, in many ways, is a kind of invisible figure during his time in the GDR. He was only invited once to perform at the Festival of Political Songs in 1982, eight years after his "informal" departure, which was never recognized or

approved by authorities of the state. This notion of invisibility, however, is one which was ascribed, or perhaps better, defined, from outside of his person. Rather, he produced prolific commentary on his environment and maintained correspondence with Chileans that remained in the GDR. These traces were thus rendered simultaneously invisible and authoritative over the course of his artistic development. These invisible traces of an invisible man communicate disappearance and change in a way that visually and physically authoritative items struggle to do.

During his brief stay in the East German port city of Rostock, he began work on his text *Cantores que reflexionan* ([1984] 2016). The book is an assemblage of fragments, musings, critiques, and interviews. Owing to the fact that so many of these pieces were started in the GDR and drawn out over his years of European “peregrinations” (Morris 2006), they reflect a momentum and dynamism that warrants consideration with regards to the instability of East German memory. His words often reflect an exteriority, loneliness, and homesickness that underscore the entirety of life in exile. The short text, “*Escrito en Sproeverder*,” is on the surface the telling of a solitary existence in the woods, but it also defines an artist’s fleeting and ephemeral connection to the materiality of a once natural world:

*Afuera el aire no termina de ser limpio. Desde mi ventana se puede ver un grupo de construcciones pequeñas entre los árboles. Elijo este momento de la tarde para detenerme en medio de mí mismo. Escribir, cambiarle de cuerdas a la guitarra, o sencillamente fumarme un cigarrillo y beber de mi botella de cognac. En la radio oigo canciones en un idioma que desconozco. Estoy a cincuenta kilómetros de Berlín, RDA, en una casa de vacaciones...*

Outside the air is not quite clean. From my window I can see a group of small constructions between the trees. I choose this moment in the

afternoon to pause and check in with myself. To write, to change my guitar strings, or to simply smoke a cigarette and drink from my bottle of cognac. On the radio I hear songs in a language that I do not understand. I am fifty kilometers from Berlin, GDR, in a vacation house... (Escrito en Sproeverder 2016).

The life described in this text is fragmentary, a sort of montage of one version of daily life in exile. It is interesting here that these disjunctures are oriented around music, but around a music that not precisely legible or authoritative: a guitar in the process of being restrung, German songs heard without recognition or understanding. In this way he leverages music to mediate the unsettling of space around him. Speaking literally from the outside (from a rural area on the outskirts of the East German capital), his fragmentary musical reflections provide a counterpoint from an unseen vantage point. He goes on to describe fleeting and precious details of the space around him:

*Sobre el suelo del bosque hay una capa de pasto larga como una cabellera y se ven los helechos secos como los dejó el verano. Esta mañana he encontrado un pequeño camino que sube por la colina y es de arena. Lo sigo con dificultad y me recuerda las bajadas hacia el fundo Tunquén, en las cercanías de Algarrobo. Sólo que para imitar el ruido del mar me detengo en la cumbre donde mejor sopla el viento, y con ambas manos improviso una concha marina que me cante al oído el ruido de las olas.*

On the forest floor is a cap of long grass like a shock of hair and the ferns are dried from the summer. This morning I found a small path that I strode up to a hill made of sand. I continued with difficulty and remembered the slopes towards the estate of Tunquén [coastal area in central Chile], in the area surrounding Algarrobo [small coastal city in Chile]. Just to imagine the sound of the sea I paused on hill where the wind blew stronger, and, with both hands, I improvised a marine shell that sang to me the sound of the waves (Escrito en Sproeverder 2016).

The naturalism of these words underscores the feelings of loneliness and absence experienced by so many exiles in new environments. However, while Gitano's reflections

communicate a sense of solitariness, they are firmly situated in a sense of place as ephemeral products like music and cigarettes crisscross around him. These memories communicate the performativity of shifting place; the rustling of grasses and crashing of waves. This world from his memory is brought into dialogue with space and in doing so, he produces a stark commentary on how aural traces move about and latch on, even in a disappearing environment. This space is released from its sense of imaginary through its dialogue with memories of the “slopes towards the estate of Tunquén” and the “area surrounding Algarrobo.” Rodríguez here produces place through his own traces with which he marks the area. He builds an invisible world in an imaginary seashell. However, his descriptions of the performance of this world hold true as a critical antagonist to erasure. These images cannot communicate the unspeakability of place and its inevitable progression towards disappearance, and it is precisely this failure, this absence of fixity and stability that allows us to engage with this lost landscape.

Disappearance and failure are continual themes in Rodríguez’s reflections on the GDR. He writes about a performance in Paris in which he performed a cueca “collected” (quotes are mine) by the famous Chilean folklorist Héctor “Negro” Pavez. The *recopilador* was in the process of receiving heart surgery, from which he subsequently died due to complications on July 14, 1975. Although Rodríguez’s short reminiscence on his relationship with Pavez primarily describes their connection in Paris, he also describes how he arrived too late to facilitate the incorporation of Pavez into the East German cultural and physical landscape:

*Llegué a tiempo desde Berlín para asistir a su entierro. Le traía una invitación de la RDA para que fuese a formar entre los chilenos un*

*conjunto de canto y danza. Era tarde. Allí están sus cenizas en Père Lachaise, esperando que las llevemos a Chile y las echemos a volar en el viento del Canal de Chacao.*

I arrived on time from Berlin to attend his burial. I brought him an invitation from the GDR for him to establish a song and dance ensemble. I was too late. There are his ashes in Père Lachaise [Cemetery in Paris], waiting for us to bring them to Chile to throw them in the Chacao Canal [waterway in Southern Chile]. (El fantasma 2016)

Similarly, he describes the failure to form a kind of Chilean-German cultural project that was intended to highlight representatives from all disciplines in the arts:

*En abril de 1974 partí a Rostock, un nuevo puerto en las etapas del exilio. Se planeaba formar allí un conglomerado chileno de artistas. Teatro, danza, música popular, música clásica y literatura. Era un ambicioso y hermoso proyecto entre alemanes y chilenos que estaba destinado al fracaso. Contabilizó dos pérdidas para la resistencia cultural: el desaparecimiento del grupo de teatro Lautaro, formado por chilenos con participación de algunos alemanes, y del conjunto musical chileno Aparcoa, uno de los pilares de la Nueva Canción.*

In April 1974 I left Rostock, a new port in the stages of exile. We were planning to form a group of Chilean artists. Theater, dance, popular music, classical music, and literature. It was an ambitious and beautiful project with Germans and Chileans that was destined for failure. It accounted for two losses of the cultural resistance: the disappearance of the theater group, Lautaro, and the musical group Aparcoa, one of the pillars of nueva canción. (Otro Puerto 1986)

In both the case of Héctor Pavez and in the case of the Lautaro theater project,<sup>1</sup> beyond the imaginings of a richness and dynamic cultural exchange with the Chilean artistic community, his essays on the GDR are fundamentally about how these imaginings might interact with architecture and material presence. He describes his love for the “old constructions, the streets and their histories. The houses that have resisted time and its

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<sup>1</sup> The Lautaro Theater was ultimately successful and a pillar of Chilean cultural production and exchange in Rostock. Founded by Alejandro Quintano and directed by the renowned choreographer Patricio Bunster.

inexorable passage refer themselves to war or earthquake. It is only being American that brings me a slightly exaggerated love of constructions” (Ibid).

This juxtaposition between a failed imaginary development and physical impact of a Chilean cultural milieu with the GDR’s complicated and conflicting tension around German architectural legacy and progress, may seem unexpected in an explication of the role of Chilean nueva canción in exile. Even Rodríguez poses this question to himself:

*Me dirán que esto tiene poco que ver con la canción chilena. Sin duda, pero ocurre que aquí hay material para la canción sobre la casa que deberé escribir un día. Es una canción que le debo, entre otras cosas, a la primera casa que tuve en el exilio.*

I note that this has little to do with Chilean song. Without a doubt. But I realize that there is material here about the house that I must write one day. It is a song that I owe, among other things, to the first house that I had in exile. (Ibid).

But even this hesitant description of gas lights, cobblestone streets, and buildings trying to protect themselves from an ever-changing set of prerogatives is inseparable from an artist’s performative relationship to place. He describes song as a kind a debt to his environment, one that marks and maintains the sense of architectural instability that he describes so vividly. Although he never fulfilled this debt to his home in the GDR, his 1976 album *Los pájaros sin mar* is replete with testimonies to various cities and spaces that marked his life. We can look at these works as well as writings completed in the GDR and featured in *Cantores que reflexionan* as bearing traces of these environments and carrying the smells, sights, and sounds of a state’s ephemerality into the future.

### *Las dos orillas del Elba*

In addition to the fleeting and journalistic reflections captured in the writing of Osvaldo Rodríguez, initially written to document some of the more informal aspects of life for Chileans in the GDR, there were several fictional or semi-autobiographical texts that reveal some of the most dynamic and unexpected ways that Chilean music flowed through and recorded East German space. Among these texts were Carlos Cerda's *Morir en Berlin* (1993), Roberto Ampuero's *Detrás del muro* (2014), and Omar Saavedra Santis' *Blonder Tango* (1983). With the exception of *Blonder Tango*, which was written in German and produced as a film by the East German DEFA film studios in 1985, all of these texts were written years after their respective authors' return to Chile from exile. They therefore carry the progressive changes of the former GDR into the evolving landscape of the country years after reunification. Music is used in these texts in various ways, sometimes as a part of a backyard gathering where Chilean exiles dance *cuecas*, other times as a private experience listening to a record of a Chilean political anthem in one's living room. In these and other instances, the music and musical participation of this community is inseparable from the authors' observations about changing space from the vantage of exile.

While any of these texts might serve as a point of orientation for tracing aspects of the evolution, erasure, and continuation of GDR space, Juan Forch's 2012 novel *Las dos orillas del Elba* (*The Two Shores of the Elba*), perhaps uses music most clearly to memorialize and challenge spatial narratives from his time in exile. Forch is best known today in Chile as one of the instrumental creative forces behind the 1988 "NO" Campaign

that mobilized a voter base to remove Pinochet from office in the historic plebiscite vote of the same year. During the years of the dictatorship, he was a creative powerhouse who developed his directorial style producing animated shorts and documentaries for DEFA studios during his exile in the GDR. Since the return to democracy in Chile he has drawn on the training he developed as a film student in Dresden to support numerous other political campaigns in Latin America.

In addition to his work in film and television, Forch has published several novels over more than twenty years. *Las dos orillas* tells the story of Coque, a young communist in exile in the GDR, and his observations and adventures (many of which are amorous) during the course of his life in Dresden. The text is a deluge of Chilean slang peppered with German, French, and Portuguese and references to works by figures as diverse as Antonio Gramsci, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, and Pablo Neruda. This kind of linguistic and referential saturation is paralleled visually in the way character dialogue is packed into the paragraphs: without line spacing, *guillemets*, or *rayas*. The effect of reading is an overwhelming density that mirrors the intensity of Coque's personal, political, and sexual experiences and development. When framed against the detailed descriptions of space and place through which the protagonist passes in Dresden and Berlin, the environment and the buildings, such as the so-called *Pentacon*, the apartment complex where Coque lives with other Chileans, are rendered shaky and in flux as they dialogue with his own relationship to the space:

The sun still has not risen. In front of us is a Soviet building with ten floors and 150-meters long with its uniform windows and its crammed and alternating balconies. The symbol of residential modernity of this Germany proud to be considered the most advanced socialist country. To

our back, the building of grey stucco with five floors and thirty- or forty-meters long with striking balconies, more human in size, and a more welcoming character, built immediately after the war. All the Chileans that live in front would like to live in the other building. And all the Germans that live in this one would like to leap forward *al neue Wohnung*. (Forch 2012, 145)

At first glance this passage seems to present the Chileans of the Pentacon as marginal and dehumanized by the East Germans. This point should not be overlooked as the book presents many scenes where Coque and the Chilean community around him feel rejected and sidelined in exile. However, this scene also positions the protagonist as an interlocutor between two structures ideologically and spatially divided. Coque is aware of the movement and machinations occurring in and around each of these environments and he seems uniquely poised to comment on and identify the relationship and interdependence between these ostensibly separate dynamics from his outsider perspective.

Even Chilean literary critics writing about the novel indirectly expressed doubt and reservations over the perceived lack of singularity—both ideological and geographic—described in the book. Writing in *El Mercurio*<sup>2</sup> on June 15, 2012, literary critic Camilo Marks notes,

Apparently, or according to what is shed in [the book], the criollo communists had a fabulous time in Dresden, zero partisan activity, nothing of control and cadres. The story ignores almost completely the Marxist-Leninist vocabulary, the class struggle, the organizational discipline, the anticapitalist movement, and everything that is usually associated with the proletarian ideology. (Marks, 2012)

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<sup>2</sup> It should be noted that *El Mercurio* is a prominently right-wing periodical in Chile.

Similarly, Patricia Espinosa writing in *Las Últimas Noticias* on July 13, 2021 seems to anticipate that readers might be disappointed with the lack of gritty details about the surveillance and control experienced by Chileans in the GDR:

Although something is left to be seen, the book does not intend, as a principal objective, to settle accounts of repression by the German state nor strategies of the Communist Party. Instead, it tries to expose the process of ideological and existential change experienced by a character not disposed to accommodate or take things calmly. (Espinosa, 2012)

The absence that these critics describe, the failure of the narrative to fulfill the expectations of singularity and stability with which many readers would likely approach it is, however, less an example of a kind of rosy ignorance on Forch's part, and instead an active communication and awareness of the spatial insights of the Chilean community. The characters in the book toil on production lines, but their status as workers does not render their distinct relationships with the state powerless. Although Coque experiences conflict with party officials and also with his friends, he is not reduced by it. There may be a desire to frame the characters and their space simplistically because it facilitates the erasure of this space and this moment with time; if we can disappear the complexity of the way space in the GDR was experienced, instead framing it within a moralistic legacy of good triumphing over evil, we can concomitantly disappear the legacy of the space itself. Forch embraces an altogether different form of disappearance however, one that places the Chilean exile community as arbiters of erasure and change due to their status in between nodes of picnolepsy. He continually disrupts and pluralizes space and place in the text through the activity of Chileans in exile. Two of the most interesting examples of

this disruption occur around the descriptions of musical activity which we might read as insights into the GDR's continued and invisible resonance today.

In one scene Coque is in a bar celebrating the birth of a Chilean neighbor's new child in the GDR. The neighbor, Cárcamo, wants to name the young boy "Lenin," but Coque suggests that "It would be like tattooing him with the red and black flag [of MIR]. Name him Camilo. He was a great revolutionary, but it won't give him away" (91). He proceeds to sing the song "Camilo Torres" by Víctor Jara for his friend while sitting at the bar. The song tells of the assassination and symbolic rebirth of the Colombian revolutionary Camilo Torres and here the baby might carry this sense of legacy and hope into the future. The friend appears to consider the request and Coque feels vindicated in what he sees as his attempt to protect the child from becoming an instrument of the party. They make their way together to visit the friend's wife in the hospital and arrive drunk and Coque and the wife make jokes about the baby having a German father—he is later described as "un perfecto huilliche" (93), a joke about how dark the baby's skin is. They stumble out of the hospital and end up on a quiet and deserted street in Dresden when the friend, Cárcamo, shouts into the air "¡Camilo Lenin Cárcamo! ¡Bienvenido al mundo! ¡Wilkommen, cabrón!" and proceeds to sing the lyrics to Jara's song once again while dancing through the empty streets.

After returning to the *Pentagon* Coque deposits Cárcamo in front of his apartment where they have a brief exchange:

*¿Y aprendiste a tocar el saxo? [pregunto cuando lo dejo en la Puerta de su departamento] Todavía ni empiezo. [responde con dificultad] ¿Y cómo le vas a tocar las canciones de cuna, guatón? [vuelvo a interrogar] Voy a tener que cantarlas nomás.*

[Coque] "Did you ever learn to play the saxophone?"  
[Carcámo] "I still haven't started"  
[Coque] "Then how will you play him lullabies, *guatón*?"  
[Carcámo] "I guess I'll just have to sing them." (94)

Coque then retires to his apartment, drunk and staring into the night sky over the GDR:

This is my exile, Coque. And this is my life. I never wanted to leave Chile.  
But I am here, watching the days and trains pass. (94)

This scene is a powerful testimony to the ways that the Chilean community in exile shaped, contributed to, and memorialized their unique relationships to the shifting and fleeting space of the GDR. Principally, we see Coque's apprehension about the singularity of an imagined Chilean revolutionary ideal. His reservation over imprinting Carcámo's child with the "tattoo" of MIR is not only a reflection of his own criticism of the party, but also a challenge to East German geographic singularity. Jara's lyrics here are used precisely to express all of the contradictions and diversity of Chilean identity in exile instead of making it legible. It is unclear what the future holds for any of these characters, including young Camilo, but name and the song become an expression of his multiplicity and challenge to space. For the moment, the child is a kind of narrator, a living representation of the in betweenness of an exilic experience. As long as Carcámo sings him lullabies and the lyrics of Jara's song that documents his namesake, the child will continually pass these fragments of experience across both sides of the divide. This divide is something that was experienced by all Chilean exiles, but this child and his song become here one way to translate and acknowledge its vastness.

This sonic fragment furthermore leaves a trace of itself behind in the bar (which may no longer exist) and the streets outside the hospital (which invariably look different

and serve a different function). Song here circulates around an act of creation and an act of embracing the plurality and instability of an unparalleled experience. Camilo Lenin is a fictional baby, surely based on a real one, his fiction and the ephemeral music that passed around his creation and contribution to East German space are inscribed on the real changes that continue to take place in contemporary German cities. Coque, as the historian of this tension between real and fictional change, leaves us with these musical traces to show how these acts of inscription are simultaneously constant along with the days and the trains that pass him.

In an entirely different act of geographic and spatial intervention through musical activity, Forch provides a scene shortly after the one just described of Coque's trip to the iconic rally to welcome Luis Corvalán after his release from Chilean prison in 1976. Corvalán was the general secretary of the Chilean Communist Party (PC) and one of the most iconic figures in Chilean politics on the world stage. He was imprisoned by the military dictatorship shortly after the coup at the Isla Dawson concentration camp in the south of Chile. In 1976, he was granted asylum in the Soviet Union as part of a prisoner exchange with the Soviet dissident writer Vladimir Bukovsky. As a part of the asylum process and his installation in the Soviet Union, Corvalán undertook a kind of "freedom tour" in the GDR where he met with party leaders, attended performances and rallies, and gave speeches. This tour was documented in the 1977 film *Wir werden siegen durch die Solidarität* (*We Will Overcome Through Solidarity*), which was directed by Joachim Hadaschik and released by DEFA studios.

However, whereas the film appears to instrumentalize Corvalán's exile, singling him out in juxtaposition and contrast to the mass of East Germans and migrants from other countries that came to celebrate his arrival, Forch's depiction of the 1976 welcome rally uses music as a tool to place Chileans both within and on the margins of this event in order to construct a different procedure for narration. The scene begins on the S-Bahn, part of the public transportation system that passes around the city of Berlin. Coque travels to Berlin from Dresden with Jesús, who is his older adoptive father figure in the book. Jesús is a member of the Communist Party, but is also very elegant, aristocratic, and dismissive of those he sees as beneath him. As Coque's formative interlocutor and guide through his experience in the GDR, the old Chilean communist is a frequent source of contradiction and messiness for both the protagonist and the reader. When Coque and Jesús board the train, they find themselves "in a repulsive act":

*...todo el coche se pone a cantar canciones del Quilapayún, del Inti o de Víctor Jara. ¡Engels me libre! ¡Soy peruano! ¡Soy rumano! ¡Soy apátriada! Pero por favor, no me hagan sentir parte de este rebaño.*

...the whole train began to sing the songs of Quilapayún, of Inti or of Víctor Jara. Engels save me! I am Peruvian! I am Romanian! I am without any country! But please don't make me be a part of this herd. (127)

The crowd here singing the songs of Chilean nueva canción is comprised of East Germans, but also Chileans. Coque is so profoundly antagonized by hearing the songs of these artists function—largely as they were intended—to animate a base and mobilize support for Chilean solidarity, that he begins one of his many tirades over the course of the text criticizing everyone around him. The songs in this case push him out of the center of his own narrative, instead placing him on the periphery where he observes and

derides what he deems as a false sense of unity and belief that Corvalán's release measures out to some form of success:

*Loas, van, loas vienen. [pienso] Pero en Chile, en este momento hay alguien que está muriendo o está siendo torturado para morir en pocas horas o para denunciar a otro que tendrá que morir... [pienso] Y nosotros celebrando a alguien que nos dijo que había que luchar hasta el fin, sin titubeos... Pero nunca tomó una pistola ni nos organizó como debió hacerlo, nunca contó con un contingente armado frente al cual dirigir la defensa de nuestra mayor conquista: el gobierno de la UP...*

Praises go, praises come. [I think] But in Chile, in this moment there is someone that is dying or is being tortured... [I think] And we are celebrating someone that told us that we would have to fight to the end without hesitation... But he [Corvalán] never took a pistol nor organized us as he should have, never expected an armed contingent against which we would need to direct the defense of our greatest achievement: the government of the UP... (128)

Coque's criticism of Corvalán extends beyond this brief excerpt, but his words here underscore one possible way that the circulation of this music in exile and its retellings and reimaginings over time have a continued effect of disrupting the sense of space that is projected in films like Hadaschik's *Wir werden siegen durch die Solidarität*. Coque and Jesús in this scene are literally held at bay from entering the crowd and seeing Corvalán's speech and the other festivities. Instead, the scene is disconnected, congested, and only available to the protagonist—and by consequence, to us—through our ears. The discomfort of the passage and registering his anger with Corvalán and the broader failure of the UP in Chile, is a significant counterpoint to Hadaschik's visualist orientation to the rally where the former general secretary is presented to East German audiences without conflict or contradiction.

This scene ends with “some group of ponchos, guitars, quenpas, and bombos” performing “El pueblo unido” and “No nos moverán.” However, Coque argues the feebleness of these messages: “Since we were defeated, I gather that we were not united” and “Since we are in the GDR, I gather that no one is getting us out” (129). Musical memories buttress Coque’s (Forch’s) memory of the rally as an unstable incident, one where sight and sound offered two different readings of the way that this event projected the values of the East German state about place, identity, and politics. This aural experience from the margins, however, presents an intervention and commentary on the tension between state and personal memory. Beyond Forch’s effort here to demonstrate a kind of failure of the visual to articulate the plurality of Chilean identity, he also imbues the aural and ephemeral with a form of historical authority. These fleeting and quasi-fictional memories of Chileans sounding in exile are imprinted within an ontology of disappearance. They offer a counterpoint to procedures of spatial making and unmaking and communicate their continued resonance today.

We have examined two small, but significant, examples of how musical representations through text offer a type of opening into spaces and geographies of disappearance in the former GDR. I would like to lastly examine one visual text which shows the limitations when trying to render disappearance through film. Although it recognizes the power of Chilean *nueva canción* as an intervention and commentary on East German life and politics, it cannot go beyond a static narrative and fails to demonstrate the dynamism and invisible mark of Chilean music on East German space

and architecture. However, the music around the film manages to escape this fixity and extends into the space of disappearance and impossibility.

### **Dean Reed Playing Víctor Jara in Bulgaria**

Four years after establishing permanent residency and developing a successful career as an actor in the GDR, the American singer Dean Reed took his first behind-the-camera role as director and screenwriter with the East German DEFA studios. The product of this effort was the 1977 film *El cantor (The Singer)*, a bizarre and somewhat controversial film where Reed (who was more colloquially known as “The Red Elvis”), wrote, directed, and starred in the only “biopic” ever produced about life of the Chilean singer Víctor Jara. Upon viewing the film, it is easy to dismiss Reed’s efforts—the film suffers from some wider directorial and structural issues and Reed’s blue eyes and fair features are a hardly convincing representation of the Chilean icon. The film does however take great pains to recreate and pay homage to Jara’s life and the world he inhabited in the weeks leading up to the September 11 coup and his assassination at the hands of Pinochet’s military forces in detention. Emilio Rojo describes in the German periodical *Märkische Volksstimme* on July 9, 1977, that Reed purportedly composed the script from interviews that he conducted with Jara’s widow Joan Turner, although in a 2008 article in the Chilean magazine *The Clinic* entitled “El gringo que quiso ser Víctor Jara” (“The Gringo that Wanted to Be Víctor Jara”), Catalina May claims Turner denied Reed the right to produce the film. *El cantor* also featured performances from a number of Chilean celebrities including former Chilean president Allende’s Minister of Cultural Affairs Clodomiro Almeyda and Isabel and Ángel Parra. The same article mentions

however, Ángel Parra's great displeasure with the film at the 1978 screening: "I remember as the movie was unfolding, I was shrinking in my seat. I left before it finished so that I didn't have to show my face. I was ashamed by it."

Despite Reed's clearly misguided and maladroit efforts to lend an air of authenticity to the film, it is generally regarded as a well-intentioned homage and a sincere effort by a man who considered Víctor Jara a true friend and considered himself as one of his biggest fans. Rather than taking on these issues here however, we might instead try to evaluate certain elements of the content and aesthetics of the film and how they contribute to the present discussion on the disappearing narratives of space and music within the shifting environment of the GDR. The film's saturation with international bricolage—a U.S. rock musician performing the life of a Chilean folk singer on a film set in Bulgaria for an East German film company—reveals precisely those elements that remain conspicuously absent from the film: Victor and his circulation and role in East German space. By examining the way that the film speaks the unspeakability of this exchange we can see how it shows us a kind of musical shaping from the margins and the traces of its disappearance.

Dean Reed was born in Colorado in 1938 (the same year as Víctor Jara) and had moderate success in California as an actor and recording artist. However, his work gained more traction in Chile than it ever did in the U.S. and by the end of the 1950s his recordings were some of most popular international hits in Chile's burgeoning rock scene (Mularski 2014). Reed began touring in Chile in 1961 and settled there in 1962. By the end of the decade, he had cultivated an artistic and political persona increasingly aligned

with a number of leftist movements around the world. Jedrek Mularski (2014) describes Reed as situated within a number of complexities and contradictions that have come to characterize the Cold War era both in Latin American and around the globe. As an artist affiliated with American popular music, his political expression and presence on stages alongside artists in the nueva canción movement was seen by many on the left as a publicity stunt. On the right, his initial brand of aseptic bubblegum pop was encouraged, but as he grew increasingly political, he was rejected and even banned in countries like Argentina and Uruguay (ibid.). Quilapayún founder and member Eduardo Carrasco has stated after his own and Jara's initial suspicions of Reed in the Unidad Popular campaign, that in fact "Dean was sincere...in reality he was very naïve. He had a view about public affairs that was more based in ethics than reflexive and political" (cited in Mularski 2014).

We might consider Reed's politics as reactionary and ideological, less based around a complex knowledge of political and social conditions and more around a clear moral binarism between right and wrong. The setting, production, and even his performance in *El cantor* are all framed within these clear and unshakable dynamics through which the artist saw the world. He attempted to construct a fundamentally uncomplicated world, one where the intersection of music and politics results in a stable and unflinching imaginary of Chilean space. The replicas of murals by the Brigada Ramona Parra, the communist mural collective that was instrumental in rallying resistance to the Pinochet regime, or plaques indicating the State Technical University of Chile, rather than feeling like powerful homages or reconstructions of Chilean memory,

instead seem to freeze their architecture and space with archeological anxiety.

Unfortunately, these singularizing approaches to space also extend to the characters, making the film feel more like a reductive ethnographic study than a complex dramatization. Although Reed knew Chile quite well and was acquainted with much of its geography, the ethical singularity with which he approached the relationship between song, space, and identity results in a narrative that feels much more based in fiction than possibility.

*El cantor* was filmed primarily in Bulgaria and featured Bulgarian actors in most of the principal roles with the exception of Reed, a few East Germans and, the Chilean “guest stars.” Claudia Sandberg (2021) has described the role of Chilean geography in the imaginaries of a number of East German filmmakers. In her analysis of three DEFA films adapted from Chilean texts, she describes how the introduction of Chilean themes became entangled in a number of political and artistic efforts to merge Socialist Cinema with the “Third Cinema” being developed by artists in the Global South in the middle of the twentieth century (Sandberg 2021, 22–23). One consequence of this was the “imagining” of Chilean space as a political strategy in DEFA cinema. We have already seen the manifold ways that Chilean cultural products served as powerful indices for various forms of political engagement and practice across East German society. In the case of Bulgaria as a backdrop for Chilean-German film, both Chilean and East German filmmakers identified real and imagined aspects of the people, landscapes, and cities that they felt would stimulate engagement with films (Sandberg 2021, 24).

Reed drew on this imagined performance of Chile as a place with a community of Bulgarian “surrogate” actors to reproduce this space for an East German audience. This practice lends to the sense of discomfort and the rigidity of space that makes the film feel so *false*. As an interesting counterpoint to spatial approaches in the film, in a 1977 interview in the East German journal *Film und Fernsehen*, Reed states that although deeply inspired by the life, attitude, and work of Víctor Jara, he did not necessarily attempt to put forth an actual version of the artist. Reed is never identified as Jara in the film and instead only referred to as “*El cantor*”:

A lot of it took place as the film tells it. I wanted to show Victor’s life and political struggle during the last three weeks of his life in the film. But the film is called “El Cantor”... and not “Víctor Jara.” Victor should be understood as a symbol. He stands for all of the revolutionary artists in the world (cited in Butter 1977, 9).

In this way, we see how despite the sense of moral rigidity that permeates the setting and characterization in Reed’s depiction of Chile, the life and identity of Jara himself is somewhat opaque and elusive in this filmic representation.

We see Reed’s *Cantor* carrying sacks of food, playing with children, having discussions with his wife and friends all within the boundaries of this imagined space. When we actually hear and see him perform Victor’s songs however, the fluidity of the Chilean artist’s legacy resists the rigidity of these constructed spatial imaginaries. Victor’s performances demonstrate how his music cannot be held within a static and unshifting environment. Although Reed here uses his music to construct a world where he can enter into and connect with the life and legacy of Víctor Jara, the deployment of

the Chilean singer's songs continually reveals the instability and changes that surround the production and understanding of the film.

There are three scenes where Reed performs one of Jara's classic songs. The first begins with Isabel and Ángel Parra in their guest role performing "*Por todo Chile*" ("For All of Chile") at an imagined rally for the Unidad Popular. The hall is filled with dozens of Bulgarian actors representing students and allies of the party. Reed is backstage during the performance when festival organizers ask him if he would give a short speech beforehand. After some back-and-forth *el cantor* assents: "Well, let me at least bring the guitar with me. I never know what to do with my hands when I talk." This was a purportedly true story from Jara's life where when asked to give a speech in a similar setting he said: "I'm a singer, not a speaker. And what should I do with my hands when I speak?" (Reed cited in *ibid.*). When *el cantor* walks on stage, instead of giving a speech he begins to sing Jara's song "Ni chicha ni limoná" ("Neither Chicha nor Lemonade") a song that accused the Allende administration and many Chilean citizens of complacency under the government (Read and Wyndham 2016, 26). The song calls out the fiction of spatial and political fixity. However, *El cantor's* performance of Jara fails to realize the nature of the song. This critical plurality of Jara's song, however, seems to fly under the radar of the film when we see a video camera filming the stage from the vantage point of *el cantor*. Reed's performance of "Ni chicha ni limoná" must therefore pass through the video camera that documents and mediatizes the event before *El cantor*, as a film, can have it pass into a dimension devoid of any spatial and ethical ambiguity. In other words, this song could not enter the space as a singularity without some form of mediation

between the singer and audience. Reed's performance here attempts to go forth directly into a fixed space. Jara's song, by contrast, recognizes the instability of the world in which it was deployed and moves around at the margins of this change.



Figure 5.2: Dean Reed performing the title role in *El Cantor* (1978, DEFA, dir. Dean Reed)

The other two songs in the film operate similarly to one another in that they fragment and make uncertain the performance space around *el cantor*. The first song “Aquí me quedo” (“Here I Stay”) appears after an outdoor dining scene with a group of *compañeros* in a rural area. Although the scene begins with a sweeping pan of the Bulgarian countryside (an attempt to evoke a Chilean landscape) as soon as Reed begins singing the camera zooms in and removes all traces of the landscape from view. Brief cuts show the faces of audience members, but the camera never pulls back to allow the space to breathe. One possible reason is that the fiction of space in the film, as tethered to a kind of moralistic ascription to architecture and geography, becomes deeply unsettled when the fiction of Reed's *El cantor* faces off with it. Later on in the film, the night

before the military coup, the singer sits down to record Jara's song "Cuando voy al trabajo" ("When I Go to Work") in the living room after his wife (named *Janet* in the film) falls asleep. While performing the song into the recorder facing the wall, Janet (played by the German actor Friederike Aust) stirs from bed and stands behind him listening to his song, all the while without his knowledge. As the viewers of the film become imbricated in this omniscient gaze, both aware that *el cantor* does not know Janet is there and recognizing her own distance from the singer in this moment, we become brought into the impossibility of receiving Jara's music through Reed. Instead, we can only approach the scene in secret, as Janet does, as Reed's performance literally moves away from us towards the wall, but Jara's song encircles us marking the instability of the moment.

Watching this film and seeing an imagined Chile filtered through the lens of the GDR (and with all of the concomitant plurality) belies the failure of moral/ethical binarism and rigidity of GDR space. Despite Reed's attempt to produce the geography and architecture of this imagined Chile as a monolithic depiction of ethical values, one of his primary tools in accomplishing this (Jara's music) never meets the space in quite the way he expected. Instead, Jara's songs appear to abandon Reed in the environments that he constructs, allowing him to perform the fiction of spatial certainty while simultaneously reshaping and destabilizing the moment on their own terms. For East Germans approaching the film against their own experience of spatial and geographic uncertainty in the GDR, Jara's music afforded a point of orientation as the world around them literally shifted under their feet. Whereas Reed used the story of Jara to develop a

kind of moral framework for his own understanding of space, the performance of these fictions particularly allows for an emancipation of Jara's songs in the GDR, ever-circulating and changing in response to the instability of the environment.

## **Conclusion**

Although the GDR no longer exists in the form of a nation state, attempts to manage the legacies of its physicality in fact reveal certain possibilities about the ways it continues to resonate in contemporary East German space. If de Certeau's "verticality" and Virilio's "horizontalness" comprise a fragmented three-dimensional relationship to space, the various lacunae connected with the Berlin Wall and broader divisions between East and West were certainly not revealed as a product of reunification. Indeed, much of the discourse around topics such as Ostalgie seems to be efforts to fill these gaps with security and fixity. The idea of imbuing space with a coherent spatial narrative seems more an attempt to reject the possibility that disappearance is a kind of condition that orients most of our relation to space more generally. Rather than embracing this condition, space, and the production of space in these instances, must be mediated in such a way that dampens how it continually performs itself to us as well as how we perform ourselves to it.

I have tried here to embrace—to the best of my ability—the condition and ontology of disappearance as a marker of life in the GDR through the analysis of fragments, fleeting, and ephemeral soundings of a community that participated in it in exile. This is not the only way to look back, and forward as geography and space perform their selves through disappearance, but the soundings of this group are ubiquitous and

manifold in a variety of different textual resources. These examples are not authoritative, and certainly not the only options. Notably absent from these texts are the voices and soundings of female Chileans' relationship with and historical narrativizing of space and geography. However, the selected texts all function within and against space using vastly different strategies to negotiate disappearance. In this way they form a rather comprehensive web of analysis, fragmented albeit linked to one another in a manner that parallels the fragmented environments from which they sound. It is my hope that this model promotes further investigation into other exilic performances and constructions of space, not only in the GDR, but wherever there are communities in exile around the world.

## Chapter 6: Conclusion

The core question underlying this project might be something like: How do people build things with delicate materials? Or, perhaps going one step further: What do these constructions look, feel, and sound like when they appear in equally delicate environments? “Delicacy,” here, while perhaps inciting some to bristle vis-à-vis tropes of “*el hombre nuevo*” or the musical revolutionary, is not an assault on or undermining of the revolutionary and/or militant potency of this particular musical community. Instead, it is a suggestion that we acknowledge the circulation and meaning of this music in plural and dynamic terms. Sonic geographies are laid down atop other forms and experiences of space through delicate intersections. Precarity in this project considers and describes this delicacy and the processes of exchange around it. Although addressing a very specific condition quite distinct from the experience of Chileans in the GDR, AbdouMalik Simone provides a powerful description of how these delicate exchanges might mobilize as a constructive force at a kind of fragile limit beyond one’s direct experience of it:

The lives of residents must ramify, but in ways not easily traced back to them but which nevertheless open corridors for these same residents to keep moving. Here, experiments to make something happen spiral out and in, bear down and ramify outwards, not in clear direct channels of affecting, but in wavy, circuitous lines. This does not simply offer an approximate description of the way resident maneuvers ramify, but also point to the incessant search for position from which to observe the swarm of these maneuvers across the landscape of apparent drudgery and danger. It is seeking position where a person becomes more than one and less than two. (2018, 16–17)

I want to be careful here to avoid eliding Simon’s particular subject and version of precarity with the way I am considering it here, but his acknowledgement of these ramifying lines moving within and beyond the limits of precarity are descriptively in line

with how I am here thinking about space and the articulation of sonic geography. I hope to have provided several imperfect ways of thinking about this dynamism and how conditions of delicacy, fragility, or precarity might actually have resulted in powerful exchanges between sound and space driven by a community in exile.

I was initially apprehensive to explore “precarity” as a possible framework for the way that the cultural products of Chilean exiles circulated in East German space. I spent a lot of time thinking about this word, consulting different thesauruses to try and find something less fragile, less vulnerable that might still communicate a dynamic of flexibility and multiple meaning to a space, a community, and a music so often conceived as singularities. It felt uncomfortable to articulate the activities of a group that was so clearly defined by strength, adaptability, and creativity as something contingent. I also did not want to under-acknowledge the unique condition of exile: the in-betweenness and unsettledness, the uncertainty, loss, and changes in identity. I kept returning to “precarity” as a way of reflecting on the duality between this sense of strength on the one hand, and fragility on the other, as well as the space between them.

Furthermore, I did not want to simply “pluck” precarity as an apposite descriptor from the conceptual fabric of fragile terms around the even more fragile conditions that mark the lives of most of the world’s inhabitants. The more I thought about how the term marked Chileans drawing on strategies of song and sound to cultivate alternative dynamics of spatial participation, the more I determined that it frames most forms of interaction (sonic or otherwise) between individuals, groups, governments, and institutions. I hope, however, that thinking through this term in this way with this

community, and in this particular context, does not divest or disenfranchise its ability to target specific accounts of precarity and the severity and acuteness with which they are experienced. Sweeping accounts of precarity suggesting its ubiquity admittedly run the risk of mitigating its ability to call out forms of injustice or articulate specific relationships. By highlighting its descriptive or metaphorical utility, I recognize that it runs a similar risk, but in my use here I suggest only one dimension of the way it proliferates through cultural and political life. My more broadly conceived understanding of the term as developed through one particular historical and musical context, is not a critique of the more acute or dangerous experiences of precarity. Instead, I try to show that these different, albeit certainly interrelated evaluations of the term can exist alongside one another and be placed into a productive dynamic of exchange.

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Precarity offers a valuable framework for the consideration of vulnerable labor conditions among vulnerable groups (Foti 2005; Tsianos and Papadopoulos 2006; Waite 2009), capitalist urban infrastructures and transformations of housing stability (Ferrerri, Dawson, and Vasudevan 2016; Harris 2015), and broader tensions and fragility within inter- and intra-class dynamics (Standing 2011). Precarity is a descriptive tool (Waite 2009), but it has been convincingly examined as an ontological condition that has occupied the interest of philosophers, social scientists, and geographers now for several decades (Bourdieu 1963; 1998; Butler 2005; Ettlinger 2007). In a 2018 special issue of the journal *Cultural Geographies* Ella Harris and Mel Nowicki articulate how geographic considerations of precarity demonstrate “how processes of placemaking and unmaking

are also processes of producing, reproducing and resisting precarity and elucidate how affective experiences of precarity, or of related imaginaries such as flexibility, mediate experiences of place for different subjects” (2018, 390). Their arguments and those of the other contributors to the special issue echo my own in suggesting that it might include contradictory experiences of fragility and strength as well as an ever-shifting dynamic between individuals and the space around them.

My work throughout this project has approached delicate processes of exchange somewhat differently from scholars thinking about fragile infrastructures, vulnerable communities, and their interactions with hegemonic and oppressive economic and ideological forms of political organization (Chari and Verdery 2009). I have attempted to describe a system of techniques that are deployed in what I believe to be most forms of interaction between individuals and space. I do not contest the importance of cultural, political, and geographical studies examining the complex and vulnerable realities for so many humans, but I also hope that this work offers another way of considering how space is produced through multidirectional and unexpected exchanges. While it certainly “mediate[s] experiences of place for different subjects” as suggested above by Harris and Nowicki (2018, 390), I would argue that these same subjects also shape and mediate the experience and conditions of precarity, not only for those in their immediate spheres, but also for those larger institutions and the borders and boundaries that continually fail to articulate these subjects within a legible framework of completeness or singularity. These dynamics may occur along lines of antagonism or resistance (Foti 2005), but they may be products of much more mundane experiences of participation in space. These dynamics

may also result in “alternative” geographies and spatial formations, but they frequently rely on other porous borders around things like homes, neighborhoods, and states. Instead, here, I have tried to describe several dynamic processes, both intentionally and unintentionally deployed, that interact with the myriad other experiences and identities through tracing, threading, and knotting (Ingold 2015) in continually shifting delicate and imperfect configurations.

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Sonic geography is a strategy that I have used here to give consideration to unstable formations within and around one community comprising many distinct values and experiences. Chilean music making in exile—and certainly in the GDR—cannot be entirely described through a lens of spatial antagonism or resistance. Many of the accounts of sonic geographies here were largely unintended for both Chileans and East Germans. It is not to say that this artistic community operated apolitically. Indeed, their music was quite clearly articulated within a logic of antagonism and resistance to the violence and authoritarianism of the Pinochet dictatorship. However, their sonic products also reverberated in unexpected ways that reflected artists’ unique histories and identities and continue to bear sonic traces across buildings and landscapes in unexpected places around the world today.

Instead of being determined by a relationship of antagonism and resistance to space, sonic geographies are laid down, often with fragility, and often with awkwardness, upon existent geographies as a result of their precarious composition. For those that participate in them, they offer avenues across borders and reimaginings of spatial

organization. They also can participate with and map onto other geographies such as those that are maintained through hegemonic and oppressive organizations and other institutions that try to realize space through forced inscription. In this way, sonic geographies do not provide so much of a “referendum” on space, but instead offer unexpected ways of viewing and participating in it.

The generative and constituting properties of sonic geographies therefore emerge as a result of precarious interaction. Rather than framing the group as strictly defined by their resistance or militancy, describing the precarity of the Chilean artistic community in the GDR and also of the world in which they sonically participated articulates, I believe, a more active role in the shaping of space. This is not meant to suggest that the experience of exile, of being ripped from one’s homeland and inserted into a political environment defined by strategies of authoritarianism and surveillance was not a painful and unimaginable challenge for many of those that experienced it. I have demonstrated throughout this project that, while many of these artists were celebrated in the GDR, this was frequently underscored by experiences of spatial tension and anxiety. However, I have also demonstrated that this community was not wholly marginalized or reduced by this precarity, but instead drew on it and its interactions with the manifold precarities of the GDR to establish new ways of thinking about and experiencing space. In this way, precarity maintains its utility as a descriptor, but it is also a technique, and sonic geographies are one way of thinking about and experiencing the ways this technique becomes realized.

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With this work, I also hope to work towards dismantling the notion, particularly from the perspective of the United States, that East Germany and the way it was experienced should be taken as a singularity. For many Americans, the legacies of the Cold War mark any invocation of Socialism or Communism within a fixed and impermeable geographic conception of “the East” that suffered under authoritarian rule. However, it must be recognized that there were many different communities and relationships to the GDR: the older generation that might have either directly supported or comfortably existed under the era of National Socialism; the “old guard” communists of whom many returned to positions in government after themselves experiencing imprisonment and exile; and the young generation that supported the *idea* of GDR, but desired greater opportunities for political participation. Individuals from these and other groups existed in a continued tension with the GDR, constantly struggling over ways to reshape and redefine space and often drawing on music to do so.

Into this dynamic arrived a group with similarly multiple meanings, identities, and aspirations for their futures. Fleeing one environment and arriving in a new one, the awkwardness and fragility of this transition afforded the accrual and dismantling of many forms of geographic and spatial composition along the way. Among those who harbored racist and nationalist perspectives carrying over from the Nazi Era, this group represented an encroachment, and therefore the voicing of *nueva canción* in exile became a way to create an authentically Chilean space within an unforgiving environment. For the communist old guard, the songs of this group signaled successes of foreign policy and powerful voices in the fight against fascism. The group of exiled Chileans in the GDR

used this flexibility to exploit borders and overlay new sonic geographies atop existing frameworks of sonic impermeability. And for many others, they represented levels of engagement and possibility for which many hoped, thereby allowing East German citizens to reach out and connect through new sonic possibilities. These various spatial-sonic frameworks existed in cooperation and also in conflict with one another overlapping and subject to constant reshaping due to their precarious foundations.

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It might be more comfortable to evaluate the GDR through a precarious lens because we know how its story ends: the erection of the Berlin Wall in 1961; the 1965 Eleventh Plenum of the Central Committee of the SED, which led to an increased climate of censorship and restriction; the forced expatriation of the dissident singer Wolf Biermann to West Germany in 1976 along with dozens of other outspoken artists in the following years. These measures were taken to demarcate and proscribe a form of ideological and geographic stability within the GDR's borders. However, and with the assistance of time and retrospection, we can assess the manifold fissures and lacunae that these processes produced in the social, political, and geographic infrastructure. We can evaluate how efforts to suture a state and the minds of the people within it within an ontology of walls (Major 2010) would ultimately lead to demands among East German citizens for more open policies like *perestroika* and *glasnost* that were established in the Soviet Union in 1985. We can see how the idea of a monolithic citizenry bonded by a common political ideal would spur the emergence of subcultures and networks of subversive cultural products. The energy around making things feel less delicate only

seems to reveal just how precarious notions of fixity and control are stitched together. Conversely, the interaction of different precarities and relationships seems to reveal something very dynamic and complex, an ever-transforming constellation of—in this case—space and sound.

Chileans were not the only group that served to undo the threads of the GDR's awkward international tapestry and retrace their own pattern on top of it through the unique application of their cultural products. Indeed, there were guest workers, migrants, exiles, and students from dozens of countries around the world that participated in and reshaped space in ways consistent with those that I have shown throughout this project. However, the Chilean community in exile in the GDR, with a population of less than 3,000, cultivated an impressively diverse and impactful sonic presence resounding not only in the East, but also tracing sonic geographies around the world from this uniquely precarious environment. In my analysis here, I have presented four broad “case studies” examining different ways of thinking about the role of these sonic geographies and the ways that they were overlain upon other real and imagined spaces within and beyond the GDR.

In the second chapter, I provided a general history and survey of the presence of Chileans at the Festival of Political Songs in East Berlin. This festival took place from 1970–1990, precisely covering the years of Salvador Allende's democratic election as president, the overthrow of the Allende administration by the Chilean military, and the seventeen-year military dictatorship under Augusto Pinochet. I argued that because the festival lines up with a number of the most significant political changes in Chile in the

twentieth century, that we might evaluate East German ideas about Chilean national space within the framework of the “Three Worlds” and the Cold War in accordance with changes in Chilean artistic representation at the festival. We see numerous attempts to singularize and characterize this artistic community by festival organizers and party officials. However, the group continually resists ideological or aesthetic singularization thereby leading arts administrators and record producers to exploit racial and gendered components of Chilean artistic identity.

This produced a complex dynamic of precarious interactions and the ways these exchanges resulted in spaces and forms of spatial engagement unexpected to both East German officials and to the Chilean community. On the one hand the GDR state attempted to construct Chile in accordance with their foreign policy goals in Latin America. During the Allende administration, officials sought to maintain a paternalistic role in relation to this community despite the attractiveness of the Chilean system to East German youths. After the coup and over the course of the dictatorship, festival organizers functioning as government representatives highlighted distinctive songs and sonic elements in ways that indexed certain racial or gendered dynamics within official discourse. For Chileans utilizing the festival stage to promote solidarity against the dictatorship, their music was heard differently by artists and other concert participants and ended up tracing across the globe offering a system of alternative sonic possibilities.

I explored these real and imagined possibilities about sound and space in the third chapter. Here I developed several ways of thinking about the role of voice as well as a kind of co-constitutive element of spatial sounding in exile. Instead of borders and state

organization being an antagonist to sounding in/of exile, it becomes a core component that frames its capacity for engagement and reception. Chilean artists in exile called out from within and towards a deliberate understanding of national identity through the use of political anthems. Following Shana Redmond's (2013) development and consideration of anthems among the African descended, I show how these anthems became multiple through processes of antiphonal engagement. Rather than revealing a deficiency, however, of these anthems' ability to resound within and inscribe upon the space of their reception in exile, it is the precarity of their singularity that allowed them to be engaged in this way.

Thinking about space and borders as a counterpoint (as opposed to an antagonist) helped me to organize my ethnographic work with the Chilean performers in East Germany in chapter four. These artists all brought a unique set of skills and artistic orientations to their social roles as political artists in exile. Similarly, their distinctive ideas about aesthetics, politics, and folklore interacted in different ways depending on the cities or regions in which these artists lived. Even in a country as small as the GDR, we can see that there were widely different experiences and soundings from within this one migrant community. Although all of the Chilean artists in exile understood themselves to be committed and integral members of the movement for Chilean solidarity, considerations of their continued artistic growth and development in exile has remained generally under-recognized. This work demonstrates yet another point of precarious intersection between artists deploying unique forms of capital and a shifting environment.

Shifts, traces, and remains form the core of the final chapter of this project. I try here to think about the connection between the memories that some of my research collaborators have expressed about the former GDR and the way that they (and I) might experience it today. How does one fill the space between the continual making invisible of the past and the precarious foundation of the present from which we memorialize? If cities are palimpsests—or better yet, if they are continually (un)made to envelop themselves and violently break forth with a new face—then how can we really engage with a past spatial formation and those that sonically participated in it? To imperfectly answer this impossible question, I turned to a small collection of textual objects by or about Chileans in the GDR. These objects were not strictly produced by musicians, but they each deal with and remember Chilean musical activity in important ways. I argue here that these texts and the traces and fragments of musical life they articulate, offer a way of interrogating the space, geography, and architecture of a state defined by a condition of precarity. It is the plurality of this community and of the fragmentary and shifting nature of the way their sonic products interacted with the world around them, that allows us to—if only briefly—think about and participate in an environment’s (un)making or invisibility.

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Recently, I went for a walk with a prominent East German political scientist along Karl-Marx-Allee in the Mitte neighborhood in Berlin. He thought it would be interesting to point out the Kino International where he remembered seeing Inti-Illimani perform in 1978 and several other recollected sites in his musical memories of the GDR. This wide

avenue was the site for the May Day parades and celebrations honoring workers and the Chilean ensemble was there that year to participate in the festivities. On a cold, Wednesday morning in January, my colleague was able to briefly fill the street with the hundreds of thousands of participants in both of our minds. The activity and excitement around this event were sonically animated through the imagined presence of Inti-Illimani and he was able to briefly repurpose the space around us to make room for an imperfect and precarious memory.

As we approached the corner of Otto-Braun-Straße he looked with frustration in the direction of the Alexanderplatz. The top of the Fernsehturm was poking out high up into the sky but there were a number of buildings and structures that impeded visual access to the memories he wanted to describe to me. “That wasn’t there before,” he lamented pointing to a squat, uninteresting building that houses a modern pharmacy chain. Just behind the building, he described the stage from a music festival where he remembered seeing a performance by the South African singer Miriam Makeba and also meeting Gladys Marín, who would go on to be the head of the Chilean Communist Party. As we stood on the corner thinking about the sounds and activity of international communities articulated within and across the shifting landscape of the former GDR, I watched him bring his hand up and sort of “push” the building to the side, thereby allowing us to hear and imagine this environment differently.

This sonic reconfiguration of space was not just a fetishization or nostalgic reminiscence of the “old days” of the GDR. Instead, it was a way of thinking across the gap between different spatial imaginaries. Certainly, there was a tone of bitterness as we

discussed “*das scheußliche Schloss*,” the refabricated and recently opened Humboldt Forum in the space that was formerly the East German parliament building. Many former East Germans continue to feel tension and discomfort over the way space has shifted around them and things have been made unrecognizable or invisible. These sorts of sonic interventions in the form of memories, texts, and histories allow for broader forms of spatial reconciliation.

Some of the most robust of these interventions come from communities that arrived in the GDR experiencing and expressing a unique relationship with and insight into precarity due to their orientation as exiles or migrants. As I have demonstrated through this project, the Chilean community in the GDR, signaled a number of different positions and meanings across the various strata of East German political and cultural life. Similarly, they themselves had different experiences depending on their location, their political and aesthetic philosophies, and their goals. The intricacies and complexities of these experiences offer extremely diverse interpretations of space. The musical expressions of these experiences, whether pressed on to a disc, re-commemorated as a live performance, or hidden as a trace therefore continue to offer means of reassessing space both for East Germans and for the community of Chileans that either returned or stayed in Germany.

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It is unlikely that scholars in the 2000s and 2010s developing language for and examining conditions and features of precarity could have predicted just how apposite the various orientations to the concept would become during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Precarity has become—if it was not already—symptomatic of nearly every dimension of human experience: work, politics, movement, and even breathing. When social scientists and philosophers interrogate the ways our lives are marked by precarity, it is typically framed as either a condition that underlays a particular community’s relation to space or with consideration of the ways that it appears to mark most forms of human social, political, and economic exchange. These considerations are invaluable as they advance the understanding of the governments, states, and other institutions contribute to these conditions for different groups. The global pandemic has shined a light on, and given a language to, the ubiquity of precarity and the multifarious dimensions of its shaping of our lives.

This project was deeply impacted by the “new precarity” that has emerged as a result of the pandemic. My own experience of an acute spatial and geographic disruption is not unique; it is likely that most—if not all—people have had a least some form of precarious reckoning in recent years. However, this condition has also proven to be a source of connection and possibility for myself and for many of the other collaborators on this project. At the beginning of this work, I was thinking about tracking down a group of individuals, and the voices that emanated from them, in order to evaluate how they operated within a certain space and time. But building this network through oftentimes sketchy internet connections and from different nodes around the world during this highly vulnerable moment, brought me into an unexpected historical and spatial relationship with the project as well as many of the individuals that helped to shape it.

In conversations with these other individuals, the pandemic was almost never a topic that was given more than a perfunctory conversational acknowledgement. These exchanges were not meant to be therapeutic—although it is possible that they may have been. I know that for me, these conversations often felt very generative and expansive at a time when the world felt very small and dangerous. Unlike basically every other conversation I had over the majority of this period, talking about Chilean music in the GDR with this diverse community sidelined the pandemic temporarily and allowed collaborators and myself to briefly rethink the rooms and worlds around us. Talking about and remembering these distant musical activities allowed us to briefly reconfigure this new COVID world similarly defined by an ontology of walls. Although it was not my goal to draw on fieldwork as a means to help make sense of the pandemic, I think that for all those involved talking about, thinking about, and listening to the music of this community in this context became a powerful strategy for participating in the world changing around us.

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Sonic geographies therefore are one way of thinking through and actively engaging the environments around us. Acknowledging precarity as a fundamental condition of interaction and experience implicates all of us as vulnerable and imperfect cartographers, but I hope that it also demonstrates a dimension of access and possibility. I have examined the intentional, revolutionary, and unintended ways that Chilean nueva canción reshaped and reimagined space at a global and local level from a site of musical activity in East Germany. These possibilities were experienced with varying degrees of

specificity. For some Chileans in exile and East Germans, the musical activities of this group were instrumental in facilitating sites of sonic and spatial renewal. For other individuals in both of those communities, these soundings were simply a quotidian aspect of the continually shape-shifting soundscape and landscape around them. This work takes seriously both forms of spatial-sonic activity and all the various possibilities in between.

When voice, sound, and song are mapped onto space, the result is not typically a stable one. Instead, it is a process of shifting and multifarious experiences, identities, and values coming together and finding spaces of intersection, providing a possibility, and then, oftentimes, coming apart. This sense of change and dynamism between the spatial and the sonic is a product of exchange between many distinct precarities. These precarities interact under various conditions: sometimes casual, sometimes forceful, and sometimes violent. This examination of a community in exile has been one way of thinking through some of these conditions and the ways that certain individuals experienced them differently. Through this process, we can reflect on changes in both the real and imagined landscape and the delicate sonic materials that shaped its composition.

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### *Multimedia Resources*

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### *List of Primary Fieldwork Interviews and Correspondence*

\* Some names and contacts have been left off this list at the discretion of author

\*All interviews over Skype or WhatsApp video unless otherwise noted

**Cirilo Adriazola Salas** – Guitarist and Singer in groups Tierra del Fuego and Alerce

July 7, 2020

December 7, 2020

December 9, 2020

June 29, 2021

February 11, 2022 (in-person; Berlin)

**Julio Alegría** – Winds player and former musical director of Aparcoa

September 22, 2020

September 25, 2020

February 4, 2021

February 11, 2021

**Reinhold Andert** – Former folk singer and one-time member of Oktoberklub

Multiple emails between September 2021–February 2022

January 4, 2022 (in-person; Berlin)

**Elke Bitterhof** – Former member of Oktoberklub and organizer of Festival of Political Songs

Tens of emails between June 2020–March 2022

December 9, 2021 (in-person; Berlin)

**Luis “Lucho” Briceno** – Former host of the podcast “Perspectivas a través de la Nueva Canción Chilena”

July 2020

**Lilia Concha** - Former sub-secretary in the Ministry of Culture under Chilean President Michelle Bachelet; Current professor in education at the Universidad Alberto Hurtado

February 26, 2020 (in-person; Santiago)

**Jorge Castillo Pizarro** – Journalist and former director of *El Meollo Cultural*

Tens of emails between September 2020–February 2022

**Patricio Castillo** – Musician and one-time member of Quilapayún

Multiple emails and questionnaires between February 2020–January 2021

**Vera Cerutti** – Widow of Osvaldo Rodríguez

Multiple emails and autobiographical texts exchanged between September 2020–December 2020

**Lutz Kirchenwitz** – Former member of Oktoberklub and organizer of the Festival of Political Songs

Multiple emails and texts exchanged between March 2021–January 2022

**John Paul Kleiner** – GDR Historian

December 4, 2020

**Ricardo López** – Winds player in groups Jaspampa and Alerce

May 20, 2020

August 6, 2020

November 13, 2020

January 28, 2021

**Bernhard Maleck** – Professor at Humboldt Universität zu Berlin; Grew up in the GDR

January 19, 2022 (in-person; Berlin)

**José Márquez** – Winds player in the group Illapu

Questionnaire received February 2021

**Osvaldo Puccio** – Former Minister Secretary General under Ricardo Lagos; Lived in exile in the GDR after political detention in Chile; Former Chilean Ambassador

April 27, 2020

July 7, 2020

September 14, 2020

**José Pérez** – Guitarist in groups Jaspampa and Alerce

May 20, 2020  
September 2, 2020  
December 16, 2021 (in-person; Leipzig)

**Roberto Rivera** – Former member of the group Tiemponuevo in Dresden

July 7, 2020

**Leonardo Rodríguez Mendo** – Former member of the group Basta in East Berlin

January 7, 2022

**Silvia Rühl** – Widow of Osvaldo Rodríguez

Questionnaires exchanged June 2020  
June 30, 2020

**Sergio Vesely** – Musician and artist that lived in exile in West Germany after political detention in Chile

May 22, 2020  
June 22, 2020  
November 24, 2020  
January 27–January 30, 2022 (in-person; Denkendorf)

**Gabriela Wojtiniak** – Filmmaker and collaborator with the group Alerce

Tens of emails and questionnaires exchanges between June 2020–January 2022

**Ulrike Wulkau** – Former partner of Osvaldo Puccio; Raised in GDR and lives currently in Chile

Multiple emails and questionnaires exchanges between April 2020–April 2022