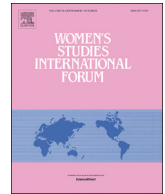


Contents lists available at [ScienceDirect](https://www.sciencedirect.com)

Women's Studies International Forum

journal homepage: www.elsevier.com/locate/wsif

The resignification of the Chilean dictatorship's international discourse: Decolonisation, religious tolerance and women's rights



María José Henríquez, Tatiana Rein-Venegas*

Institute of International Studies, University of Chile, Chile

ARTICLE INFO

Keywords:

Human Rights
Dictatorship
Chile
Women's rights
Discourse
International relations

ABSTRACT

The Chilean dictatorship reacted to the international condemnation with a resignification of its international discourse in areas of Human Rights that it considered innocuous, such as decolonisation, apartheid, religious tolerance and -as we suggest- women's rights. The article seeks to determine the key representations elaborated by the dictatorship, through a discourse analysis, and a post-structuralist approach in International Relations. Its findings show that in the area of women's rights there existed a clear contradiction between the internal and international narrative on the part of the dictatorship, with a support for feminist ideas in the international sphere and a hostile opposition against them in the domestic one. For the evaluation of the consequences of this practice, the analysis uses the boomerang model, looking at the impact of the contradiction on the strength not only of the human's rights movement, but also the women's rights one. In turn, it evaluates the effect that the latter had on the dictatorship policies and discourse.

Introduction

The election of Salvador Allende as president of Chile in September 1970 aroused great expectations: he was the first openly Marxist socialist in Latin America, who- in the middle of Cold War- came to power through the ballot boxes in a small country located in an area of American influence. Particularly in Western Europe, Chile attracted international attention during the Popular Unity Government, disproportionate to its size, which nonetheless reflected the attraction that Chilean politics caused at least since the early 1960s (Angell, 2001, p. 176). The great similarity between Chilean politics and its parties with those of some European countries produced sympathy and understanding, a situation dissimilar to that of other Latin American nations (Angell, 2001). In this regard, the way in which Allende came to power at a time when in Europe, precisely, socialism was being revised, was key. As such, it was an experiment that developed before the eyes of the world, and its tragic end turned it into an international event (Giner, 1984; Judt, 2006, pp. 807–841). Consequently, international condemnation was articulated and extended firstly against the coup d'état, and then against the serious and systematic violations of human rights that followed it.

The dictatorship was forced to react and did so by preparing a discourse in which, in the first place, it justified its action. However, this article argues that dictatorship sought to give another meaning to

the idea of human rights, especially within the framework of the United Nations. This resignification of the international discourse was developed on those human rights issues that were considered “innocuous” for the dictatorship, such as supporting the advance of decolonisation, the struggle against apartheid, the promotion of religious tolerance and the defence of women's rights. This final point would materialise itself in the World Conference on Women, held in 1975 and organised, precisely, by the United Nations, in which the representatives of the Chilean dictatorship took part.

The present article is a historiographical study using unpublished archival documents obtained mainly in the Historical General Archive of the Chilean Chancellery, but also from the Historical Archives of the Argentine Chancellery and the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) of the United States, as well as interviews with key actors. It addresses the topic from the perspective of discourse analysis, associated with the post-structuralist theoretical approach in International Relations (analysis inspired by the work of Hansen, 2006). The specific framework helps to identify how the dictatorship's foreign policy was connected, through its discourse, with the reasoning underlying its political actions. In other words, it finds the key representations that, through the legitimisation of foreign policy decisions in issues of human rights and in particular women's human rights (Hansen, 2012), achieve a justification of its policies at large. It engages with the relevant literature about women in the Chilean dictatorship,

* Corresponding author at: Institute of International Studies, University of Chile, Av. Condell 249, Providencia, Santiago de Chile, Chile.

E-mail addresses: mjhenriq@uchile.cl (M.J. Henríquez), trein@uchile.cl (T. Rein-Venegas).

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.wsif.2020.102389>

Received 4 June 2019; Received in revised form 9 May 2020; Accepted 26 June 2020

Available online 12 July 2020

0277-5395/ © 2020 Elsevier Ltd. All rights reserved.

with women's human rights, and uses the concept of boomerang model and its idea that the "diffusion of international norms in the human rights area depends on the establishment and the sustainability of networks among domestic and transnational actors" (Risse et al., 1999). The essential notion that governments that use repression react to the internal and international pressure that these networks put on them through their discourse, which eventually forces them into a path towards respecting human rights (Risse et al., 1999) has been applied in the area of human rights in the case of Chile. In the present work, we will use it in order to determine whether the discourse that the dictatorship employed internationally, strengthened the women's movement against the dictatorship.

The remainder of the article is divided into three parts. The first section refers to the international condemnation of Pinochet's Chile and the adjustments that the dictatorship made to its narrative. The second section analyses what we have termed the "resignification of the discourse" related to human rights and the activism that, to that end, the dictatorship developed, especially in the United Nations. Finally, in the third section, the discourse about the role of women's rights is examined. Conclusive remarks follow.

Human rights and the international condemnation: the first adjustments to the narrative

The situation triggered after the coup d'état on September 11, 1973, not only abruptly ended the expectations of those who saw in the "Chilean road to socialism" a peaceful option for the left's access to power, but it also generated great worldwide interest in the face of numerous and serious denunciations of human rights violations. Thus, almost immediately, different international organisations got involved in the South American country, carrying out a series of investigations.

As early as October 1973, the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) instructed its Executive Secretary, Luis Reque, to travel to Chile in order to obtain adequate information on the events that were taking place. Reque visited the country between October 12 and 17 and at the end of his mission he presented a report recommending, among other measures, that the Commission observe the situation of human rights in the country in situ (Organization of American States, 1985, p. 1).

In parallel, the Directorate of International Organisations of the Chilean Foreign Ministry alerted the delegation to the United Nations about allegations based on "(...) rumours received from different sources that, orchestrated by the forces of Marxism, seek to muddy the prestige of the Government" (AMRECH, 1973h).¹ This helps us observe an early way of conceptualisation of reality on the part of the Military Junta, given that the theory of the left-wing conspiracy would become a genuine conceptual framework for understanding reality. Neither at that time nor until much later, did the representatives of the new regime understand the enormous impact that Salvador Allende and the Popular Unity Government caused in the region and, especially, in Western Europe. Thus the idea of an "international communist conspiracy" became the lens through which a complex situation was simplistically read, a fact that is possibly due to an excess of provincialism or a lack of international links on the part of the new Chilean leaders (see [Fernandois, 2004](#)).

At the beginning of November 1973, James Holger, the chargé d'affaires of the permanent mission of Chile to the United Nations, informed Santiago about the note sent by the Secretary-General of the UN, in which he referred to the various requests that, between September 14 and October 29, were directed to him by individuals and

organisations about the events that had occurred in Chile as well as alleged violations of human rights. Holger felt that the response should be as complete and detailed as possible, considering that the country was, paradoxically, a member of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights and that this was to meet between February 4 and March 8, 1974 (AMRECH, 1973d). There would not be much time to develop a strategy, because the violence triggered by the coup also produced an enormous refugee issue, which was addressed in the debates in UN (Bastias, 2013, pp. 30–35). Towards the end of November 1973, the permanent representative of Chile to the UN, Ambassador Raúl Bazán, was forced to intervene in the debate raised by the report of the High Commissioner for Refugees, responding to the "comments" of the delegations of Sweden, France and Australia, as "(...) largely unfair and wrong" (AMRECH, 1973g). The argument was simple: in full use of its rights a state could adopt measures of internal order against those refugees who had committed a crime or an attack against the security of the country. Clearly, the ambassador had no clear instructions and no exact information about the incident that had triggered the protest and that involved the ambassador of Sweden in Chile.² For the moment, the Chilean Mission continued to receive notes from the Secretary-General, which enclosed new communications sent from different parts of the world, requesting information on the human rights situation in Chile. In this context Ambassador Bazán decided to act:

"I am preparing a draft response, which I will send in the next diplomatic bag, and in which, after making a detailed account of the human rights violations committed by the government of the Popular Unity, it is demonstrated that the situation produced justified the supreme recourse to rebellion against a tyrannical regime, a resource admitted in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The transitory and emergency nature of the current moment is underlined, which, in the light of human rights conventions, authorizes the suspension of some of these rights" (AMRECH, 1973e).

In this way, a discourse of a draw between the actions, as well as the delegitimisation of the Popular Unity Government took form. These would progressively become one of the arguments most used by the regime in its defence. Thus, during the first months of 1974 and before the imminent presentation of a project of condemnation of Chile at the Commission of Human Rights, Ambassador Bazán proposed and sent to Santiago a draft resolution against the USSR, through which "our country echoed the universal commotion" provoked by "the humiliating and unjust treatment", victim of which was the writer Alexander Solzhenitsyn "detained and banished without being subjected to a formal process". Not without a certain ingenuity, and unlikely as it may seem, the ambassador considered that – in the search for balance – the project would produce "certain fear in the Soviet Union" (AMRECH, 1974b).

The military government went further and by explicit instruction of the President of the Governing Junta, Bazán was instructed to refrain from making commitments with the members of the commission, to the effect of withdrawing the Solzhenitsyn project in exchange for the non-presentation of a Soviet project that proposed the creation of a commission of inquiry on Chile. This instruction was aimed at taking on an "attitude of the greatest firmness" (AMRECH, 1974e), at the same time that investigations were ongoing and the pressure on the Junta increased.

Amnesty International visited Chile in December 1973 and

¹ The acronym AMRECH stands for Historical General Archive of the Chilean Chancellery (in Spanish, *Archivo General Histórico del Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores de Chile*). Henceforth, the next references to this body will be formulated as "AMRECH".

² "On 25 November, Swedish Ambassador Harald Edelstam and several Swedish officials accompanied by the French ambassador, Pierre de Menthon, were insulted, physically assaulted and even threatened with death while trying to prevent the arrest of Uruguayan citizen Mirtha Fernández Pucurru, a political refugee at the embassy that was being treated for urinary tract cancer at the Sara Moncada Clinic in Santiago. Mirtha was arrested by the security forces and taken to the women's prison in Santiago. Only 10 days later her release was negotiated, and she was able to leave for Sweden" ([Camacho Padilla, 2007](#), p. 77). Own translation.

published the results of the investigation in January 1974. According to the members of the mission, torture, which dictatorship had widely used, was still in use at the time of the mission's visit to Chile and the country's authorities had done nothing to suppress that practice (Commission of Human Rights, 1975, p.1). In this regard, it was indicated that:

“General Bonilla, Minister of the Interior, told us in an interview that, in a situation such as the one that Chile had gone through, it was to be expected that the troops would commit some excesses. In contrast to attempts to downplay such excesses, we found that foreign experts had been called to Chile to teach methods of interrogation. The Minister of Foreign Affairs strongly denied the presence of Brazilian police officers, but the prison guards in the National Stadium recognised without difficulty that Brazilian police officers had been present during the interrogations, and that their mission was to teach their methods to the Chilean policemen in charge of such interrogations” (Commission of Human Rights, 1975, p. 1).

The excesses, as noted, were attributed from the beginning to the context that would soon take the form of an Internal War, that is to say, the second representation that the regime fed in its defence and that, possibly, had a greater hold over time. The discourse, of course, was continually adjusted and in the search for proposals Raúl Bazán made a statement, as part of the Commission for Human Rights, urging the body to find a way to put into effect as soon as possible the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, in line of what is expected according to the boomerang model. The instrument, eight years after its approval by the General Assembly, was not in force due to a lack of ratifications and Bazán proposed that the countries that had already ratified it sign a protocol in order to put it into force immediately (AMRECH, 1974j). The ambassador himself informed Santiago that with his action he sought to “emphasize our permanent adherence to the cause of human rights” and to be a constructive contribution to the work of the commission, “where virtually all my previous interventions had been limited to defending ourselves” (AMRECH, 1974j). The trend, however, would not decrease.

In May of 1974, the trip of a mission of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights was announced, but the dictatorship delayed the entry permit, granting it only in mid-July (Weiss, 1980, p. 114). Finally, the visit took place between July 22 and August 2 and, according to the military authorities, the members of the commission “(...) had the broadest freedom to visit places of detention and meet with detainees, whatever their legal status. They held interviews with different Ministers of State, Ministers of the Supreme Court, with the Comptroller General of the Republic, with the President of the Bar Association, and with various other figures” (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1974, pp. 402–403). The report produced, however, did not respond to the expectations of the regime and before the complaint a narrative was structured in the following terms:

Given the characteristics of the events that occurred in Chile on September 11 and afterwards, where followers of the previous government fired without contemplation at the troops and the latter were forced to respond, the fallen and missing on both sides have been many. Until today there are cases of soldiers who, due to the action of the extremists, have not been found. This is to highlight that the characteristics of what happened in Chile do not fit that of a normal situation and, therefore, it is impossible to try to apply norms and procedures of a state of no unrest. Hence, in some exceptional cases, and due to the heat of the struggle, a small number of people have disappeared (...) in addition, in many cases people who have been reported missing are in hiding, executing acts contrary to the government or have surreptitiously left the country (Organization of American States, 1985, p. 81–82).

The image of an internal war, therefore, justified the repression. The report and the observations of the Chilean Government were

presented to the General Assembly of the Organization of American States when it held its fifth regular session in Washington, in May 1975. Although the representative of the Chilean government tried to impede its dissemination, the commission's own regulation allowed the publication and distribution of the reports once submitted to the Permanent Council of the organisation. Thus, “(...) news agencies and newspapers throughout America and Europe disseminated and published full paragraphs of that document” (Organization of American States, 1985, p. 125), contributing to the progressive worsening of the regime's external image. This also contributed, according to Fries (2019), to the strengthening of human rights organisations, which understood that they could alert the international community about what was happening inside the country and the contradictions that there existed in its official discourse.

On its part, in September 1974, Amnesty published a second report on Chile, which the dictatorship tried to discredit on the grounds that all the information was based on the brief visit made in November 1973. However, throughout the year of 1974 the NGO continued sending observers to Chile, giving instructions to other accredited inspectors and receiving their reports (Organization of American States, 1985, p. 125). These reports were sent to the UN Commission on Human Rights and, in August 1974, the Sub-commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, of the Commission of Human Rights, adopted a resolution requesting the latter to study the violations of human rights in Chile. It also requested the Military Government to restore and safeguard basic human rights and fundamental freedoms. The Chilean authorities, in a letter addressed to the Secretary General of the UN, called the resolution “biased” and “discriminatory” (Weiss, 1980, p. 116).

Towards November 1974, the General Assembly of the UN approved another resolution in which it recommended to the government the liberation of political prisoners, the establishment of human rights and the granting of letters of safe passage to the Chileans who requested them. The resolution provoked a violent reaction from the government, who argued that it was a campaign mounted by international Marxism led by the Soviet Union (Weiss, 1980, p. 117).

The concern at the UN reached a climax on 27 February 1975, when the Commission of Human Rights unanimously approved the creation of an ad-hoc working group in order to investigate the human rights situation in Chile. From the very beginning, it worked together with the Chilean authorities, as was stated by the group's chairperson-rapporteur, Ghulam Ali Allana, considering his “(...) communication and friendly dialogue with the representative of the Government of Chile, and although Chile was no longer a member of the commission, the representative of the Government of Chile, nevertheless participated in it as an observer” (General Assembly of the United Nations, 1975, p. 1). In view of the above, the group was encouraged to draft a resolution in which a visit to Chile was arranged, a decision with which the Chilean Government agreed and, moreover, the resolution was written in consultation with the Chilean delegate (General Assembly of the United Nations, 1975). However, six days before its arrival, Pinochet announced that the visit would be suspended. In his speech he would stress:

“(...) the cowardice - that I do not know how to describe- from the rest of the world that, in the face of Chile's fight against the USSR, David against Goliath, hides its head and aids communist slander, based on sending permanent commissions to come and see if human rights are complied with. How many commissions have they sent to Cuba, to the USSR and now to Vietnam, to Laos or Cambodia?” (Qué Pasa, 1975, p. 11).

Apparently, the explanation of the Chilean reaction could be found in some rather circumstantial factors. It was believed that the Chilean Communist Party had ordered its members, during the visit, to carry out a highly publicised claim of asylum in embassies on a grand scale (Qué Pasa, 1975, p. 11), as well as statements by the chairperson-rapporteur

of the group that, according to the government, had manifested signs of partiality, along with the experience of the previous commissions. Finally, the same week that the government's refusal took place, an Egyptian delegation had visited Chile, with which a Chilean-Egyptian cultural agreement was signed; that delegation also received from Chile's government the offer of expanding ties with the Arab League along with the latter's international support regarding the Chilean situation (Revista Ercilla, 1975, p. 10).

Apparently, after this contact, new fronts of international action were opened to the dictatorship and the manifestation of good will towards the UN visit no longer had the same importance. Considering that the result of the investigation would invariably be negative, the effect of opposing the visit would be the same. In addition, some kind of Arab promise had been obtained to not back accusations against Chile for human rights violations (Muñoz & Portales, 1987, p. 91), which led to supporting a draft resolution calling on the General Assembly to declare Zionism a form of racism (Schoultz, 1981, p. 130).

After the impasse, the working group issued a statement in which it stated that "(...) maintaining the refusal (of the visit to Chile) can only lead to the conclusion that the Chilean Government is not in a position to face an objective investigation" (Schoultz, 1981). It also added that the group's members did not have political positions, nor did they belong to countries that could be identified as Marxist-Leninist and the members of the delegation "were not communists and of unsuspected impartiality" (Schoultz, 1981). Obviously, the fact that this declaration had international exposure made the international situation of the country even worse.

Despite not being able to carry out the investigation *in situ*, the group prepared a report based on the statements of some 120 witnesses, who appeared voluntarily in Geneva, Paris, New York and Caracas (General Assembly of the United Nations, 1975). Among the main recommendations of the prepared report, it was considered that the root cause of the violation of human rights and fundamental freedoms in Chile was the state of siege. The working group was convinced that there was no armed resistance or armed uprising against the regime and that the state of emergency should end. In addition, the civil courts had to enforce the right of protection by the constitution or habeas corpus, as well as the abolition of military courts and the decisions issued should be appealable before the civil courts. The right to nationality should also be restored for those who had been exiled. Also the organisation called DINA should be abolished,³ because of its faculties that placed it above the law, and the right to form unions and freedom of association should be restored (General Assembly of the United Nations, 1975).

The Chilean Government responded to the report via a note from its representative, which appeared in The New York Times, indicating that "(...) The working group was unable to verify the accuracy of the complaints made against the Chilean authorities and the alleged facts and conclusions of the aforementioned report are based fundamentally on hearsay evidence" (p. 10).

As noted, "the international Marxist campaign", "a discourse of a draw between the actions" and "the internal war" were images that created a largely reactive, not especially articulated discourse that, progressively, led to the elaboration of a strategy and tactical movements in the search for allies. Within this framework, then, the resignification of the international discourse would occur.

The resignification of the international discourse

During the years of the Popular Unity government and in line with the moment of global contestation, the government developed a

³ The acronym DINA in Spanish stands for *Dirección de Inteligencia Nacional* (Directorate of National Security). It functioned as the secret police of the dictatorship.

discourse characterized by three "antis". Thus, the anti-capitalist, anti-oligarchic and anti-imperialist stances defined a clear internal and international position that in the various multilateral forums of the time denounced the "functioning of practices of neo-colonial dependency" (AMRECH, 1973b). As such, colonialism, racism and apartheid were symptoms of the pathology diagnosed through a discourse that mixed developmentalism and dependency theory.

After September 1973, it was logical to expect a change. Nevertheless, the first surprise was to come from the continuation of the country within the Non-Aligned Movement. The decision, not free of controversy within the General Assembly, was aimed at "(...) destroying the international fence that has been sought to raise around our government", and therefore, to coordinate diplomatic action aimed at the members of the group with which there was "a certain political affinity" (AMRECH, 1973a). The bet, defended by the diplomats stationed in New York, was not always understood in Santiago and the abandonment of the group would occur sometime later.

In the search for support, the Chilean mission to the UN did not have to act only through diplomatic channels, whose logic was well known to the experienced officials. Possibly, the most difficult thing was convincing the new authorities, especially the Military Junta, of the appropriateness of certain actions. Thus, the Chilean position could be characterized as in extreme zigzagging.

Towards the end of 1973, and in consideration of Lisbon's failure to comply with the resolutions of the General Assembly, African, Asian and Arab countries redoubled their efforts to obtain the recognition of the international community for Guinea Bissau, at first, and then for Angola and Mozambique. It was an effort supported by several European countries, especially the Scandinavian ones, as well as Australia and some Latin American countries, namely Peru, Panama, Mexico and Argentina (AMRECH, 1973c). Nonetheless, in Santiago the opinion was different and when a project on the territories under Portuguese administration was discussed in the Fourth Committee (Item 71), abstention was ordered, despite the request of Ambassador Bazán to vote in favour, fearing that the African countries would "react passionately against us" (AMRECH, 1973a). The apprehension, as expected, was confirmed and Chile was accused of "being motivated by racism" (AMRECH, 1973a). In view of this situation, Santiago authorized to vote in favour of the project in the plenary session held on 12 December 1973. Of course, at first, the relationship with Portugal (also under a dictatorship, until April 1974) was prioritised. Nevertheless, as the African countries were numerous, the position that had been maintained during the Popular Unity Government, now was resumed. In this sense, the change in the discourse was significant: in March of 1974 James Holger, in his speech before the Special Committee on Decolonization, would emphasize that "the permanent adhesion of the Government of Chile to anti-colonialism in no way excludes the very cordial relations that link us to Portugal" (AMRECH, 1974l), observing "a fairly moderate tone when making some critical comments about the policy of the Government of Portugal" (AMRECH, 1974l); nevertheless, by October, the Chilean delegate, Julio Duran, declared "our support for the national liberation movements of Angola and Mozambique". Obviously, of the communist orientation of both, nothing was said (AMRECH, 1974k).

Following the Carnation Revolution, as well as an apparent change in the traditional Brazilian policy of support for Portuguese colonialism (AMRECH, 1974f), the modification that was made became part of the resignification of the human rights discourse that had begun in 1973; on the one hand, and the subsequent tactical adjustments to it, on the other. Although the policy developed during the Popular Unity Government, it also, in some way, aimed to differentiate the relationship with Portugal and adhere to an anti-colonialist line. The diplomats' argument would underscore the importance of maintaining Chile's participation in deliberations that practically did not affect the country, because, precisely, the context had changed:

(...) I point out to you that the delegation of Chile has intervened in each of these issues and has done so, primarily to demonstrate policy continuity in the field of decolonization. In this way we have shown that the previous government did not hold a monopoly that in some circles tended to be attributed to it, not only in regard to this matter, but also in everything related to apartheid and racial discrimination. I believe that by keeping the voice of Chile on the forefront of matters of decolonization, we are obtaining an indisputable political dividend for our country, as we neutralise our opponents who would like to see us in the company of the very small group of countries that defend colonial regimes at the United Nations. Unless you see otherwise, adopting such a position in no way contradicts the government's clear and determined anti-Marxist policy (AMRECH, 1974g).

Related to Chilean "activism" in the UN, another topic of misunderstanding between the Chilean mission and Santiago focused on South Africa and apartheid. Initially, at the end of October 1973, the delegation in New York considered it essential "to inform the numerous African delegations that not only had Chile not changed its anti-apartheid policy, but it was following its unalterable line of rejection of that policy of discrimination" (AMRECH, 1974i). This is how the Chilean delegate, Leonidas Irrarrázaval, put it when he began the study of the "Draft Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid", at the Third Commission on Social, Humanitarian and Cultural Affairs. The project was originally drafted by the Soviet Union, but that was not the problem; rather, it was the fact that some of the provisions of the convention implied changes in domestic legislation, which generated some apprehension. However, given the need to win the trust of African countries, it was important to maintain the same line of support for the project, "although without much emphasis", stressed James Holger. Additionally, it was feasible for Chile to participate in a general reservation on the topic of asylum, It would not formulate specific reservations on other points "so as not to weaken its position of support of the anti-apartheid policy".

"(...) This would correspond to a realistic and politically significant vision, rather than a legal conception of the issue, based on the fact that it is unlikely that in Chile there will be a case of punishing a person responsible for the crime of apartheid and that the approval in the Third Committee of a draft convention does not eliminate the possibility of formulating a reservation at the time of signing or of postponing its ratification" (AMRECH, 1974i).

However, "the South African case" was complicated by issues that were more reminiscent of the theatre of the absurd and not, as it was possible to foresee, due to legal complexities. The systematic work to improve the image of the country at the UN received a severe setback when the Military Junta supported the decision of the Chilean tennis federation to play a Davis Cup match against South Africa. Different resolutions of the General Assembly (for example, 2775-D-XXVI) had invited governments to draw the attention of national sports organisations to the issue of apartheid and sports, and as such no European countries, nor Australia, nor New Zealand, played against South Africa. In Chile, however, the Junta had another opinion.

The reasons for such an absurd turn of events were the following: first, a restructuring of the Davis Cup by the International Tennis Federation, resulting in South Africa being included in the South American Group. Second the fact that the first rival, Argentina, did not show up. Chile was second and its federation decided to play in a neutral country, considering that the restrictions only applied to national territory. For Ambassador Bazán, the sporting merit of an eventual victory would be diminished because the South African team had eliminated previous rivals for non-presentation. Additionally, its participation negatively affected Chile's position as a member of the Committee of Trustees of the United Nations Trust Fund for South Africa, constituted to help the victims of apartheid and also of the United Nations Council for Namibia, a territory illegally administered

by South Africa (AMRECH, 1974c). It was, in his words, "incomprehensible that we, in the state of international orphanhood in which we find ourselves, after having made some progress in achieving the understanding of Arab and black African countries, which is indispensable, give ourselves the luxury of compromising this progress" (AMRECH, 1974d). Precisely at a time when the UN Commission for Human Rights was organising the initiation of a study through the creation of an investigation group on abuses in Chile, this decision would only "keep alive an odious campaign that hinders us in every way and can hinder even more our international coexistence", and that "a real pack of enemy countries is waging a fierce attack on all fronts against the external image of Chile". Bazán stressed that the line drawn could not be changed because this would give support to the countries that considered Chile's favourable attitude towards the Arab and African countries as suspicious, "accusing us of being fascists". Despite the tone and weight of the arguments, the game was played and Chile lost it by 2–3. Colombia, on the other hand, would not appear in the next round.

The attitude towards Israel was not free from controversy either. At the beginning of 1974, the Commission of Human Rights initiated the debate on human rights violations in the territories occupied by Israel and the instruction from Santiago was not to participate in the deliberations. However, Bazán warned about the inconvenience of absenting himself at the time when the voting began (the number of members of the commission was small and his absence would be interpreted as support for Israel) and suggested an affirmative vote, considering that the interests of Chile were at risk. If remaining in the Non-Aligned Group was the intention, it was not possible to distance oneself in the face of a problem on which the group had a clear political position. In addition, Chile had already voted against Israel in the last General Assembly (September 1973) and dissidence could risk "our normal oil supply" (AMRECH, 1974a). However, during the next regular session of the General Assembly (September 1974), Chile voted in favour of Israel. Concretely, it voted against the resolution that recognised the right of the Palestinian people to return to their land and abstained in the resolution that granted the Organisation for the Liberation of Palestine (PLO) the status of permanent observer in the General Assembly. Both resolutions were adopted with large majorities. This action was intensely celebrated by the representative committee of the Israelite community of Chile, in consideration of the attack that both Israel and Chile were suffering at the hands of "a combination of Arab and Marxist countries" (AMRECH, 1974n). On this issue, Chile's international action was also zigzagging because, as already mentioned, in 1975 the dictatorship chose to gain the support of Arab countries. In the case of the relationship with Israel, the intention was to keep a balance, because on the one hand the Israel's strategic model was attractive for the Chilean army, and, on the other hand, the voting capacity of Arab countries voting as a block exceeded this of 30 votes (Harvey, 2011, p.166).

Possibly, the only issue in which an immediate agreement between diplomats and military authorities arose was on the interpretation of religious freedom as a national expression of respect for human rights. The Chilean interventions at the Third Commission were not meant to be limited to the period of apartheid, and the conditions could not have been more favourable, as in December 1973 the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights would be celebrated. In this occasion, the General Assembly had agreed to give priority to the agreement on a declaration on the elimination of all forms of religious intolerance. In his speech, the representative of Chile would highlight that in Chile the separation between church and state could be considered exemplary, due to its peaceful results and to the fact that in recent years all the religious ceremonies attended by state authorities were ecumenical (AMRECH, 1973f); nevertheless, the first ecumenical *Te Deum* had been established by Salvador Allende.

The following year, Chile went on the offensive and the Foreign Ministry instructed the delegation to participate in the general debate on agenda item No.54, entitled "Elimination of all forms of religious

intolerance". This time the task corresponded to the Sergio Diez, and the clash with the Soviet delegate, Zenkiavichus, was direct. The Soviet Union, in Diez's words, had to "humanise its legislation" and "revise its political philosophy". The response, predictably, pointed to Chile's use of "fascist propaganda techniques" (AMRECH, 1974m).

In the articulation of the discourse at the UN, a good part of the defence was oriented towards attacking the socialist bloc and, therefore, to the gathering of information that reinforced the arguments. As such, the different Chilean missions sent to Santiago all the news that could be useful in the counterpropaganda campaign, namely: about the psychiatric internment of dissidents in the USSR, from Belgium; the testimony of a Jewish dissident released from a forced labour camp in the USSR, from Canada; the repression of Soviet painters and writers, from Paris. Chile even offered to host Vietnamese and Cambodian refugees, up to 100, but requested the support of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, which would facilitate the tickets and finance subsistence for the first two months as "(...) it would be useful to provide the refugees with the indispensable work equipment so that they start their productive activities and prefabricated houses to install them on lands suitable for rice cultivation" (AMRECH, 1975d). In term of the boomerang model this would be considered a tactical concession.

But if defending oneself and attacking the socialist bloc was logical and even epic, in many opportunities there was a bewilderment at the offensive coming from unequivocally anti-communist countries and, to a large extent, the explanations for such aggressions were ignored. Thus, for example, at the explicit request of the permanent representative of the United Kingdom, Ambassador Richards, the Chilean delegation was excluded from the visiting mission of the Special Committee on Decolonisation, of which Chile was a member, to the Gilbert and Ellice Islands. These were sporadic missions that the committee sent to territories under colonial administration and, as a prerequisite, the assent of the administering power was needed. Therefore, "Faced with the possibility that the United Kingdom would not let the visiting mission enter, it was decided to compose it only with representatives from Africa and Asia. In this regard, I [The Chilean Ambassador at the UN] have been able to verify that there were no manoeuvres by the socialist delegates to exclude Chile and that the situation that occurred was due to nothing more than the request of Ambassador Richards, who, I was told, acted in compliance with instructions from his government" (AMRECH, 1974h).

Ambassador Bazán warned that, although Chile had been well treated within the committee, "I think that this is basically because we have maintained our traditional anti-colonialist line and have not given arms or justifications to our critics." He informed the Foreign Ministry of the attitude taken up by the United Kingdom in this case, since "it could perhaps be consistent with unfriendly expressions of a similar nature that the country had made in other international forums". In fact, until the arrival of Margaret Thatcher to the government in Great Britain in 1979, the traditional relationship cooled in such a way that the sale and delivery of British arms and spare parts was even hampered (Muñoz, 1986, p. 103).

Chile, in short, would become active on certain human rights issues, specifically those related to decolonisation, racial discrimination, especially apartheid, and religious tolerance. These were topics, apparently innocuous, in which the Chilean record was clean since the human rights violations that were committed were not linked to race. It was an obvious and even crude situation, but in the multilateral framework Chile had identified a niche and the purpose was clear: to neutralise critics and gain sympathy.

Although in Santiago it was decided not to go for re-election in the Economic and Social Council, Chile applied for the UNDP Governing Council,⁴ the UNICEF Executive Board and the Commission on the Status of Women. These were all areas where Chile could, apparently without cost, divert international attention from serious human rights

violations committed in the country. As we can see, and according with the model of Risse et al. (1999), in the first years of the dictatorship, Chile moved between negation, tactical concessions and apparent recognition of the relevance of human rights, at least in its discourse.

Women's rights and the dictatorship's contradiction

The defence of women's rights would be incorporated into the international discourse of the dictatorship as a result of a specific opportunity: the UN conference in 1975. In fact, governments previous to the dictatorship, had initiated similar moves. Eduardo Frei's Christian Democrat government in 1970 participated in the first International Seminar organised on this issue, called "Women in International Affairs" (Albornoz, 2018, pp. 287–288). It was a topic that was progressively coming to the fore, especially towards the end of the 1960s. Thus, during the Frei government, the National Women's Office (Oficina Nacional de la Mujer) was created in 1969, to a large extent accepting the recommendations of the UN Commission on the Status of Women, as well as of the International Labour Organisation and the Organisation of American States (Saintard, 2013, p. 287). Thus, as part of the first forty measures of the administration of Salvador Allende, it included the social security of housewives, creating the National Secretary of Women in September 1972. Apparently, it was a process in which the dictatorship was not entirely uninvolved. In November 1974, Sara Navas, legal advisor of the National Secretary of Women, wrote to the ambassador of Argentina in Santiago, requesting information on legislation referring to "the legal status of women in relation to their work status, especially that of housewives, who would then be considered a professional" (Archive of the Argentine Chancellery, 1974), since this could change their labour status, due to Argentinian new regulation. According to Navas, local news had informed of the promulgation, by the government of the Argentine Republic, of the aforementioned laws and she had requested documentation "in order to promote greater knowledge of everything related to the problem of Latin-American women, since this affects one of the objectives set by the National Secretary of Women" (Archive of the Argentine Chancellery, 1974). As will be seen, other visions would be predominant.

The dictatorship had a predominant view of women as mothers, and it promoted this view. The connections with the Feminine Section in the Franco' Spain and the Spanish national discourse was particularly relevant for the National Secretary of Women. According to Grez (2015), this institution was to serve as a way of rewarding the role played by right-wing women against Allende's government. Additionally, women in management and administrative positions within the National Secretary of Women had studied in Spain with scholarships from the Feminine Section, which existed from the fifties. They incorporated ideas taken from Spain, such as traveling school (Catedras Ambulantes), centers of assistance (centros de atención) and rural homes (hogares Rurales) (Grez, 2015). The collaboration with Franco's Spain served to develop the national discourse about women, close to values adhering to a conservative Catholicism, with women as wives, housewives, and ideal mothers, where key values were family, the care of children, patriotism and the protection of family (Grez, 2015).

During the dictatorship, women were very relevant for voluntary work led by the first lady, Lucía Hiriart. The main institution was CEMA-Chile, which grouped together mother centers from all over the country. In 1983 it counted 230.000 members and 6.000 volunteers, and defined itself as an institution oblivious to political and or religious proselytism. It devoted itself to the integral development of women that were its members, and through them to the wellbeing of their families (Lechner and Levy, 1984). CEMA trained its members in diverse manual techniques, such as confectionary, hairdressing, cosmetology, genre

⁴ However, due to a lack of support, the application had to be withdrawn (AMRECH, 1975f, 1975g).

painting, embroidery, among others. It defined its voluntary members as persons who keep Chilean values and those represented by the government, making them known. Finally, its publications included this officially promoted message (Lechner and Levy, 1984). Moreover, during the dictatorship, any reference to feminism was shown to represent an erroneous path for women. There were even spaces of ideological indoctrination against women's liberation and the need to perfect themselves as housewives (Godoy, 2013, p. 104; Maravall, 2004, p. 9). In short, the dictatorship intended to depoliticise women: Chilean women should not develop any activity related to their needs or life expectations. Instead, their role was to serve the government, embrace its actions and support it (Munizaga, 1983, p. 44).

More than thirty years after the beginning of the democratic period, three women⁵ who opposed the dictatorship coincide in their memories and vision on the subject, pointing out that: "it was a monolithic discourse...the women's role was social, with the famous 'damas de color' (color ladies).⁶ Women that did charitable work, and were a projection of the domestic role" (Fries, 2019). Frohman (2019) suggest that the only discourse existing was the one from CEMA-Chile, which was very relevant because of its presence across the country. Teresa Valdés (2019) is even stronger in her appreciation: "there were not rights, only obligations...Women were mothers, from the soldiers and from those that led the country that were men. For the dictatorship women were reproductive... and they had to discipline us. All the network of mother centers, all that they did with the 'damas de color' was to discipline women in their role of service, of social assistance, of being good mothers, wives and housewives". She suggested that only a couple of women from the dictatorship, for example, Monica Madariaga, the only minister, and Lucia Gevert, Ambassador in West Germany, constituted exceptions of women that represented another view about women and that eventually could have worked in favour of some of women's rights. According to Valenzuela (1993, p. 333), within professional women from the right, coming from the middle class, there was a group that supported the battle for some women's rights, but "this was done in a weak and isolated way, in the sense that it was expressed through individuals more than in collective actions".

In the international sphere, as mentioned above, the dictatorship faced, from the beginning, a number of denounces about the human rights violations that were taking place in the country. In this scenario, the dictatorship had to decide on its participation in the First United Nations World Conference on Women, scheduled for mid-1975. Women's rights would start to be increasingly important in the world, and women would start organising and establishing networks across borders (Matras & Lightman, 2016, p. 122). At that time, the world event was envisioned as an opportunity to approach human rights from another perspective and, in this way, face criticisms and denunciations by diverting attention. It was not just about maintaining the discourse on colonialism, apartheid, and racial and religious discrimination, as the situation of women allowed an "aggiornamento".

The World Conference on Women was held between 19 June and 2 July in Mexico City and Chile decided to appoint Alicia Romo Román (AMRECH, 1975a) as the official liaison representative of the government, who was the titular representative in the Commission on the Status of Women. She also worked in the Directorate of Industry and Commerce and her activities in promoting the application of women's rights had reached certain relevance (AMRECH, 1975e). She was precisely one of the representatives of the women from the right that supported an increase in some women's rights.

At the conference, the delegation of Pinochet's Chile backed resolutions related to the following issues: the status of women in South Africa, Namibia and Southern Rhodesia; the integration of women in

the process of political, economic, social and cultural development on an equal footing with men; the participation of women in the promotion of world peace and international cooperation; the participation of women in the strengthening of international peace and security; and the fight against colonialism, racism, racial discrimination and foreign domination (AMRECH, 1975c). Nevertheless, according to Frohmann (2019), this discourse did not have anything to do with the Chilean reality, and "it was easy to defend the rights of women in Namibia". In consequence, the country improved its image abroad, but without internal consequences.

In short, the general rule was to support the issues of equal rights and opportunities for women in all aspects, ensuring coordination with the discourse maintained in areas related to human rights. The exception to this rule, however, was birth control, since the government's policy was family planning and responsible fatherhood and in no case birth control (AMRECH, 1975b). In parallel to the official representation, other Chilean women, including the widow of Salvador Allende, Hortensia Bussi, attended the conference and its workshops, intensely denouncing the violations of human rights that were being committed inside the country (Pieper Mooney, 2010, p. 618). The attendance of both Alicia Romo and Hortensia Bussi generated impressive and even aggressive interventions. In her speech, on 29 June, Romo said: "(Mrs. Allende) was first exploited by Unidad Popular to play the role of wife - and she well knows what that was- and now she runs about the world, the prisoner of Soviet totalitarianism, which dresses her widow's tears. This is as false as was her wife's role during the Unidad Popular government" (NARA, 1975). The comment not only showed an underlying ideology related to the mental construction that the dictatorship tried to create about the international Marxist campaign, but it also sought in particular the humiliation of Hortensia Bussi as a wife, through judgments about her private life.⁷

Hortensia Bussi, on her part, addressed on 30 June the Chilean exiles and a group of critics of the Pinochet regime. On that occasion Laura Allende, the late President's sister, referred to Alicia Romo as an example of the "degenerate fascist woman" (NARA, 1975), probably meaning that she was a fascist, because she was part of the dictatorship, and a degenerated woman, because of the role that women was playing in it. According to the revised documentation, this group did not criticise the content of the Chilean discourse itself, but sought to detract legitimacy from the official Chilean representation in the conference. This is because, as we have seen, that discourse did not distance itself from the position of the UN.

It is evident that the ideological intersection of the declarations (Soviet totalitarianism vs. fascism) was an expression of the situation that was being experienced in Chile and the extreme violence unleashed on the sympathisers of the regime deposed in September 1973. But beyond the political element, it is possible to identify a contradiction in the narrative of the dictatorship and at least two different visions of women. Thus, if the internal discourse reinforced the profile of woman as mother and housewife (Maravall, 2004), the international one presented women on an equal footing with men. It was therefore an internally inconsistent narrative and in open contradiction with the international discourse.

In the first place, according to Rita K. Noonan, in practice, this discourse was inconsistent because it was precisely those women, namely the good mothers according to the model that the dictatorship wanted to impose, who saw the integrity of their families threatened, and whose reaction was to repudiate the state to defend themselves: after all "(...) they were only good wives and mothers looking for thousands of cherished missing relatives" (Noonan, 1995, p. 95).

Secondly, there were some paradigmatic examples that reflected the

⁵ Lorena Fries, Teresa Valdés and Alicia Frohman.

⁶ These were group of women in diverse voluntary positions, which were helping orphans, persons that were ill, and so on.

⁷ In particular, it suggested that Allende was lady's man (see Amorós, 2013), which was at odds with the objective and tenor of a conference that advocated dignity and equal rights for women.

clash regarding women's role within the sectors that supported the dictatorship. The first one was the reluctance to modify women's status inside marriage, regulated in the civil code from 1855, which first did not allow women to have property rights over their goods, and second put them in a situation of incapacity (Valenzuela, 1993; Htun, 2003). Along these lines, during 1960s and 1970s the Argentinean and Brazilian dictatorships had initiated reforms in order to modernize their civil codes, changing the status of women in marriage (more than with the aim to improve women's status, military leaders were motivated by their desire to generate major state reforms). The Chilean government, as the Argentinean and Brazilian, appointed an expert group to propose a reform to these regulations, which in Chile were not approved for political reasons (Htun, 2003, p. 58–68). In fact, the proposal generated a debate inside the regime among more modern and more conservative sectors, the latter represented by organisations such as CEMA-Chile or the National Secretary of Women, and supported by Lucia Hiriart. This sector managed to impede any reform and to postpone the discussion, despite the pressure exerted by professional women from the right. Alicia Romo stated: “the status of a married woman in the civil law is that of a person who is frankly diminished and discriminated; limited by law in her capacities and powers. She is not a full person, as she depends on her husband through a legal figure similar to that of slavery” (El Mercurio, July 18, 1986, cited in Valenzuela, 1993, p. 334). Finally, “the regime endorsed only a symbolic reform in 1989” (Htun, 2003, p.58).

Teresa Valdés (2019) considers that there was a clear contradiction between both discourses, more feminist in the international sphere, and inexistent in the domestic one. In the latter, the only place destined for women was in voluntary work, while in the international arena they could say whatever they wanted, as this did not have any impact internally. The international discourse, from her point of view, was opportunistic. Valdés even participated, as a member of the civil society, in the first Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean, in 1977, in Cuba. There she heard the Chilean delegate, who spoke about all the advances in the area of women's rights. Valdés recognises that this had nothing to do with the internal situation. In fact, another example of the clash between the different visions on women during the regime, is the one that arose due to the government's refusal to ratify the United Nations convention on the elimination of discrimination against women, after the official envoy had signed (Valenzuela, 1993, p.334). The CEDAW was not ratified until the last days of the dictatorship in 1989, as happened also with the reform of the civil code. The above suggests that any change that took place at that time was aimed more at cleaning the face of the government abroad than to make a real change, in other words a kind of ‘tactical concession’. In any case, it is possible to consider that the international sphere was seen by the progressive sectors of the dictatorship, specifically professional women, as a “window of opportunity” to raise some of their demands.

The international discourse was so inexistent in Chile, that Lorena Fries (2019) does not even remember it and thought that it must have been in line with the domestic discourse. This can be explained through the internal irrelevance of the international discourse, following Valdés (2019), or because Fries in the 1970s was still at the university and it was only later that she became part of the women's and the human rights movement. She suggested that “the debates about the international discourse of the dictatorship were recognised long after, analysed in retrospective more than at the specific moment, and without connection to the violations of women's human rights, which is an issue that opened just on the 2004, to be exact” (Fries, 2019). This reflects another tension, this time between diverse sectors that constituted the opposition to the dictatorship. There were organisations concerned with the human right violations that were occurring, such as women organised in the academia, women in NGOs and grass-roots organisations and women in parties from the left. Many of them were dealing with some “women's issues, but they were not necessarily working

together (Portugal, 2009).

The women's movement had become increasingly important throughout the world and had achieved relevant successes during the decades of the dictatorship (Fraser, 1999). However, in Chile women had incorporated mostly to the human rights movement or the grass-roots organisations and the feminist movement was not necessarily so significant (Rein, 2013). According to Frohmann (2019), there was a tension against feminism, so only few women were declaring themselves as such. Women from the left, who opposed the dictatorship and participated in political parties, also started battling for women's rights and theorizing about them, mainly in the 1980s (Valdés, 2000). This was concretised in the participation of women in different spaces: political parties, human right and women's organisations. Nevertheless, the members of these organisations thought that women's issues distracted from the main concerns of human rights violations (Frohmann, 2019).

After the UN conference in 1975, the feminist movement would take shape in Chile as more than just a part of the more general movement for the defence of human rights. The creation of the Women's Study Group (Círculos de Estudios de la Mujer) in 1979 marks a milestone in the development of new interpretative frameworks. Many of the participants in the meetings of the Study Group adopted a feminist approach and actively searched for gender equality in the nation and at home (Pieper Mooney, 2010, p. 616). “Democracy in the country and at home” would be the slogan that would link the transformation of gender roles with the end of the dictatorship, comparing the authoritarian system of government with the dominant pattern of behaviour within Chilean families. In the process, international links were very important (Pieper Mooney, 2010, p. 617). Many Chilean women participated in the non-governmental organisations present at the subsequent UN World Conferences on Women in Copenhagen (1980) and Nairobi (1985), conferences in which the Chilean state also participated. Teresa Valdés (2019) suggests that Nairobi's conference was particularly relevant for the movement. Women participated with a discourse that, although it recognised that the first objective to achieve was to recover the democracy and the respect for human rights, it also stated that it was essential to gain the recognition of women's rights, thus linking this idea of the democracy both in the country and at home. On the other hand, starting in 1981, Chilean women also joined the first regional feminist meetings, the Feminist Encounters (*Encuentros Feministas*), which aimed at an exchange of ideas, objectives and priorities (Alvarez, Dagnino, & Escobar, 1998, p. 297). Finally, the experience of life in exile and international solidarity encouraged, upon returning, many Chilean women to reconsider their role in society (Pieper Mooney, 2010, p. 614). Our interviewees recognise the relevance of women that came back from the exile. Before that, although Chileans had become part of the women's movement because of the experiences of that time, they were mostly autodidact, and did not pose a solid knowledge of feminist theory, which the exiles brought (Valdés, 2019; Fries, 2019). This situation also contributed to developing feminism within the grassroots organisations. Women became particularly important actors in the mobilisations from the 1980s, because they wanted to get rid of the national tyranny as well as the one they faced at home (Fries, 2019; Frohmann, 2019). The international link with women's organisations within Chile and their repudiation of the Chilean dictatorship “would facilitate the transition from the anti-dictatorial struggle to the questioning of the subordinate position of women” (Araujo, Mauro, & Guzmán, 2000, p. 136). Nevertheless, in retrospect, members of the women's movement in democracy consider that the women's movement at the end of the dictatorship was stronger than during the first years of the democracy, and that this was the period in which the movement was formed (Portugal, 2009; Puga, 2009; Weber, 2009). This was probably due to the fact that the distinct sectors that constituted women's movement battled united against the dictatorship, more than in favour of a specific feminist agenda (Weber, 2009). It may have also been due to the fact that it was at that time that

women first started dealing with issues proper to a women's movement. This development took place in spite of the absence of feminist organisations proper and the latter's dispersal into a number of smaller organisations devoted to a diverse set of issues.

Additionally to what has been sustained up to now, a further manifestation of the contradiction among diverse sectors of the dictatorship regarding women's role occurred during the plebiscite campaign of 1988. The government offered, through the Economic and Social Council, to consider the possibility of granting retirement to the housewife (Valenzuela, 1993, p. 334). This offer took place 14 years after the consultation that Sara Navas made to the Argentinean government in 1974. At the same time though, Admiral Merino proposed a new anti-abortion legislation,⁸ punishing those who either practiced it or helped to do so, as a way of defending the integrity of the family (Valenzuela, 1993, pp.334–335).

After losing the plebiscite, a group of women of the progressive right pointed out that among the causes of the defeat were the regime's attempts to depoliticise women (Valenzuela, 1993, p.317). Then, the need to adapt to a new political stage, led the aforementioned sectors, which had been promoting new roles for women, to the formation of fleeting organisations, such as the International Institute for the Development of Women's Political Leadership (IDLPM) (Valenzuela, 1993, p. 337). However, according to Matear (1996, p. 261) "The women's movement was never representative of women within the political right or centre-right."

Finally, one can argue that, although Chile is an example of a case where the boomerang model applies (Risse et al., 1999) in the area of human rights, this does not happen in the case of women's rights, because of a series of reasons: the conception of human rights at the time, the division within some groups of the opposition against the dictatorship, and the blockage on the part of the dictatorship to women's issues, even when the initiatives were led by women from the right, as has been seen in this section. Regarding the conception of women's rights, these were not perceived as human rights, by political actors, human rights organisations and the whole opposition to the dictatorship. In this direction, Fries (2019) say that "after the first or second report from the Interamerican Commission of Human Rights, which was brutal, human rights' organisations began to understand that they could alert the international community about what was happening in Chile... with women this did not happen". Valdés (2019) explains this as a tension between the human rights movement and the feminist one, which would be in line with the evolution that women's rights had even in the international sphere (Fraser, 1999). Fries (2019), on the other hand, suggests that this was due to the sexism present in all types of organisations, even in the human rights ones and in the left-wing parties. Frohmann (2019) put it even in a stronger way speaking about "sexism-leninism".

Final reflections

This article reflects on the reaction of the Chilean dictatorship to the international condemnation of the human rights violations committed domestically. Thus, arguments were articulated based around the ideas of the "international Marxist campaign", "a discourse of a draw between the actions" and the "internal war", all of which in parallel implied a resignification of human rights in the international arena that did not include something as fundamental as the right to personal integrity. This process fostered active participation on certain human rights issues that seemed "innocuous", such as decolonisation, apartheid and religious tolerance, in order to neutralise critics and gain sympathy. It was not an easy process and the tension between military authorities and career diplomats was recurrent. Ideology and

⁸Therapeutic abortion was allowed in Chile in accord with a regulation introduced in the Health Code of 1931 (Htun, 2003, p. 55).

pragmatism, interests and principles are always difficult to balance in foreign affairs and this was no exception.

In this context, the World Conference on Women, in 1975, was envisioned as an opportunity, allowing the defence of women's rights to be used as an international argument.

As such, the government could continue in its process of resignification of the discourse adopted, but also incorporate a new topic into its international agenda which did not represent a danger to the regime and which allowed it to gain "friendships". However, in this area there was a clear contradiction between the internal and international narrative of the dictatorship, since, although at the international level it supported openly feminist ideas, in the domestic affairs these were considered misguided and fought by different means. Nevertheless, this contradiction did not have any consequence in the strengthening of the women's movement, as it did happen with the human rights one. Therefore, in the women's area we cannot say that the boomerang model applies and one explanation for this was the relevance of the human rights violation themselves, so that nothing else seemed to have a place. Related with that is the absence of a gender perspective in the human rights arena. For example, according to Fries (2019), nobody asked about rapes in detection and sexual abuse to women, because they did not think of them as human rights violations and because it appeared too private. Moreover, women rights' relevance was set aside because of the sexism existing in the whole society, even in the left parties and in the human rights organisations. Finally, women that supported a more progressive agenda within the dictatorship were neutralised and their initiatives suppressed or postponed. We can consider this as part of the domination that men have exerted traditionally on women. The latter are considered 'the other sex', whereas men the neutral human being, naturally defining the interests of both sexes (Beauvoir, 2000). During the dictatorship the problems were the violations of human rights, among which the particular violations that women suffered did not have the relevance so as to be treated in particular. Thus, to a greater extent, problems and demands that women had 'as a group', could not be considered of significance, either by sectors of the left-wing, or by human rights organisations. This implied that these issues were postponed.

Acknowledgements

We express gratitude for the work done by Rodrigo González San Martín, who did the archiving work, identifying and selecting the relevant material, as well as the translation work done by Dominic Sowa, and the formatting work done by Ignacio Sánchez.

Funding statement

This work was supported by the Academic Productivity Support Program, PROA VID 2018, University of Chile, Santiago, Chile.

References

- Albornoz, L. (2018). Género y multilateralismo: cómo transitar a un futuro deseado. In J. Somavía, & P. Oyarce (Eds.). *Chile actor del sistema multilateral. Una tradición nacional* (pp. 283–322). Santiago de Chile: Academia Diplomática Andrés Bello, Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores.
- Alvarez, S., Dagnino, E., & Escobar, A. (1998). Introduction: The cultural and the political in Latin American social movements. In S. Alvarez, E. Dagnino, & A. Escobar (Eds.). *Cultures of politics. Politics of culture. Re-visioning Latin American social movements*. Colorado; Oxford: Westernview Press.
- Amorós, M. (2013). *Allende. La Biografía*. Santiago de Chile: Ediciones B.
- Angell, A. (2001). International support for the Chilean opposition, 1973-1989: Political parties and the role of exiles. In L. Whitehead (Ed.). *The international dimensions of democratization: Europe and the Americas*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Araujo, K., Mauro, A., & Guzmán, V. (2000). El surgimiento de la violencia domestica como problema público y objeto de políticas. *Revista CEPAL*, (70), 133–145.
- Bastías, M. (2013). *Sociedad Civil en Dictadura. Relaciones transnacionales, organizaciones y socialización política en Chile*. Santiago: Ediciones Universidad Alberto Hurtado.
- Beauvoir, S. (2000). *El Segundo Sexo*. Madrid: Ediciones Cátedra.
- Camacho Padilla, F. (2007). Las relaciones entre Chile y Suecia durante el primer

- gobierno de Olof Palme. *Iberoamericana*, VII(25), 65–85.
- Fernandois, J. (2004). *Mundo y Fin de Mundo. Chile en la política mundial 1900–2004*. Santiago: Ediciones Universidad Católica de Chile.
- Fraser, A. (1999). Becoming human: The origins and development of women's human's rights. *Human Rights Quarterly*, 21, 853–906.
- Giner, S. (1984). Southern European socialism in transition. *West European Politics*, 7(2), 138–157.
- Godoy, C. G. (2013). El Estado Chileno y las Mujeres en el Siglo XX. *Revista de Historia*, 14(1), 97–123.
- Grez, F. (2015). El hispanismo en las mujeres chilenas: las influencias franquistas en la Secretaría Nacional de la Mujer, Chile 1973–1989. *Revista Izquierdas*, 25, 54–75.
- Hansen, L. (2006). *Security as practice: Discourse analysis and the Bosnian war*. London; New York: Routledge.
- Hansen, L. (2012). Discourse analysis, post-structuralism, and foreign policy. In A. Steve Smith Hadfield, & Dunne (Eds.). *Foreign policy: Theories, actors, cases*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Harvey, H. (2011). *Las relaciones entre Chile e Israel, 1973–1990. La conexión oculta*. Santiago de Chile: RIL Editores.
- Htun, M. (2003). *Sex and the state. Abortion, divorce, and the family under Latin American dictatorships and democracies*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Judt, T. (2006). *Postguerra. Una historia de Europa desde 1945*. Madrid: Taurus-Santillana.
- Lechner, N., & Levy, S. (1984). *El Disciplinamiento de la Mujer*. Santiago: FLACSO.
- Maravall, J. (2004). El Ideario de Mujer bajo la Dictadura Militar (1973–1990). *Pensamiento Crítico*, 4.
- Matear, A. (1996). Desde la Protesta a la Propuesta: Gender politics in transition in Chile. *Democratization*, 3(3), 246–263.
- Matras, J., & Lightman, M. (2016). Clinton's second term: Making women's rights a foreign policy issue. *Presidential Studies Quarterly*, 27(1), 121–125.
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs (1974). *Memory of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs*.
- Munizaga, G. (1983). *El Discurso Público de Pinochet. Un Análisis Semiológico*. Buenos Aires: Clacso.
- Muñoz, H. (1986). *Las Relaciones Exteriores del Gobierno Militar Chileno*. Santiago de Chile: Ediciones del Ornitorrinco.
- Muñoz, H., & Portales, C. (1987). *Una Amistad Esquivia. Las Relaciones de Estados Unidos y Chile*. Santiago de Chile: Pehuén Editores.
- Noonan, R. (1995). Women against the state: Political opportunities and collective action frames in Chile's transition to democracy. *Sociological Forum*, 10(1), 81–111.
- Pieper Mooney, J. (2010). Forging feminisms under dictatorship: women's international ties and national feminist empowerment in Chile, 1973–1990. *Women's History Review*, 19(4), 613–630.
- Rein, T. (2013). *Mobilising against domestic violence: Women's movements in the domestic and international context of Latin America*. Thesis (PhD) University of Essex <https://ethos.bl.uk/OrderDetails.do?uin=uk.bl.ethos.601464>.
- Risse, T., Ropp, S., & Sikkink, K. (1999). *The power of human rights. International norms and domestic change*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Saintard, J. (2013). Visión de la mujer en el pensamiento y acción de Eduardo Frei Montalva. In A. Pérez Guíñez (Ed.). *Eduardo Frei Montalva: Fe, política y cambio social*. Santiago de Chile: Ediciones Biblioteca del Congreso Nacional de Chile.
- Schoultz, L. (1981). *Human rights and United States policy toward Latin America*. Princeton; New Jersey: Princeton University Press.
- Valdés, T. (2000). *De lo Social a lo Político. La acción de las mujeres latinoamericanas*. Santiago: LOM Ediciones.
- Valenzuela, M. E. (1993). Las Mujeres en la Transición Democrática. In P. Drake, & I. Jaksic (Eds.). *El Difícil Camino Hacia la Democracia en Chile 1982–1990*. Santiago: FLACSO.
- 1973.
- AMRECH (1974a). Coded telex from the Chilean ambassador to the United Nations to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, N° 95, February 9th 1974.
- AMRECH (1974b). Coded telex from the Chilean ambassador to the United Nations to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, N° 127, February 19th 1974.
- AMRECH (1974c). Coded telex from the Chilean ambassador to the United Nations to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, N° 129, February 20th 1974.
- AMRECH (1974d). Coded telex from the Chilean ambassador to the United Nations to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, N° 138, February 22nd 1974.
- AMRECH (1974e). Coded telex from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the Chilean ambassador at the United Nations, N° 149, February 27th 1974.
- AMRECH (1974f). Confidential diplomatic cable from the Chilean ambassador at the United Nations to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, N° 7, March 19th 1974.
- AMRECH (1974g). Confidential diplomatic cable from the Chilean ambassador at the United Nations to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, N° 17, May 8th 1974.
- AMRECH (1974h). Confidential diplomatic cable from the Chilean ambassador at the United Nations to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, N° 1159/26, September 3rd 1974.
- AMRECH (1974i). Diplomatic cable from the chargé d'affaires of the Chilean permanent representative to the United Nations to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, N° 1541/433, October 24th 1974.
- AMRECH (1974j). Diplomatic cable from the Chilean ambassador at the United Nations to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, N° 379/122, March 7th 1974.
- AMRECH (1974k). Diplomatic cable from the Chilean ambassador at the United Nations to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, N° 1451/49.
- AMRECH (1974l). Diplomatic cable from the Chilean ambassador to the United Nations to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs N° 392/130, March 12th 1974.
- AMRECH (1974m). Diplomatic cable from the Chilean ambassador to the United Nations to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, N° 1582/563, November 22nd 1974. Text of the intervention of the delegate Mr Diez on the topic of religious intolerance.
- AMRECH (1974n). Letter from the representative committee of the Israelite Community of Chile to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, ref. 24047, December 4th 1974.
- AMRECH (1975a). Diplomatic cable of March 21st 1975.
- AMRECH (1975b). Instruction 77 of 1975.
- AMRECH (1975c). Instruction 78 of 1975.
- AMRECH (1975d). Public telex of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the United Nations high commissioner for refugees. May 30th 1975.
- AMRECH (1975e). Telex 76 of February 1975.
- AMRECH (1975f). Telex 91 of February 1975.
- AMRECH (1975g). Telex 192 of April 1975.
- Archive of the Argentine Chancellery (1974). Letter from Sara Navas, legal advisor of the National Women's secretary to the ambassador of Argentina in Chile, November 21st 1974. (E fund. AH/0120).
- NARA (1975). Official report of the US embassy in Mexico to the secretary of state in Washington. R011528Z July 1975.
- Qué Pasa (1975). *Revista Qué Pasa*.

Newspaper Archives

Revista Ercilla. (1975, (July 9th 1975)).

Documents

- Comission of Human Rights (1975). Letter dated 27 of December 1974 received from the general secretary of the amnesty international. United Nations, Economic and Social Council.
- General Assembly of the United Nations (1975). Report to the economic and social council. "Declaration made by Mr Ghulam Ali Allana, chairperson-rapporteur of the ad-hoc working group charged with investigating the current situation of human rights in Chile".
- Organization of American States (1985). Report on the situation of human rights in Chile. Washington.

Interviews⁹

- *Fries, Lorena. November 28, 2019. (President of Corporación Humanas. Lawyer of Human Right and former member of La Morada).
- Frohman, Alicia. December 16, 2019. (Historian, former member of FLACSO and of La Morada, and currently working on ECLAC).
- Portugal, Ana María. December 4, 2009. (General Coordinator of ISIS).
- Puga, Rosario. December 3, 2009. (Member of the directory of Corporation La Morada).
- Valdés, Teresa. December 11, 2019. (Sociologist, specialist in gender, former member of FLACSO, and worked in diverse international organisms, such as ECLAC, UNFPA, and UNIFEM).
- Weber, Paulina. December 2, 2009. (Co-Director of MEMCH).