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**Title:** La dimensión internacional del pensamiento político Chileno. Aprendizaje y transferencia en el exilio  
**Issue Date:** 2016-09-13
Summary

One of the direct consequences of the installation of military rule in Chile in 1973 was the massive exile of intellectuals, scholars and leaders of political parties allied to the ousted government of Salvador Allende. The geographical destination of these political leaders in exile varied greatly, resulting in a massive influx of Chileans throughout the world. For the first time in Chilean political history, a large contingent of political-intellectuals landed en masse in different continents in the harsh conditions of exile. Thus began a long and complex journey for a highly fragmented and polarised left, which had to process the end of the Popular Unity government in a completely new environment. During this intellectual process, some of the Chilean exiles learned and transferred ideas from their new environment and constructed a new political project to bring democracy back to Chile.

This work aims to shed light on how and in which ways the Western European context had an impact on the Chilean exiles’ political thinking. In doing so, this study seeks to incorporate an international dimension into the analysis of Chile’s recent political history. In this regard, the study aims to fill in the gap that authors like Ulianova (2014), Purcell and Riquelme (2000) and Hite (2000), among others, have highlighted regarding the lack of its incorporation into the analysis of Chilean political development. This is especially relevant for the 1973-1989 period, when a sizable number of Chileans had to abandon their country, becoming spontaneous ambassadors for the democratic Chilean cause.

In addition, this study aims to shed light on the process of political reformulation that took place under the specific conditions of exile. The spatial-temporal break caused by exile put both basic certainties and the individual and collective identities of those who had abruptly abandoned their homeland under enormous pressure. In the case of political exile, this new state of uncertainty regarding identity is compounded by the perceived failure of the politics that forced such an exile. Therefore, exile precedes a reconstitution of certainties and political paradigms in new social and political scenarios. This duality fills exile activity in the host country and leads to a reinterpretation of the past, based on the new incentives received in this situation. Exile, which involved coexisting with a new socio-cultural context and dynamic intellectual debates, directly affected the way in which the causes and consequences of the military coup were interpreted.

The influence of exile on Chilean politics was expressed in diverse ways. The exiles established a broad network of international contacts, both with governments and non-governmental organisations, created think tanks and exerted pressure through international organisations. The mere presence of political refugees managed to fix and
maintain the world's attention on the military regime in Chile. Moreover, exile influenced Chile’s political development because of the impact of exile on Socialist leaders, who oriented themselves towards a process of ideological renovation that involved moderation of thought, allowing for their convergence with other political actors. Finally, coordination between exiles and internal resistance - often financed by international aid agencies - allowed the opposition to organise itself against the military regime. It is this influence on exiles in Chile’s re-democratisation that will be tackled specifically in this study.

As a general hypothesis, it is argued that it is impossible to propose a comprehensive analysis of the history of Chilean political thought in the second half of the twentieth century without considering its international dimension. In addition, this study will seek to identify the role played by political crises in the ideological reformulation of the Chilean political and intellectual elite. It is argued that, given the feelings of uncertainty and perceptions of failure, political leaders turned to new points of reference and ideas, in order to propose new alternatives for their political objectives to be achieved. This study also addresses the influence that the political circumstances in Western Europe had on the intellectual political process of Chilean exiles. It is argued that the dynamics of the European political context greatly determined the political reflections of Chilean exiles in Western Europe. Moreover, the study analyses the role of the organisation of European solidarity networks around the Chilean political debate. In this regard, it argues that it was through the contact that emerged from solidarity organisations - particularly those based on the newly hoisted flag of the defence of human rights - that Chilean leftist political leaders came into contact with European ideas and political institutions. In addition, this study deals with the so-called ‘process of renovation and socialist convergence’ and its role in the organisation of democratic opposition to the military regime. In this sense, it is said that the Socialist Renovation is an example of the impact of the international dimension on local politics and that it played a central role, from exile, in Chile's return to democracy. Finally, the case study will address the influence of the Dutch context on Chilean exiles. In this sense, the research seeks to identify how the process of ideological renovation, experienced by a segment of Chilean exiles, was developed, through the analysis of the origins, development and work of the Institute for the New Chile founded in Rotterdam in 1977.

In order to analyse the above-mentioned topics, the study makes use of the concept of political transfer proposed by Te Velde (2005, 2007) to identify and explain the ways in which Chilean political exiles connected with the Western European context. This concept, which has mainly been used to discuss political transfer in the nineteenth century, is complemented by disciplines such as political science so that the concept can
be applied to more recent phenomenon, such as that experienced by Chilean exiles during the late 1970s and early 1980s in Western Europe.

Concerning the structure of this dissertation, Chapter 1 starts by operationalising the political transfer concept, stressing its use in identifying the connection between agent and context. After this, the concept of political learning is also adopted as a mechanism for observing how a transfer agent selects, adapts and appropriates a particular practice or political idea, according to its own needs, in order to rebuild the mental maps that have recently collapsed. The connection between political learning and political crises is also addressed in this section in order to understand how political crises encourage exiles to seek new references in the ideas circulating in order to rethink their political leanings. The third concept which is incorporated into the theoretical construction of this research is the theme of exile. This gives a specific analysis-oriented aim to exile, which acts as background for and as an active witness to the political transfer and political learning of Chileans during their relatively long period of exile.

The concept of political transfer, complemented by political learning in exile, allows for the relationship between the exiled Chilean community and the international system to be observed. In this relationship, the creative processing of political failure - both of ideas and alliances - became the centre of analysis. The latter led to the development of a new political proposal expressed through the processes of Socialist Renovation and Socialist Convergence in exile. To achieve this, the political leaders, stimulated by the crisis caused by political failure, first questioned the foundations of their thinking in the light of the ideas circulating on the international exile scene. Subsequently, once mistakes had been identified, a new political proposal was built, based on what had been learnt during exile.

After the theoretical framework made it possible to address the connection between agents and context, the aim was to frame the importance of the international dimension within the history of Chilean twentieth century political thought. Chapter 2 shows that the international factor has always been an important element of the dynamics of Chilean politics. In addition, it demonstrates that, in the Chilean case, the intellectual political elite, when facing a political crisis, have always sought out ideas from international reference points to help overcome any uncertainties and reorganise their understanding of the political scene. This constant factor in Chilean history was reinforced during this time when, due to the crisis caused by the coup, leftist political leaders sought new ways to rebuild their political projects using international references. The period of exile proved to be of particular importance because of the scale on which leaders were connected to the ideas circulating in the international arena. In this sense, the present study seeks to reinstate the political formulations developed in exile as part of the history of Chilean political thought in the second half of the twentieth century.
Chapter 3 shows the importance of the context of Western Europe in the political debate that followed the traumatic experience of the coup in exile. The European political and ideological context at the time indicated that Western European leftist political forces were also going through the restructuring of their main doctrines, a process in which the Chilean case helped to reappraise the relationship between socialism and democracy. In addition, and in line with the historical analysis carried out in Chapter 2, this chapter also shows that the Western European political landscape remained fairly similar to how the Chilean political landscape was organised. This facilitated interaction between Chileans and their new context, allowing them to actively join in European political discussions. Thanks to this and like their European peers, the exiles formed their own opinions based on the ideas in circulation, which, in the case of Socialist Renovation, prioritised the construction of a democratic socialism that was less ideological and more pragmatic and that would ensure the establishment and functioning of greater political alliances.

For the purposes of this study, the most important debate in which Chileans were involved was the discussion about the relationship between socialism and democracy. From their own experience with authoritarian regimes - either in Chile or east of the Iron Curtain - a sector of the Chilean left began to rethink its traditional links with democracy. These early debates, fuelled by the need to make sense of a traumatic reality, urged political intellectuals to seek out new references to make sense of the new reality that had been imposed on them.

The scenario that accompanied this process coincided with renewed attention internationally on human rights. Thus, the Chileans arrived in Europe to a significantly mature international framework for the defence of human rights, which allowed political activism against the military regime to be channelled through the human rights discourse. This contributed to an apolitical language that facilitated temporary partnerships based around the Chilean cause, even in a Cold War context. Thus, the human rights international cross-organisations managed to build bridges between political militancy of different kinds. In this regard, it was under the banner of human rights that Chileans were strongly linked to European ideas and political practices, especially through the organisation of transnational solidarity networks. In this context, Chilean exiles could leave their prejudices aside to interact en masse with the ideas and practices that served as ideological references in a period of political rethinking. The centrality of the context, either due to intellectual debates or to the spontaneous solidarity organisations that emerged around human rights concerns, set the tone for the first stage of the Chilean exile, which experienced its first transformation, generated by the intellectual processing of the defeat in a new environment. It was precisely this context that was one of the determining factors in explaining the different paths taken by Chilean political groups.
The second stage of intellectual processing in exile is analysed in Chapter 4. In this chapter, it is possible to identify that, after the first period of exile, the Chilean political and intellectual elite in European exile set themselves more complex policy formulation goals. The exiles’ analysis went from processing the crises to building a new political proposal, known as the Renovation process, which was constructed in the light of interaction with the new ideas and political practices available in Western Europe. The Renovation (and its practical application in the Convergence movement) proposed a new type of democratic socialism, which not only sought to denounce the military regime but also to pose a real alternative to government in the event of the end of military rule.

The political transfer contained in the Renovation was analysed from two different perspectives: the reappraisal of the value of democracy and the subsequent distance from Marxism-Leninism. This process, coinciding with debates on the same in European socialism, began a new era of political agreements based on the minimum values of democracy. In this new political formulation, speeches that were focused on specific topics were constructed, removing ideological confrontations that could endanger the fragile balance of any alliance.

Abandoning the party rigidities that had prevented rapprochement between the political elites in exile, the political leaders of the Renovation therefore found themselves with concrete issues on which to lay the foundations of a new and democratic opposition to the military regime. This process was not immediate and the opposition still had a long way to go to become a real alternative for a democratic government. However, the origins of the opposition that eventually became the Chilean government between 1990 and 2010 can be identified at this time.

Through the analysis of the foundation and work done at the Institute for the New Chile, it is possible to establish that the dynamics of Dutch politics were at the centre of crucial debates at the time of the Chilean exiles’ arrival. This, in turn, determined that both the Chilean and the Dutch followed parallel paths in the complex journey between socialism and democracy. It can also be observed that, through interaction with Dutch politicians, Chileans began a process of selection, appropriation and eventually the political transfer of the environmental elements that made sense for the reconstruction of their political project in exile. In doing so, the main elements of political transfer were accepting democracy as an opportunity and limit for political activity; coalition building, particularly favouring joint work between Socialists and Christian Democrats and the tendency to seek consensus in the political arena. The diffusion and circulation of Renovation ideas, carried out by the Institute, was paramount. They allowed for the debate to grow, bringing together a wider network in which Renovation ideas were debated. Also, the reorientation of the Institute's work once in Chile helped confirm how
political transfer, initiated in exile, was completed when Renovation ideas were applied in the Chilean context.

Lastly, it can be identified that the approach of the Renovation sector played an important role in Chilean political reality, highlighting the importance of the international dimension in Chile’s political development. The already demonstrated importance of the socialist renovation in the intellectual sphere and of convergence in the field of political practices in Chilean political development shows that an analysis of Chilean political history in recent decades would be incomplete without considering its international dimension.

Despite being a dark moment in the pages of Chilean history, exile proved to be a creative time for national political thought. It was in the context of exile that political leaders developed the intellectual capacity to process failure. This, in turn, led to a process determined by the political transfer of those contextual elements that meant it made more sense to rebuild a political project in Chile. Such political and intellectual reconstruction, not only of ideas but also of ways of doing politics, led to the foundation of the Coalition of Political Parties for Democracy, which took control in Chile in 1990 and held power until 2010. The consequences of this transfer are both multiple and complex and pose interesting questions for future exploration.

For this study, many primary sources were used. Between 2013 and 2016, a total of 39 interviews with key informants were conducted in both Chile and The Netherlands, all providing crucial information. Also, the revision of documents in the General Archive of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Santiago de Chile allowed for interesting light to be shed on the activities of exiles in The Netherlands between 1976 and 1983. Along the same lines, reviewing documentation in the archives of the International Institute of Social History in Amsterdam shed light on the relationship between Western European solidarity networks or organisations and Chile. Finally, exclusive access was granted to the personal files of Saskia Stuiveling on the foundation, development and activities of the Institute for the New Chile in Rotterdam. The latter provided a privileged view of how the Institute functioned, providing key information about the development of learning processes and Chileans’ political transfer during exile.