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# Chilean Muralism in Exile: On Solidarity and Transnational Memory

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# Chilean Muralism in Exile: On Solidarity and Transnational Memory

**Abstract.** 50 years after the coup d`état in Chile, cities such as Amsterdam, Frankfurt, Leeds, Milan, Belgrade, Los Angeles, and Chicago, still display traces of Chilean exile on the walls of cultural centres, universities, theatres and other buildings. These are the remains of hundreds of murals, painted by brigades created by Chileans in exile to encourage their host countries to show solidarity with their resistance to the Pinochet dictatorship. The complex experience of Chilean exile and its long-lasting and intergenerational repercussions have only slowly been integrated into research and memory practices. This article examines three case studies of Chilean murals in exile as atypical forms of testimonial sources, with the aim of gaining insights into the multi-layered network of actors behind them, in particular into the testimonies of Chilean exiles and actors of international solidarity. It also explores the memorial dimensions of

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postephemeral murals and how these can function as carriers of a collective, transnational memory of Chilean exile.

**Keywords:** Chilean muralism, exile, solidarity, transnational memory, post ephemeral murals.

**Resumen.** A 50 años del golpe de Estado en Chile, ciudades como Ámsterdam, Frankfurt, Leeds, Milán, Belgrado, Los Ángeles y Chicago aún muestran huellas del exilio chileno en las paredes de centros culturales, universidades, teatros, y otros edificios. Son los restos de cientos de murales, pintados por brigadas muralistas creadas por chilenos en el exilio para animar la solidaridad en sus países de acogida contra la dictadura de Pinochet. La compleja experiencia del exilio chileno y sus repercusiones duraderas e intergeneracionales se han integrado lentamente en las prácticas de investigación y memoria. Este artículo examina tres estudios de caso de murales chilenos en el exilio como fuentes testimoniales atípicas, con el objetivo de obtener información sobre las múltiples capas de actores que hay detrás de ellos, en particular sobre los testimonios de los exiliados chilenos y los protagonistas de los movimientos de solidaridad internacional. También explora las dimensiones conmemorativas de los murales post-efímeros y cómo éstos pueden funcionar como portadores de una memoria colectiva y transnacional del exilio chileno.

**Palabras clave:** Muralismo chileno, exilio, solidaridad, memoria transnacional, murales post-efímeros.

## Introduction

This article emerges from our ongoing interdisciplinary research project *Cartographies of Chilean Muralism in Exile*, which is digitally mapping the hundreds of Chilean murals created by exiled Chileans during the 1973-1990 military dictatorship, as well as the interconnected actor network behind each mural; consisting, first, of the *afectados* (Gatti, 2014), the actors affected by the state violence of exile; second, the local, national and international solidarity and human rights advocacy groups who played a key role in supporting the exiles; and, third, the local, regional, national and international organisations that have created programs to support the exiles (e.g. the Chile-Committees, the World University Service Chile Scholarship programme in the UK, the West-Berlin-based *Chile-Nachrichten*, and many more). The aims of the project are multiple

and include examining the role of the exile brigades, their operational dynamics, the solidarity networks involved, the circulation of protest iconographies, and the evolution of the murals' function and meaning over time, as well as to disclose the murals' polyphonous testimonials, examine their role as carriers of transnational, transcultural and multidirectional memory, and to fully grasp their potential as historical landmarks and memorials of exile. Methodologically, we draw on new testimonial studies, memory studies, digital humanities, art history, history of social movements, reception aesthetics, and more. To date, we have documented over 260 murals and we have conducted over forty interviews with former exiled muralists, exiles, and members of solidarity networks.[3] By no means does this article claim a final and complete analysis of the entire phenomenon, but is rather a presentation of work in progress.We begin from the observation that, fifty years after the coup d'état in Chile, numerous cities in Europe and across the globe still bear the visual legacy of murals created by Chilean exiles. Their presence often continues to resonate both with former Chilean exiles and with the surrounding community, as shown through initiatives in cities such as Belgrade, Milan, Leeds, Moirans, Bremen, Los Ángeles, and more, who have sought to protect and restore their local Chilean murals, leading to a reactivation and a renewal of their significance, and often to a reconnection of the networks that originally supported them.

In this article, we will argue that these initiatives have not only elucidated local commitments to the solidarity campaigns with Chile, but have also laid bare a *postephemeral* and a commemorative dimension of the murals. We will start by addressing the measured inclusion of the theme of Chilean exile in both academic research and memory practices. We will then look at the role of muralism in exile as a key element of the international solidarity campaigns for Chile, and address its dimensions of testimony and memory. We will then define the concept of the postephemeral mural and illustrate its characteristics by analysing three case studies from two different countries, and providing some preliminary conclusions on the scope of the research project.

[3] These interviews took place in the framework of the research project and the corresponding documentary film Chilean Muralism in Exile (2024) directed by Daniel Oblitas Baca and Sandra Rudman. We wish to express our sincerest gratitude to everyone who shared their story with us.

## Chilean Exile in Research and Memory Practices

It has been noted that there is "a paucity of research on Chilean exile", especially within Chile (Hirsch, 2012: 48; Jedlicki, 2007: 88). Research on Chilean exile began outside of Chile, often conducted by Chilean exiled academics (Rebolledo González, 2006: 101ff.) and initially focussed mainly on psychological, sociological and political issues, addressing topics such as mental health, integration, solidarity networks and cultural production in exile (Adams, 2012; Angell and Carstairs, 1987; Bolzman, 1989; Cieters, 2002; Jedlicki, 2001; Kay, 1988; Munoz, 1980; Peris Blanes, 2009; Prognon, 2008; Sznajder and Roniger, 2007; Wright and Zúñiga, 2007). Within Chile, the psychological dimensions of exile began to draw attention as soon as the first exiles were allowed to return (Arnold and Haefner, 1985; Lira, 1982). Yet, a broader analytical perspective would only develop ten years later, after the beginning of the transition to democracy, spearheaded by the anthropological work of Loreto Rebolledo's (Rebolledo González, 2006; Rebolledo González and Acuña, 2001; Rebolledo, 2001).

In addition, memory practices in Chile have slowly seen the integration of the experiences and histories of former exiles.[4] Hugo Cancino noted that exile is "a matter officially forgotten and a mere subaltern part of collective memory of Chileans who lived the dictatorship within their country" (Cancino Troncoso, 2003: n.p). Loreto Rebolledo further pointed to the complete absence of Chilean exiles in the practices of memory-making: "El exilio no tiene fecha ni lugar donde recordarlo. No hay memorials, placas, museos, ni otros soportes materiales" (Rebolledo González, 2006: 13), which remained unchanged six years later, as attested by Isabel Piper Sharif's observation that sites of memory usually do not remember the exiled (Piper Shafir, 2012: 13).

An important development came in 2014, when Chile's flagship institution of memory, the Museo de la Memoria y de los Derechos Humanos (MMDH), dedicated the year to the topic *Asilo/Exilio*. Maria-Luisa Ortiz, head of collections and research at the MMDH, spoke of a "debt" to the exiles and

[4] As a brain drain of leftist intellectuals and cultural workers took place, exile also generated a vast cultural production: the resistance shown in graphic art and literary magazines such as La Araucanía or El Rebelde was an early production of memory, and the exilic experience was a recurrent topic.
A particular reflexive and more intimate way of dealing with the experience of exile happened in poetry (Gonzalo Millán, *La Ciudad*, 1979), novels (Antonio Skármeta, *No pasó nada*, 1980; Virginia Vidal, *Rumbo a Ítaca*, 1987; Leonor Quinteros Ochoa, *Exilkind*, 2014), film (eg. Leutén Rojas Etcheverry: *Exilio. El peso de la memoria*, 2019), and graphic art (Eg. Guillermo Núñez). See also (Rebolledo González, 2006: 106ff.)

described the museum's role as follows: “como museo, sentíamos que teníamos una deuda en poder acoger lo que era esta memoria [del exilio]”. She also spoke of exile as:

> un tema del cual los chilenos habíamos hablado muy poco también, en lo que era su profundo significado para tantas y tantas familias en este país, para la sociedad en su conjunto. Entonces empezamos con la idea de

comenzar a hablar del exilio, y abrir espacios de conversación, y asumir esta tarea como museo. (MMDH, 2016)


Figure 1: Brigada Pablo Neruda (1975). Inti-Illimani Quilapayún per il Cile, Afiche para el concierto Arena de Verona, Verona. CL MMDH 00000164-000001-000006, Fundación Museo de la Memoria y los derechos Humanos. Part of the exhibition Afiches de Solidaridad Internacional (MMDH, Santiago, 08.05.2014-28.09.2014).

Using a transgenerational approach, exiles, their children and grandchildren were invited to share their testimonies through a user-friendly multimedia format, while

several educational projects invited the public to join the dialogue (MMDH, 2014). In May 2014, the MMDH launched the exhibition International Solidarity Posters (figure 1) that shed light on the many solidarity campaigns with Chile and Chilean exiles. This was followed in October 2014 by the exhibition Exilio/Asilo, with twelve sections dedicated to key elements of the exilic experience, such as departure, expulsion and uprooting, international activism and condemnation, the second generation, and return. In addition, in June 2016, the MMDH launched the Oral Archive Voces del Asilo/Exilio, an online database featuring over sixty exile testimonies, which continues to be open to new contributions. Both the creation of these participatory oral archives and the integration of various elements from the aforementioned exhibitions into the permanent exhibition[5] have marked the beginnings of institutional recognition of the theme of exile.[6]

In the framework of the activist turn in memory studies (Gutman and Wüstenberg, 2023), it has been observed that, in Latin America, "the shaping of collective memory around [its] legacy of violence is inseparable from activism" (Mandolessi, 2023: 295). As a research project on testimony and memory, Cartographies of Chilean Muralism in Exile also belongs to those "prácticas signadas políticamente, múltiples pero con una direccionalidad específica: la resistencia al silencio oficial" (Calveiro, 2006: 65). The murals painted in exile provided us with an opening to address a persistent difficulty that surrounds speaking about exile. Their disclosure will therefore contribute to integrating the collective, transnational memory of Chilean exile into both research and memory practices.

## Chilean Muralism in Exile

The Chilean mural brigades constituted "uno de los fenómenos artísticos de mayor importancia en nuestra historia [de Chile]" (Ivelić and Galaz, 1988: 45), which

[5] This can be seen in room number 4 Condena Internacional, which is dedicated to the mobilisation of Chileans in exile, international solidarity, and the reprobation of human rights in Chile by the international community. Additionally, a world map showing the global distribution of Chileans in exile equally has also become part of the permanent exhibition.

[6] Often, the exiled communities have established their own platforms, e.g. Rayuela Kollektiv Berlin or Viena Chilena 73 – 23. See the contribution from Molden et. al. in this issue.

emerged as a "nueva forma de hacer propaganda política" (Sandoval, 2001: 27), as "herramienta de intervención política, […] de intervención coyuntural sobre un hecho de la vida pública" (Longoni, 1999: 23). Their urban disputes initially began during the 1963 presidential election campaign: supporters of the Christian-Democrat candidate Eduardo Frei Montalva had begun to paint star tags on the walls (Sandoval, 2001: 27). As a reaction, a group of supporters of the Unidad Popular created the acronym *Vota (V) por (X) Allende (A)*, which became "el símbolo de la campaña presidencial de Allende" (San Julián, 2014: 2). In the decade leading up to Allende's election in 1971, the walls of public space gradually turned into a means of popular communication and contention (Arrate & Rojas, 2003: 557). Undoubtedly, the best-known brigades are the Brigadas Ramona Parra (BRP)[7], which emerged as militant propaganda groups of support for the Unidad Popular. As Ana Longoni explains:

> La línea muralista que inauguran las brigadas Ramona Parra es la del mural efímero, callejero, realizado por militantes (que no se consideran a sí mismos artistas) en condiciones de riesgo. Antes que de una manifestación artística, se trata de una intervención coyuntural sobre un hecho de la vida política. (Longoni, 1999: 23)

In addition to the ephemeral nature of murals, to which we will return later, Longoni also points out the risk involved in the activity itself. As brigades of oppositional political parties often clashed violently, techniques of the brigades were kept simple, effective, and quick, with a work team divided into *trazadores*, who outlined the letters and images; *fondeadores* who painted the background; *rellenadores* who filled the image; *fileteadores* who added contours; and *retocadores* who retouched it (Kunzle, 1978: 362f.).

After the election of Salvador Allende, it was the Brigadas Ramona Parra who took this practice to a new level: "la sacaron de su estricto encuadre propagandístico, para convertirla en un medio de expresión popular y colectivo" (Ivelić and Galaz, 1988: 288). With the coup d'état of 11 September 1973, the cultural project associated to the Chilean road to socialism came under attack; personal libraries were burned, and the offices of Chile Films, Quimantú editorial, Nueva Canción – or New Song – label Discoteca del Cantar Popular (DICAP), and others were destroyed in what is commonly known as the apagón cultural or

[7] Named after Ramona Parra, a young communist who died by police force during a protest at Bulnes Square in 1946. (Sandoval, 2001: 27)

[8] Ivelić and Galaz write: "dos días después de haber triunfado el pueblo en las urnas, apareció el primer mural en las calles de Santiago. Muy pronto siguieron otros. Hasta que en un par de semanas la ciudad cambió de fisionomía" (Ivelić and Galaz, 1988: 45).

el golpe estético (Errázuriz, 2012). The cultural manifestations related to the Unidad Popular were systematically dismissed or relegated to a position of resistance (Jara, 2021). With Operación Limpieza (Trumper, 2016: 3), the murals, considered "testigo[s] molesto[s]" (Núñez, 1993: 113) of the era of Allende and the Unidad Popular, were removed and the brigades were disarticulated. Their members were either arrested, forced to go underground, or into exile.

Both exiled artists and muralists, as well as individual exiles, formed new muralist brigades in their respective host countries. While the actions of the exile brigades had a direct formal relationship to the muralist tradition of the Brigadas Ramona Parra, many of the elements that defined the BRPs in Chile, in terms of imagery, modus operandi and spatiality, changed in exile. The modus operandi of the Brigades now followed almost exclusively legal channels9, as the brigades now only painted upon invitation. These invitations often came from solidarity groups who then discussed the location, design and necessary administrative procedures with their local councils, and provided the brigades with official support in the form of transport, materials, scaffolding and an honorarium that was exclusively earmarked for Chile. Approximately twenty brigades were formed, several of which were founded around a former member of a muralist brigade. The Brigada Ramona Parra of the Netherlands, for example, was founded by Jorge 'Kata' Nuñez, a former BRP leader in Valdivia, and Eduardo 'Mono' Carrasco, a founding member of the Brigada Ramona Parra who played a leading role in the Brigada Pablo Neruda in Italy. Many other brigades were made up of exiles with little to no muralist experience, such as the Brigada Salvador Allende in Frankfurt or the Brigada Elmo Catalán in Rotterdam.

## Murals in Exile as Vehicles of the Chile Solidarity Campaigns

The Chilean exile brigades played a pivotal role in the solidarity campaigns for Chile by painting hundreds of murals all over the globe. They directed a struggle for Chile's freedom, driven by a testimonial urge to denounce the coup, continue the legacy of the Unidad Popular, and motivate spectators' solidarity. However, the painting of murals rarely happened on its own. The event often took place in

[9] One exception is the mural at Bielefeld University, which was secretly painted overnight by the Salvador Allende Brigade in December 1976. After the initial shock of the university administration, the mural was allowed to stay and eventually became the first mural in Germany to be placed under heritage protection in 2015.

the context of a broader solidarity event or a *peña* to raise funds for Chile, featuring other activities such as performances of Chilean New Song, *arpilleras* and art prints sales, screenings of Chilean documentaries and films, dance and theatre, and tastings of Chilean *empanadas* and red wine (Wright, 2014). When the painting of a mural was the main activity, it nevertheless fostered a vibrant atmosphere of collectivity, enriched by the presence of spectators, shared food and live music performances.

The connection between Chilean New Song and the muralist brigades in exile was of particular importance. Patrice McSherry has argued how the musicians of Chilean New Song were "unofficial 'ambassadors' of the Allende movement" that "helped to generate and sustain the support and solidarity of masses of people" in exile (McSherry, 2017: 15). Such was the case of Inti Illimani, who were exiled in Italy and were often accompanied by the local Brigada Pablo Neruda who painted murals during their concerts (see also: Gregoretti, 1976). In our interviews with Horacio Durán from Inti Illimani and Hector 'Mono' Carrasco from the Brigada Pablo Neruda of Italy, both recalled the concert in honour of Victor Jara in the Arena of Verona, on 6 September 1975, as one of the most remarkable events of the time. Durán spoke of Quilapayún and Inti Illimani playing "un concierto absolutamente e*spectacular*," in the presence of Joan Turner de Jara and the Brigada Pablo Neruda (Durán, 2022). 'Mono' Carrasco vividly recounted the dramatic climax when all the lights went out, everyone fell silent, the various panels were gathered together, and one huge mural was unveiled. He spoke of 20,000 people releasing:

> un gruñido de león, un estruendo, la gente gritaba, cantaba, se abrazaba. Fue muy emocionante. Yo creo que eso también es una de las cosas que quienes estuvimos en eso no vamos a olvidar nunca. […] Y yo te diré sinceramente, yo creo que después de eso, ya no fuimos los mismos. […] E incorporamos en los conciertos del Inti Illimani en Italia, esencialmente los murales. (Carrasco, 2022)

The concert in the Arena of Verona can be established as the moment when Inti Illimani and the Brigada Pablo Neruda of Italy began a lasting alliance. That the *spectacular* and multisensorial nature of these events was of particular importance for their long-lasting impact, was shown in our conversations with the former members of the solidarity movements (Schaap, 2022; Schwab, 2022). In our interview with sociologist Jan de Kievid, former national coordinator of the Chile Committee in the Netherlands, he explained how remarkable it was that so many people in the Netherlands knew about what was happening in Chile:

> This was because of the music groups and because of the empanadas. Because of the posters and perhaps first and foremost because of the murals. A lot of people recognised them and almost everyone in the

> Netherlands knew more or less what they were. There were only 2,000 Chileans in the Netherlands, and they were very active and visible. And this is what promoted the solidarity. If you started to talk to people about Chile, they always mentioned that they had seen a Chilean music band on the market square, or that they had seen a mural. They did not always understand its meaning, but it appealed to something they knew about. (our translation, de Kievid, 2022)

His observation shows how a lasting impact was created through the eventful and collective character of Chilean New Song, muralism, graphic art, and more, and how this produced a widespread and visual awareness of the Chilean struggle. In particular, it shows that the muralist brigades in exile were important agents of the Chilean struggle and in fostering solidarity. This becomes obvious in the murals themselves.

Observing the characteristics of the mural's iconography, two thematic lines come to the forefront; the denunciation of the coup and the dictatorship, on the one hand, and the dissemination of revolutionary spirit, including the political programme of the Unidad Popular, on the other. Denunciation is often depicted through images of military violence[10] and of the complicity of the US[11]. The dissemination of revolutionary spirit and admiration for Salvador Allende are also recurrent topics[12], while the Mural of Leeds[13] reproduces program point 36 of the Unidad Popular Trabajo Para Todos. Often, the murals also incorporate local elements, such as the host countries' national flag, Dutch windmills[14] or the local rural landscape[15]. On several occasions, the mural generates solidarity between the Chilean struggle and a local one: the Mural at San Bartolomeo in Galdo[16], for example, thematises the 1957 "March against hunger" carried out by the local

[10] See: Mural Bielefeld 1976, Brigade Salvador Allende Frankfurt; Mural Foggia 1976, Brigada Pablo Neruda of Italy; Mural Amsterdam 1981, Brigada Elmo Catalán

[11] See: Mural Utrecht 1977, Brigada El Frente

[12] See: Mural Stockholm 1978, Hernando León; Mural Milan 1975, Brigada Pablo Neruda Italia; Mural Vienna 1980, César Olhagaray; Mural Leeuwarden 1987, Jorge 'Kata' Núñez; Mural Saint Martin d'Heres 1974, Brigada Salvador Allende Paris

[13] This mural is an independent initiative carried out in 1976. It reproduces a mural originally painted in Santiago de Chile, whose image also became the official correspondence header of the Chile Solidarity Campaign in the UK. See the contribution from Martinez Relano in this issue.

[14] See: Mural Purmerend 1979, Brigada Ramona Parra from the Netherlands), city towers (Mural Tilburg University 1979, Brigada Ramona Parra from the Netherlands

[15] Mural Santo Stefano Ticino 1976, Brigada Pablo Neruda from Italy

[16] By the Brigada Pablo Neruda from Italy, 1976

population. Another example are the murals of the Brigade Luis Corvalán, which often evoke the dark figurations of Chilean and German concentration camps17. The brigades thus called for solidarity by solidarising with the histories of violence in their host countries. Therewith, the murals already reflect their own shift from agents of solidarity towards agents of memory, and of a multidirectional memory in particular (Rothberg, 2009). Within Rothberg's "axis of comparison (defined by a continuum stretching from equation to differentiation) and […] axis of political affect (defined by a continuum stretching from solidarity to competition […]) " , the murals generate a relationality to evoke solidarity between different stories of violence (Rothberg, 2011: 525).

While Chilean New Song and the murals in exile both operated as vehicles for solidarity with the Chilean struggle, the latter bears the unique aspect of leaving behind material residue. The murals marked the very location where the solidarity event took place for quite some time, many until today, a topic we return to later on.

**The Multiple Wounds of Exile**

After examining more than 600 images of the murals, we made the striking observation that only one of the 262 murals identified so far refers explicitly to exile. We were able to define several implicit or allegorical references, such as the symbol of the globe or the representation of both Chilean as well as local figures (e.g. Mural of Villamar 1976, Alan Jofré), however, only the mural in Pessac, France (1982) depicts exile explicitly. It shows the image of a man leaving the *cordillera*, following the arrow of the French flag with a suitcase that reads *exilio*. A further sequence of the 120-metre-long mural also depicts the *retorno* to Chile.

Exile is the implicit ontological condition for the genesis of these murals; however, it is also largely a conceptual and figurative indeterminacy within its iconography (Iser, 1972). It requires an epistemic disposition on behalf of the spectator, a "perturbation" (Schwab, 2012: 8) even, to detect and question the indeterminacy. What perturbed us was why exile remained an indeterminacy in the first place. Is there a link between the absence of exile in the murals, the paucity of research in exile, and its slow integration into memory practices? And can we access these voids through the postephemeral murals?

To elaborate upon these questions, it is first and foremost pertinent to establish that exile was not a "side-effect" of the dictatorship, but rather, alongside

[17] See: Mural Bremen 1976, Mural Kassel 1977

eradication and torture, one of military dictator Augusto Pinochet's main tactics of repression, particularly during the first phase of the regime between 1973 and 1976 (Nicolas Prognon, 2013). It has also been called "uno de los mecanismos principales de silenciamiento de la oposición" (Lastra, 2017: 122). On the one hand, exile aimed to expel *ideas*, the UP's vision of a third way to socialism, as well as cultural and artistic production and practices (Errázuriz, 2009). On the other hand, exile brutally shattered families by expelling *people*. They were labelled by the military dictatorship as "enemies" and "traitors to the fatherland," a stigma that was mediated through popular condescending expressions such as *el exilio dorado* or the *beca Pinochet* and that was even reiterated by a minority of opponents of the regime (García, 2014; Paredes, 2016; Rebolledo González, 2006: 16; Rojas, 2019). In our interview with Boris Eichin, a former exiled muralist of the Brigada Salvador Allende, he says:

> Yo creo que no se entendió el exilio. Es un problema complicado porque la dictadura trató de mostrar al exilio como una gente que se aprovechó. Que trató de aprovechar una situación política, una situación económica para vivir mejor. Y entonces ellos nos llamaron el exilio dorado. Cuando nunca fue un exilio dorado. El exilio es una cosa muy compleja. […] Y entonces siempre aquí se habla del exiliado: "Ese fue un fresco. Ese fue alguien que se aprovechó." Cuando la verdad que no es así. El exilio tiene sus partes buenas, pero también es sufrido. […] Es algo complicado. Y no se habla mucho del tema. (B. Eichin, 2022)

He points directly to the relationship between stigma, the complexity of the exile experience, the difficulty of speaking about it, and the broader incomprehension around it. The persistence of stigma has been addressed in both testimonial literature and research (Fajardo, 2021; Paredes, 2016), and has only recently begun to be challenged. Chilean exiles were not considered part of a hero's narrative, unlike for example the exiles of Fidel Castro's Movimiento 26 de Julio, who were regarded as "fighters for freedom in the homeland" (Sznajder and Roniger, 2007).

In addition to being affected by these stigmas, many exiles felt an enormous sense of guilt for having lost their battles at home, as well as for having survived (Jedlicki, 2001: 4f.); "por haberse ido, por no estar en el lugar de la lucha" (Rebolledo, 2001: 601). Both Jedlicki and Rebolledo observed how this led[18] to "une militance frénétique", "una militancia exacerbada" (Jedlicki, 2001:

[18] To unpack the entire complexity of this dynamic would go beyond the scope of this article, but we would like to point to Elisabeth Lira who also adds the factor of fear of **

5; Rebolledo, 2001: 601), and how the main narrative of this militancy was the collective struggle for a free, socialist Chile. What Jedlicki has called the *hierarchy of victimhood* is an inherent mechanism of classification that operated among victims of the dictatorship, and often relegated the exiles towards minimising their particular victimhood in all its complexities, towards a silencing (Jedlicki, 2001: 5; Rebolledo, 2001: 602). This silence was inscribed into the body and commonly manifested in the long term through ruptures or illness (Jedlicki, 2001, Ibid.), as well as through suicide (Bravo, 2022; Heinsohn, 2022). Exile became, in fact, almost impossible to speak of. Similarly to the state violence of torture, it is to be considered a case of *lo indecible* (Peris Blanes, 2017: 78; Pizarro Cortés, 2017: 23).

Almost all our interlocutors have expressed their difficulties in talking about these circumstances. Some preferred to turn the conversation towards the solidarity they had received, or towards their activities as militants. All our interviewees articulated particular concerns about the wounds that their exile has inflicted onto the next generations (Espinoza, 2022). This was also enhanced by the paradoxical experience of the return (Bolzman, 2002; Jedlicki, 2007). In this regard, one of our interlocutors expressed; "yo me sentí exiliada volviendo a Chile" (Rojas, 2022), while another stated feeling like "un extraño más" and eventually opted to live very remotely, "al campo, a la montaña" (Núñez, 2022). The complex phenomenon of returning from exile has been conceptualised politically in terms such as post-exile (Roniger and Sznajder, 2009) and poetically in the neologism *desexilio* (Benedetti, 1985). Many of our interlocutors have developed their own terms: Ethel Eichin calls it "una enfermedad auto-immune, que no es tratable" (Eichin, 2024b). She poignantly expressed that the emotional depth of exilic experiences often goes unheard and, without proper acknowledgment, risks fading into oblivion:

> Si hay algo que no se rescató de nuestra vida, en estos 50 años, es la parte emocional y la parte más profunda de la vivencia desde la mirada de cada uno. A nadie le importó escucharnos. Nadie ha preguntado el por qué, nadie ha preguntado ¿qué viviste? […] Si no nos preguntan, todo eso se va a olvidar. Se va a perder en la historia. No todos en las familias hablaron y contaron lo que vivieron. Y a su vez, hay muchas historias vividas que uno omite al contarlas, para no provocar más dolor en los que vienen detrás de nosotros, a nuestros hijos, porque nosotros les traspasamos en el ADN de nuestros hijos, todo lo que nosotros vivimos. (E. Eichin, 2024b)

thinking that all would have been in vain; "no pueden perder el significado principal de todo lo ocurrido" (Lira, 1991).

She illustrates how, while one might manage to live with the exilic condition, it never really comes to an end, particularly as it is transgenerationally passed down to the children and grandchildren of exiles. While time[19] has proven to be an important factor to start speaking about exile, Ethel's words reflect a wish for a framework to share her story, a space where her testimony is recognised, and where a reparative connection with the presence may be established. We argue that a cartography of postephemeral murals can be one step towards such a framework.

## Postephemeral Murals as Carriers of Testimonies and Agents of Transnational Memory

Recent studies on the role of agency in transnational memory politics look at how "the interplay of local, national, regional, international, and global dynamics—and the agents that shape them—result in the emergence of transnational memory spaces" (Wüstenberg and Sierp, 2020: 4). Other studies have approached the agency of non-human actors in constructing memory, particularly in terms of "artefactbased engagements with the past" (Grimaldi and Gukelberger, 2023). While we indeed look at the agency of the multilayered actor-networks behind the murals, we have also discerned a certain agency of the murals themselves. In the framework of Chilean new testimonial studies (Pizarro, 2021; Santos Herceg, 2019), we considered these cultural artefacts first and foremost as "fuentes testimoniales atípicas en el momento de reconstruir lo pasado*"* (Montealegre Iturra, 2019: 286) carriers of a multitude of polyphonic testimonies - explicitly in their iconography, and implicitly through all participants involved –, however, we would like to think about how their material presence also exercises a certain agency.

Earlier, we introduced Ana Longoni's notion of the ephemeral, interventional character of the murals of the Brigadas Ramona Parra in Chile (Longoni, 1999: 25). Camilo Trumper even locates their political significance "in [their] very ephemerality" (Trumper, 2016: 94). Nevertheless, differently from what happened in Chile, where only one of hundreds of murals survived the censorship of the dictatorship (Olmedo Carrasco, 2012: 309), in exile many of the

[19] Our interlocutors have expressed that events such as the 30th, 40th, 50th commemoration of the coup, and in particular the *estallido social* and the process of the new constitution, were factors that have instigated their confrontation with their histories of exile.

murals have survived for several decades, and some have even gained patrimonial protection. We would therefore like to propose the concept of the postephemeral mural.

In the context of Chilean murals in exile, we propose the concept of postephemeral murals when, (1) a mural has resisted its common ephemeral character and remains materially present, whether it is fading, in good condition, restored, or protected[20], (2) there exists a material reproduction of a disappeared mural near its original location, e.g. through a photographic exhibition[21] or a banner[22], and (3) when not only the object, but also the experience of the mural surfaces through memory practices (e.g. the interview above recalling the mural of Verona 1975, Brigade Pablo Neruda Italy; or the short story containing an ekphrasis of the mural of Bochum 1982, Lautaro Díaz).

The postephemeral dimensions of murals, then, recall the residual aspects of the mural event: the traces on the walls on the one hand, and the affects, sensations, memories, life stories and testimonies on the other. Thinking in terms of postephemeral murals enables us to understand their agency in the processes of reactivating solidarities, accessing exilic experience and practicing the transnational memory of exile. It allows us to observe how they operate within the city and the community, and how they can prompt processes of transnational memory space-making and place-making (Badescu, 2020).

In the following sections, we present three distinct case studies on three murals, each illustrating different aspects of how postephemeral murals exercise various forms of agency. The case study of the mural at the University of Konstanz is extensive because we have been involved in its restoration and memorialisation processes, making it a prototype study for our research. The case studies on the Mural of Osdorpplein and Purmerend are shorter, but will act as a point of comparison by showcasing the diversity of the mural'spostephemeral dimensions.

*Case Study I: The Mural at the University of Konstanz (1977), Germany, Brigade Salvador Allende*

[20] See: the mural at the University of Konstanz 1977, Brigada Salvador Allende; mural of Villepreux 1977, Brigada Pablo Neruda.

[21] See: the mural of Bremen University 1976, Brigade Luis Corvalán.

[22] See: the mural of the Documenta 6 in Kassel 1977, Brigade Pablo Neruda Germany.

The mural at the University of Konstanz (figure 2) was painted by the Brigade Salvador Allende on 25 April 1977, during a concert by the exiled folklore ensemble Quilapayún and the local Chilean-German choir, *Singegruppe*, in the main Audimax auditorium (Quilapayún, 1977). During Quilapayún's performance, the brigade painted the mural on two canvases, which together measured 1.70m by 8.10m. At the end of the performance, the mural was hung on the wall opposite the Audimax, where it remained for more than four decades. It figuratively represents the global struggle for freedom of the Chilean people, personified by a female figure with a bare chest, her floating hair forming the Chilean flag, and symbols such as the clenched, oversized fist, a white dove and a globe.

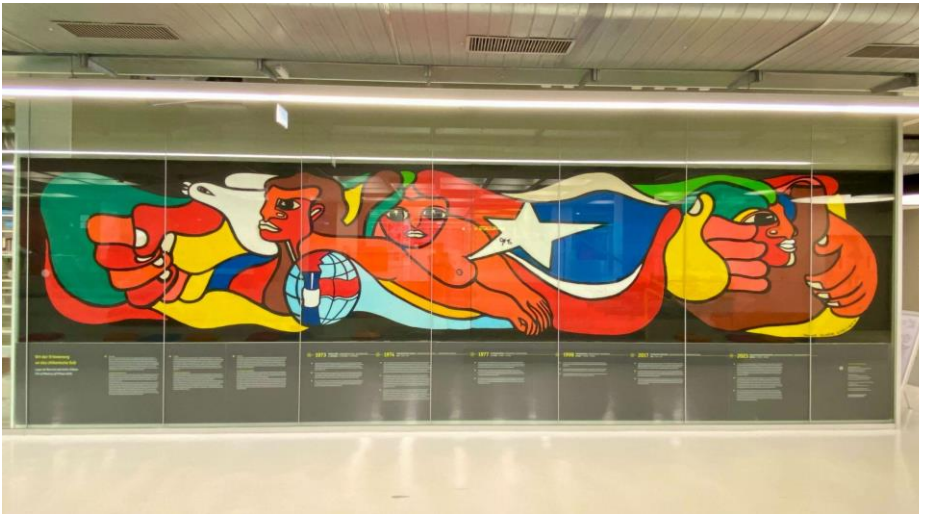

Figure 2: Brigada Pablo Neruda (1977). Untitled. University of Konstanz, Germany. Photo: Sandra Rudman.

The initiative to create a Chilean mural at the University of Konstanz came from a group of Chileans in exile that arrived in Konstanz as early as July 1974, who had been assigned to work or study at the university: philosopher Eduardo Arancibia Délano, professor of statistics Alicia Domínguez Diaz, sociologist Mario Durán Vidal, biology teacher Maria Francisca Marín, lawyer Francisco Otey, professor of education Angel Pizarro, and doctoral student in chemistry, Benjamín Suárez Isla. They were supported by the local Chile Committee Konstanz, the general student's committee Allgemeiner

Studierendenausschuss (AStA), Amnesty International, and several other solidarity groups and individuals who had been lobbying the university and their local and national government institutions for residence and work permits. The exiles worked tirelessly to raise awareness about the dictatorship in Chile, organising local demonstrations, debates and film screenings, while Benjamín Suarez also founded the *Singegruppe* choir and toured the entire state of Baden-Württemberg to inform and mobilise the local population through concerts of New Chilean Song.

The Salvador Allende Brigade was founded in Frankfurt am Main in 1976 by Chilean exiles Boris Eichin, Ethel Eichin, Iván Quintana Loreto, Waldo Rodríguez and Loreto Villela. During the 1970 Chilean presidential campaign, the four siblings of the Eichin family had already been involved in tagging the streets in support of Salvador Allende (Eichin, 2022). Ethel Eichin had at that point been a member of the Brigada Ramona Parra for a few months, having already painted a mural with Alejandro 'Mono' Gonzalez when she was only thirteen years old. The family had to go into hiding immediately after the coup, as their father was on a list of people to be arrested, and their brother Vladimir was imprisoned in the Estadio Nacional. Ethel was fifteen when she went into exile, her brother Boris was seventeen. After a short time in Argentina, they arrived in Frankfurt am Main on 8 December 1973. They painted their first mural in Frankfurt in 1974, on the wall of the University College for Social Work, at the initiative of their cousin Enrique Eichin. It was only about two years later that Boris Eichin decided to form the Brigade Salvador Allende. He had been visiting his brother Vladimir who, after his liberation from the Estadio Nacional, found exile in the Democratic Republic of Germany. While there, he ended up hosting César Olhagaray[23], an artist and former member of the Brigada Ramona Parra. Eichin was fascinated by Olhagaray's mural drawings and began to redraw them (Eichin, 2022). Months later, he began experimenting with his own designs and founded the Brigada Salvador Allende. By 1980, they had painted around 100 murals on the walls of youth centres, theatres, churches and universities in various cities in West Germany and the former GDR, as well as in France and Switzerland. They were also invited to Kassel during Documenta 6, to paint with the Brigada Pablo Neruda from France together with professional artists Gracia Barrios, Guillermo Núñez, José Balmes, José Martinez and José García.

Forty years after its creation, the mural they painted at the University of Konstanz was still hanging against the wall of the auditorium where it was conceived, but its history had been forgotten. This caught the attention of a PhD

[23] César Olhagaray painted artistic murals, notably on the wall of Berlin in 1990, and formed Salvador Allende Brigade in France, or the Otto Nagel Brigade in Berlin.

candidate, who began doing archival work together with her students, reconstructed the actor-network and history, and locating some of the former exiles, brigade members, and time witnesses. With the financial support of the university and of the former Chile solidarity network, Boris Eichin and his son Andrei came to Konstanz to restore the mural. The musically underscored inauguration was attended by other family members, as well as by members of the local Chilean community, former actors of the solidarity movement, scholars of memory studies, and the university rector who had supported hosting the Chilean exiles at the time.

The restoration and preservation processes have given certain artistic and political value to the mural, but have also created a time and space for the recognition and remembrance of its collective history, and for sharing biographic and transgenerational stories of exile. In his speech at the inauguration, Eichin underlined the surprising longevity of the mural and the importance of the solidarity network:

> Me siento orgulloso y contento a la vez, de estar en esta ciudad , en la Universidad, con ustedes desde mi lejano país, celebrando los 40 años de un mural, que se suponía de corta vida, pero que ha sobrevivido gracias al esfuerzo e interés de muchos por preservar parte de la historia de un movimiento solidario con la lucha de un pueblo por sacudirse de las cadenas de una dictadura sangrienta. (B. Eichin, 2017)

The memorialisation process continued to take shape in October 2023, when the university hosted the *Jornadas: Reflexiones a 50 años del Golpe de Estado in Chile*. In a ceremony during the conference, the Mural of Konstanz was declared a Site of Memory of Chilean Exile by the Ambassador of the Republic of Chile in Germany, Magdalena Atria, and the Rector of the University, Katharina Holzinger. It was moved to a new location at the entrance of the university library, accompanied by a timeline to explain its history and introduce spectators to the network of actors behind it. Three of the former exiles in Konstanz attended in person: Benjamín Suárez, Francisco Otey and Francisca Marín, as well as the latter's daughter. In his speech, Benjamín Suárez highlighted the many individuals who were involved in assisting the Chilean exiles in Konstanz. He meaningly attributed to the mural "que ha sido preservado gracias a una misteriosa memoria colectiva," a call to engage in the necessary exercise of memory work, which he described as "inseparable de la preservación de los derechos humanos de todas y todos" (Suárez, 2023). Later, Suárez called his journey to Konstanz "un viaje muy sanador […] que me permitió cerrar en paz varios círculos pendientes y me permitió agradecer en persona a quienes me ayudaron hace 49 años" (Suárez,

2023). Suárez therewith significantly interweaves the individual affective experience of the memorialization process with insights on the contemporary, symbolic meaning of the mural as a space to engage with memory and human rights. His friend Francisco Otey perceived the mural with more tempered feelings, as the very place and artefact are still inseparable from the trauma of exile:

> Yo lo ví, pero no me produjo nada, interno. No sentí nada. […] Después […] pasaba por ahí y lo veía y no sentía nada. Después [hoy] cambia un poco la visión en el sentido de que tú eres parte de eso, aunque no sientas nada, eres parte de eso. Yo soy parte de la entrada de la universidad, porque me acuerdo, y el recuerdo es esto, el exilio, el 11 de septiembre. Recuerdo un trauma.

He had been reluctant to attend the commemoration ceremony, however, it was important to attend for the sake of his wife Francisca Marín and their daughter. Ethel Eichin was not present in person, but in a later interview she shared the importance of the commemorative and transgenerational dimensions transmitted through the mural:

> Me emociona absolutamente saber que se restauró el mural de Konstanz, y que hoy tiene un espacio tan importante en la universidad, que puede ser visitado por las personas. Me emociona saber que aparece ahí mi nombre y el de otros compañeros. Dentro de las compañeras que participaron ahí, Loreto falleció hacia un año. Yo creo que nunca supo alcanzar saber que este mural todavía está ahí y existe. Emociona saberlo porque las nuevas generaciones en Alemania podrán ver algo que pasó hace tanto años atrás, y ahí están las 50 años. El tema que una quiere cerrar y no puede cerrar. Es un orgullo que mi hija haya podido verlo y sobre todo mi nieta, hayan podido estar en Konstanz, y hayan visto el mural así como lo hicimos.(E. Eichin, 2024a)

The official recognition of the mural as a site of memory of Chilean exile, by both the local authorities in Konstanz and the official representative of the Chilean state, was a solemn event, underscoring the local and transnational acknowledgment of the complex life stories and testimonies of those who arrived as a result of the state violence of exile. This case study therefor exemplifies how the postephemeral mural exercised agency, moved local and transnational actors, reactivated and expanded the former solidarity network, and instigated a memorialisation process that consolidated the mural as a transnational memory space. Through its iconography, the mural testifies as a historical witness to the collective narrative of the Unidad Popular's aspirations and the brutal end it faced. The process of memorialization and transnational memory space making,

however, was shaped by going beyond the collective testimony and by disclosing the individual testimonies on solidarity and exile.

*Case Study II and III: Murals of Purmerend (1979) and Osdorpplein (1981), Brigada Ramona Parra Holanda*

The murals at Osdorpplein near Amsterdam and in the nearby municipality of Purmerend were painted by Brigada Ramona Parra from the Netherlands, established by Jorge "Kata" Núñez in 1977 in Rotterdam. Kata Núñez had been the "trazador negro" of the Brigada Ramona Parra in Valdivia, which was the reason he was arrested in 1974 and convicted to a prison sentence of twenty years (Núñez, 2022). After two years, the Supreme Decree 504 of the Ministry of Justice allowed the commutation of his sentence to fifteen years of expulsion.

The Brigade Ramona Parra in the Netherlands initially attracted many volunteers, but due to Kata's requirement for serious commitment, a dedicated core team remained, including Marijke van Meurs, Carlos Oyarzún, Victor Hugo 'Masca' Valenzuela, Mirthe Longhuizen, Ingrid Huisman, Silvia Pastén, Mireya Merino, and Carolina Díaz. As a group, they painted over sixty murals, and over the years, Kata Núñez developed his artistic style and continued to work independently.

By 1973, solidarity with Chile in the Netherlands had reached extraordinary proportions, due in part to the left-wing government that took office in May that year and maintained close relations with Chile. The government was led by Prime Minister Joop den Uyl of the Labour Party, with Social Democrat Jan Pronk serving as Minister for Development Cooperation. Both had attended the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) held in Chile in April 1972. Jan Pronk was fascinated by the "progressive social economic policy with democratic means" (Pronk, 2016: 80) of the Chilean government and, when he returned to his country, co-founded the Chile Committee Netherlands (CKN) in order to support "Allende's socialist experiment" (ibid.). The day after the coup, Pronk cancelled all development aid to Chile and the government obliged its ambassador in Chile to receive refugees in order to organise their transfer to the Netherlands (Brouwer *et al*., 2013: 54), where approximately 2,500 Chilean refugees would find asylum.

Rotterdam, the hometown of the Brigada Ramona Parra, had a particularly strong connection to Chile due to the work of mayor Andre van der Louw, a member of the New Left Party of Labor (PdvA) who has been called "vocero de la causa chilena en Holanda" (Perry Fauré, 2020), along with his collaborator Saskia Stuiveling. In 1977, he founded the Salvador Allende Cultural Centre, which became a central space for both cultural and educational initiatives for Chilean exiles, as well as the Institute for a New Chile, a key platform for discussing political transference for Chile (Perry, 2017). The Rotterdam Art Foundation (RKS) also became involved with the Chilean case through its Townpainting program to promote urban visual art (Thissen, 2007: 16). During the 1974 Venice Biennale, titled Freedom for Chile (*Libertà al Cile*), Rotterdam artists met the Chilean artists of the Brigades Luis Corvalán[24] and Venceremos[25], and invited them to visit Rotterdam on the occasion of the manifestation *Por la Solidaridad Antifascista* in 1975. The Brigades were commissioned to paint several murals, including the well-known Chilean Tower Communicatiezuil and the columns at the Zuidplein Metro station (Thissen, 2007: 17). The columns are still partly present today and were restored in 2005 by Jorge 'Kata' Núñez and Juan Heinsohn Huala, a Chilean exiled painter, poet, former muralist of the exile Brigade Elmo Catalán and long-time coordinator of the Salvador Allende Cultural Center.

Both the Chilean murals of the local Brigada Ramona Parra, as well as the works of the commissioned town-painting programme, generated a particular and long-lasting impact of Chilean muralism in Rotterdam. Art historian Siebe Thissen has argued that it spawned a revival of mural painting, as the work of the Chilean brigades in exile influenced "socially committed artists of Rotterdam such as Will Rockx, Joop van Meel and Hans Abelman" in terms of subjects, political conscientization of street art, and techniques (Ibid., Bajema and Plasschaert, 1999: 8). Thissen states that the Chilean legacy in Rotterdam is "a durable one" that has initiated a new school, and labels Kata Núñez *the godfather of the Street Art* (Thissen, 2022).

We will now look into two murals of the Brigada Ramona Parra in the Netherlands, starting with the mural in Purmerend. The mural was painted in September 1979 on the wall of the Karrekiet sports hall on Salvador Allende Avenue, at the invitation of the Chile Committee Purmerend (figure 3). In our interview with Meindert Schaap, a long-time volunteer at the Wereldwinkel Fair

[24] The Brigada Luis Corvalán was founded in 1974 in Grenoble, and consisted of José Balmes, Gracia Barrios, Guillermo Núñez, José García Ramos, José Martínez Sotelo, Irene Domínguez, and Cecilia Boisier. It would later become the Brigada Pablo Neruda.
[25] Around Miguel García.

Trade Shop and a former member of the Chile Committee and the Nicaragua Committee in Purmerend, he recalls the initiative as a cheerful happening, a collective work of setting up the scaffold, Dutch and Chilean women making empanadas together, and a band playing music. He also remembers the discussion in the municipality about the mural's design, where one oppositional voice demanded an apolitical painting with local elements (Schaap, 2022). The mural is about twenty metres long, and depicts several faces in the characteristic BRP style, surrounded by the Dutch and the Chilean flags, as well as a guitar, Dutch windmills, the coat of arms of Purmerend, and fish, alluding to the nearby North Sea. A darker part represents the terror of the coup.

In 2021, two councillors from the leftist parties PvdA and Democrats 66 heard the story of the mural during an event honouring the long-time volunteer work of Meindert Schaap. They were also aware, however, of a new urban plan that included the demolition of the sports hall. In response, they put forward a motion to preserve the mural, which the municipality unanimously accepted. The municipality is still deliberating different preservation methods, ranging from conserving the entire wall to reproducing the painting elsewhere, and has consulted Kata Núñez and Juan Heinsohn about the matter.

Figure 3: Brigada Ramona Parra (1979). Untitled. Karrekiet sports hall, Purmerend, the Netherlands. Photo: Sandra Rudman.

Another case is the Mural “Chile Vencerá” on the Osdorpplein in Amsterdam Nieuw-West (figure 4). It was painted in 1981 following a design by Kata and with the participation of Marijke van Meurs, Carolina Díaz, Beto Olivarez, Mireya Merino and Silvia Pastén. The painting, measuring 20 x 3.4m depicts the struggle for a free Chile, a manifestation with the sign “No al fascismo,” several faces alluding to the classic BRP style but with a more complex colour palette, a bleeding dove of peace, the Chilean flag, a guitar, a horse and several exotic birds. In October 2018, the mural surprisingly resurfaced when an adjacent building was demolished to make way for a new residential project - an event that was reported in Chilean media such as El Mostrador and La Tercera. One project manager of the real estate company in charge recognised the historical importance of the mural, as well as its contemporary meaning for the neighbourhood that is home to many migrants and cultures. With the aim “to transfer its meaning to future generations” (MRP, 2023), they tracked down Jorge ‘Kata’ Núñez, and commissioned the restoration of the mural with support from Kroonenberg Group and the municipality of Amsterdam. The mural was restored in July 2022 by Kata, Juan Heinsohn Huala, and his daughter Lisa Heinsohn, and was thoughtfully integrated into the new building.

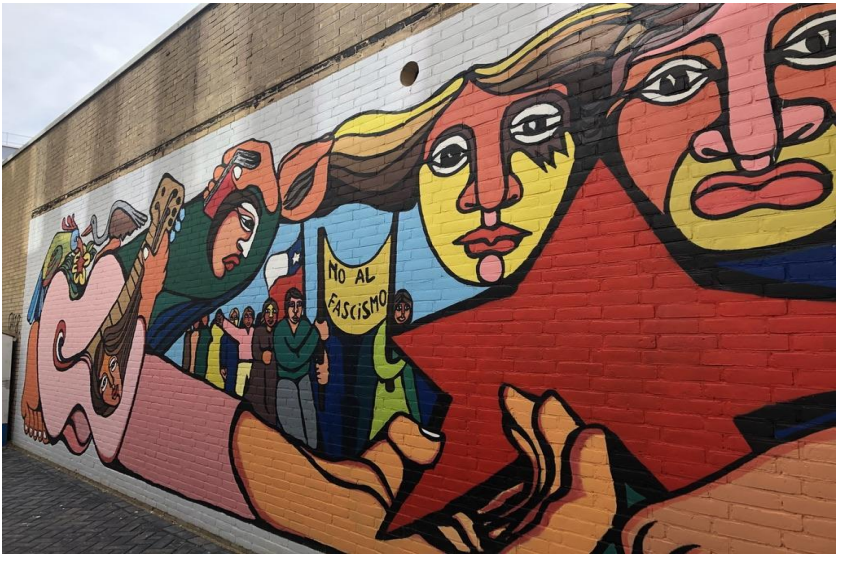


Figure 4: Brigada Ramona Parra (1981). Chile Vencerá. Osdorpplein, Amsterdam, the Netherlands. Photo: Sandra Rudman.

These case studies highlight different dimensions of postephemeral muralism. They illustrate the dynamic and multi-scaled nature of how postephemeral murals evoke agency and mobilise diverse actors across different levels. In the Osdorpplein case, a preservation initiative was spearheaded by actors of the private sector who recognised the mural's historical and contemporary significance. They engaged both institutional and community actors by securing financial support from the government and involving muralists, their families and former solidarity networks in the project. The Mural of Purmerend presents two different preservation efforts, the ivy overgrowth taken care of by local volunteers, and the threat of demolition being handled by politicians after casually hearing the murals' story. Both arbitrary and formal factors lay at the base of how the murals exist or perish, and of a possible transition of their communicative memory towards an institutionalised form of transnational cultural memory. A final postephemeral aspect emerged in a new local school of muralism in Rotterdam: their work came to shape the cityscape under the influence of the Chilean exile brigades in the Netherlands.

## Concluding Remarks

The phenomenon of Chilean muralism in exile embodies polyphonous testimonial dimensions, aspects of transnational, transcultural, and multidirectional memory, and the potential of the murals to become historical landmarks and transnational sites of memory of Chilean exile. After situating the Chilean muralist brigades as significant political and artistic militant groups of the Unidad Popular, we showed how this muralist practice evolved in exile, where over 20 muralist brigades – and several individual muralist painting initiatives – advocated for Chile's freedom, becoming significant agents of solidarity. We have exposed how the multisensorial atmosphere of the muralist actions resonated profoundly with the host communities, generating a broadly anchored conceptual and graphic awareness of the Chilean struggle.

Furthermore, we investigated the remarkable longevity of the murals in exile, including several restoration and preservation initiatives, leading to our coining of the notion of postephemeral muralism. This concept helps to understand the murals' agency in reactivating solidarities, symbolic resignification, accessing the exilic experience, and fostering transnational memory practices of exile. It allows us to study how murals operate within communities and urban spaces, potentially instigating processes of transnational memory space-making and place-making (Badescu, 2020).

Our case studies on the murals at the University of Konstanz, Osdorpplein and Purmerend have elucidated diverse ways in which postephemeral murals exercise agency. Primarily, their material presence instigates the possibility of their memorialisation. These are defined by factors such as "individual agencies intersecting through encounters, intentional or not" (Badescu, 2019), the engineering done by "political power and institutions" (Badescu, 2020), "location, funding, and activism" (Lazzara, 2011: 61), and "social mobilisation for heritage" (Garcia Canclini, 1999: 22).

The case of the mural of Purmerend has shown that individual agency and political mobilisation for heritage draws attention to the many "slumbering" cases; murals might still be present, but they are fading, while others risk disappearing or being demolished.

The case study on the commemorative process of the Mural of Konstanz has also shed light on the circulation of a transnational and transgenerational memory of exile, as it became a place where the memory of the exile community and their descendants resides, and where these complex and diverse stories and transnational identities find validation and remembrance. This also became clear in our interviews with former exiles: the murals guided us from the narrative of its collective, iconographic testimony towards the more intimate life stories and personal testimonies of the exilic experience. The cases of Osdorpplein and Konstanz exhibited a particular integration of the second and third generations of exiles' offspring, highlighting that the memory of exile necessarily remains a memory in transit, not only travelling across national borders between home and host countries, but also between generations who often circulate between Chile and the host countries of their parents and grandparents.

The preservation and restoration of these murals underscore their historical significance and the cultural memory of the mural on a local scale. However, it also potentially transforms them into a space of transnational memory, allowing for the recognition and integration of the testimonies of exile in commemorative practices, tackling the disintegration we have discussed. As a cultural artefact created by Chilean exiles in a context of international solidarity, we can indeed come to understand these murals as "transnational memory spaces" as defined by Jenny Wüstenberg: "instances or processes of remembrance anchored – through agency – in concrete locations and extending beyond national borders, [whose] memory does not make sense without the linkage to the other side of the borders." (Wüstenberg, 2020: 9) However, as she furthermore remarked: "[t]ransnational memory spaces are certainly grounded in concrete locations, but they are made meaningful through cross-border linkage and through the practices of transnational agents" (Ibid.: 4). In order for this to happen, the memorialisation process has to make the shifts from the local to the transnational

by integrating the transnational actor networks, and link the past, present, and future generations by integrating the transgenerational scales of the exilic community.

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