

ARPILLERAS BY REBECCA HINSON

(HISTORY/NONFICTION)

Questions for *Arpilleras* by Rebecca Hinson

LEVEL 1: What does it say?

General Understanding

- Quote accurately from the text to describe how arpilleras helped bring democracy back to Chile.

Key Details

- What positive and negative changes did military rule bring to Chile?
- What justification did Pinochet give for his war against Marxists?
- How was the "state of emergency" used to further empower the Pinochet government?
- What methods of civil disobedience were used to resist the Pinochet dictatorship?

LEVEL 2: How does it work?

Vocabulary

- Determine the meaning of repressive, embroidered, appliqués, socialist, junta, gangrene, solidarity, propaganda, negligence, candlelight vigil, cadavers, lime, civil disobedience, resistance movement, state violence, human rights, censored, shantytown, defamatory, mockingly, suspension, deprivation, morgues, capitalist, privatized, nationalized, tariff, satirical, trade deficit.

Structure

- Both *Arpilleras* and *Quilting* explain textile arts which gave women a voice. Compare and contrast the information presented in the two texts.

Author's Craft

- Analyze *Arpilleras* and the following excerpt, noting important similarities and differences in the points of view they represent.

Tapestries of hope, threads of love

An arpillera has the power to give a voice to a witness and to allow her to imagine the unimaginable. The arpillera always surprises, because at first glance it gives the impression that it is an innocent art, but it is not. It is an art denouncing torture, forced disappearances, and violence. The foundational role of the arpilleras in the story of Chile's history is undeniable. The experiences of the intimate lives of the families of the disappeared unite with the experiences of the nation that, out of fear, has attempted to ignore the oppressive nature of its military forces.

LEVEL 3: What does it mean?

Author's Purpose

- What evidence supports the author's assertion (below)?
"Stitched bits of cloth bore witness to the people's suffering and struggle against the regime's reign of terror."

Intertextual Connections

- Draw on information from the following texts to explain how German and Chilean soldiers were trained to kill their compatriots.

A Nation of Enemies

How did a civilized nation produce an underworld of spies and sadists? How did a military establishment steeped in traditions of honor and law lend itself to a secret terror campaign? Hitler's Germany had shown that members of a sophisticated Western society, sufficiently indoctrinated to dehumanize and hate, could relish barbarous acts. . . . But in Pinochet's Chile the secret police represented the psychotic edge of a society whose democratic values had collapsed. Like the thugs of Fatherland and Liberty, they acted out the rage and fear that had festered inside thousands of citizens as the Marxist left gained power. Once initiated into the secret police netherworld, they were bound by the mystique of an anticommunist brotherhood. And once their hands were dirtied, complicity enmeshed them in a system of state terror.

In practice, the Chilean gestapo had already established an efficient clandestine service. . . . Contreras selected several hundred men from all branches of the armed services. . . . where he offered them a "privileged place" in a crusade aimed at the "total extermination of Marxism."

There was no letup in the campaign of "psychological warfare" aimed at keeping the armed forces alert to the Marxist threat. . . . officers were subjected to "an intense and penetrating fog" of propaganda.

The largest chink in Pinochet's claim to legitimacy and popular support was the regime's poor human rights record, yet he flatly refused to acknowledge the problem. Indeed, he was vehemently unrepentant about political repression, arguing that a vigorous hand" was needed to defend the nation against Marxist wiles, "If you have gangrene in an arm, you have to cut it off, right?" he demanded.

History.com

Through the 1920s, Hitler gave speech after speech in which he stated that unemployment, rampant inflation, hunger and economic stagnation in postwar Germany would continue until there was a total revolution in German life. Most

problems could be solved, he explained, if communists and Jews were driven from the nation. His fiery speeches swelled the ranks of the Nazi Party, especially among young, economically disadvantaged Germans.

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum

Following the Nazi seizure of power in 1933, Hitler established a Reich Ministry of Public Enlightenment and Propaganda headed by Joseph Goebbels. . . . Germans were reminded of the struggle against foreign enemies and Jewish subversion. During periods preceding legislation or executive measures against Jews, propaganda campaigns created an atmosphere tolerant of violence against Jews. . . . Propaganda also encouraged passivity and acceptance of the impending measures against Jews, as these appeared to depict the Nazi government as stepping in and “restoring order.”

The Indoctrination of the Wehrmacht

German soldiers regularly cooperated with organizations like the SS in the abuse and murder of countless individuals during the Second World War. . . . a key factor in the criminalization of the Wehrmacht was the intense political indoctrination imposed on its members. At the instigation of senior leadership, many ordinary German soldiers and officers became ideological warriors who viewed their enemies in racial and political terms—a project that was but one piece of the broader effort to socialize young men during the Nazi era.

LEVEL 4: What does it inspire you to do?

Opinion with Evidence or Argument

- The United States Department of Justice has rejected requests for extradition of Pedro Pablo Barrientos Nuñez to face criminal murder charges in Chile. Integrate information from the following links to write or speak knowledgeably about this issue.

NYTimes-Víctor Jara

<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/11/18/us/victor-jara.html>

Extradition:

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-chile-rights-jara/extradite-accused-killer-of-chilean-singer-victor-jara-daughter-pleads-idUSKBN1KA2MG>

Pedro Pablo Barrientos Nuñez

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/jun/27/victor-jara-pedro-pablo-barrientos-nunez-killing-chile>

Sources

Marjorie Agosín, *Tapestries of hope, threads of love*

Pamela Constable & Arturo Valenzuela, *A Nation of Enemies*

Rebecca Hinson, *Quilting*

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Nytimes.com
Reuters.com
Theguardian.com
Ushmm.org