

SANTIAGO, CHILE

CASA RAÚL SILVA HENRÍQUEZ

JV Presence in Chile since 1986

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Overview

Chile is considered one of South America's most stable and prosperous nations. The country was impacted immensely by the 17-year rule of General Augusto Pinochet, whose 1973 coup that overthrew the democratically elected left-wing government of Salvador Allende was one of the bloodiest in 20th-century Latin America and whose dictatorship left more than 3,000 people dead and missing. Chile is coming to terms with his legacy. Courts stripped him of his immunity from prosecution and the former president was questioned over the killings of dissidents by South American governments in the 1970s and 1980s; he denied links with the campaign until his death in December 2006.

Chile has relatively low levels of crime and official corruption. The authoritarian Pinochet-era constitution has been revised and the judicial system overhauled. In recent years it has experienced social movements that have risen due to unpopular educational reform and the continued invisibility of local indigenous populations.

The country had Latin America's fastest-growing economy in the 1990s and has weathered recent regional economic instability. But it faces the challenges of having to diversify its copper-dependent economy—it is the largest world producer—and of addressing uneven wealth distribution. Chile's unusual, ribbon-like shape—4,300 km long and on average 175 km wide—has given it a hugely varied climate. This ranges from the world's driest desert—the Atacama—in the north, through a Mediterranean climate in the center, to a snow-prone Alpine climate in the south, with glaciers, fjords and lakes.

History of Service in this Country

Past: Santiago has been in community development since about 2007, when JVC staff began an agreement with the Maryland Province to begin a relationship of JVC in Chile, primarily based within the education networks offered in Santiago. This would be the first new JV site in Santiago, though JVs had served about a decade before for a brief time in Arica, Chile (northern border with Tacna). The first two JVs in Santiago, Chile—Catherine Curley and Isabel Arrastia—arrived in January of 2010.

Two Jesuits, Sebastian Correa and Alex Pizarro, agreed to serve as Jesuit support, but this support quickly shifted when Sebastian left for the year on sabbatical, leaving the responsibility of the JVs in the hands of the Director of the Fe Y Alegría schools, Guillermo Soto, a lay-person within the network. The first year and a half of volunteers lived with a group of Christian-based Chilean students. Alex Pizarro was the ICC (In-Country Coordinator) in name-only, and Guillermo Soto was asked to be acting ICC given his direct work with Fe Y Alegría. The first year of Chile was fraught with both internal and external challenges, including: the earthquake of Feb 2010, shortly following the volunteers' arrival, brand new relationships from both JVC and Chile's ends with the early departure of one of the two volunteers, leaving Catherine Curley as the only JV in Chile and the uncertainty of what support was coming from the SJs and Fe Y Alegría. We share this to provide a brief context of where we were and to highlight some of the important shifts that have occurred since the beginning of our program in Santiago.

Present: Currently, the Jesuits have taken on a different approach after intentional conversations that occurred in 2012 around the kinds of role the Jesuits in Santiago could play in supporting JVs, particularly within our efforts as JVC to support the Society of Jesus in their mission on the ground. Shortly after our 2012 site visit, the Provincial in Chile appointed Fr. Pablo Walker as the ICC and the Jesuit community in Los Nogales began creating spaces to intentionally engage the JVs in various support roles. As JVC, our volunteers are considered part of a new effort in Estación Central called the Red Apostolica Ignaciana de Estación Central (RAIEC). This is an effort by the Chilean Province to work collaboratively with lay individuals and connect a centralized effort in the sector of Estación Central through various Jesuit works. All the JVs participate within their work sites and outside of their work site in supporting the ongoing vision and mission of the Society of Jesus in Santiago, Chile. At the beginning of 2014, the role of ICC shifted from Fr. Pablo Walker to Fr. Dagoberto Lagos. Fr. Carlos Vidal and Fr. Jorge Muñoz have recently stepped into the ICC role. The JVs are supported by a wide network of individuals locally and we have seen a strong commitment from the Jesuits in supporting JVs and the mission of JVC.

Present Communities: Currently, JVC has a total of 4 JVs in Chile serving in 4 worksites (plus a second, part-time worksite for each JV). JVs live in Los Nogales, Santiago under the auspices of the Santa Cruz Parish and the Jesuits of Santiago.

JVC Partner Agencies

Hogar de Cristo / Parroquia Santa Cruz Comedor	Colegio San Alberto
Colegio José Antonio Lecaros	Servicio Jesuita a Migrantes

Country Specific Resources

Websites:

- General Resources on current events in Chile: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/chile>
- *Fragmentos de Una Dictadura*
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z3xxZRGllmA>
- "Michelle Bachelet and Inequality"
<http://upsidedownworld.org/main/chile-archives-34/4284-michelle-bachelet-inequality-in-chile>
- "Chilean rebel Camila Vallejo: 'The problem is bigger – it's structural'"
<http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2012/nov/20/chile-student-rebel-camila-vallejo>

Books: *Descriptions are from Amazon.com

The House of Spirits, (1982) Isabel Allende.

In one of the most important and beloved Latin American works of the twentieth century, Isabel Allende weaves a luminous tapestry of three generations of the Trueba family, revealing both triumphs and tragedies. Here is patriarch Esteban, whose wild desires and political machinations are tempered only by his love for his ethereal wife, Clara, a woman touched by an otherworldly hand. Their daughter, Blanca, whose forbidden love for a man Esteban has deemed unworthy infuriates her father, yet will produce his greatest joy: his granddaughter Alba, a beautiful, ambitious girl who will lead the family and their country into a revolutionary future. The House of the Spirits is an enthralling saga that spans decades and lives, twining the personal and the political into an epic novel of love, magic, and fate.

Tapestries of Hope, Threads of Love: The Arpillera Movement in Chile, 1974-1994, (1996) Marjorie Agosin.

This book tells the story of ordinary women living in terror and extreme poverty under General Pinochet's oppressive rule in Chile (1973–1989) and how their lives did and did not change following his reign. These women defied the military dictatorship by embroidering their sorrow on scraps of cloth, using needles and thread as one of the boldest means of popular protest and resistance in Latin America. The arpilleras they made—patchwork tapestries with scenes of everyday life and memorials to their disappeared relatives—were smuggled out of Chile and brought to the world the story of their fruitless searches in jails, morgues, government offices, and the tribunals of law for their husbands, brothers, and sons.

Becoming Mapuche: Person and Ritual in Indigenous Chile (2011) Magnus Course.

*Magnus Course blends convincing historical analysis with sophisticated contemporary theory in this superb ethnography of the Mapuche people of southern Chile. Based on many years of ethnographic fieldwork, *Becoming Mapuche* takes readers to the indigenous reserves where many Mapuche have been forced to live since the beginning of the twentieth century. In addition to accounts of the intimacies of everyday kinship and friendship, Course also offers the first complete ethnographic analyses of the major social events of contemporary rural Mapuche life - eluwun funerals, the ritual sport of palin, and the great ngillatun fertility ritual.*

By Night in Chile, (2003) Roberto Bolaño.

*Described as a "single night-long rant provides a terrifying, clandestine view of the strange bedfellows of Church and State in Chile. This wild, eerily compact novel—Roberto Bolaño's first work available in English—recounts the tale of a poor boy who wanted to be a poet, but ends up a half-hearted Jesuit priest and a conservative literary critic, a sort of lap dog to the rich and powerful cultural elite, in whose villas he encounters Pablo Neruda and Ernst Junger. Father Urrutia is offered a tour of Europe by agents of Opus Dei (to study "the disintegration of the churches," a journey into realms of the surreal); and ensnared by this plum, he is next assigned—after the destruction of Allende—the secret, never-to-be-disclosed job of teaching Pinochet, at night, all about Marxism, so the junta generals can know their enemy. Soon, searingly, his memories go from bad to worse. Heart-stopping and hypnotic, *By Night in Chile* marks the American debut of an astonishing writer.*

Chile: The Other September 11: An Anthology of Reflections on the 1973 Coup, (2006) Ariel Dorfman.

This anthology reclaims the date of September 11 as the anniversary of the U.S.-backed coup in Chile in 1973 by General Augusto Pinochet against the popularly elected Allende government. Contributors include Ariel Dorfman, Pablo Neruda, Salvador Allende, Fidel Castro.

Salt in the Sand: Memory, Violence, and the Nation-State in Chile, 1890 to the Present (2007) Lessie Jo Frazier.

Salt in the Sand is a compelling historical ethnography of the interplay between memory and state violence in the formation of the Chilean nation-state. The historian and anthropologist Lessie Jo Frazier focuses on northern Chile, which figures prominently in the nation's history as a site of military glory during the period of national conquest, of labor strikes and massacres in the late nineteenth century and early twentieth, and of state detention and violence during World War II and the Cold War. It was also the site of a mass-grave excavation that galvanized the national human rights movement in 1990, during Chile's transition from dictatorship to democracy.

Pinochet and Me: A Chilean Anti-Memoir, (2001) Marc Cooper.

Marc Cooper was a translator from the United States working for the Chilean President when Salvador Allende was overthrown by Augusto Pinochet in 1973. In this brief, compelling memoir he recalls his escape from the tightening grip of the junta and his subsequent return visits to a country that is still groping towards democratic recovery.

Salvador Allende Reader: Chile's Voice of Democracy, (2000) ed. James D. Cockcroft

On September 11, 1973, General Augusto Pinochet led a bloody coup against President Salvador Allende in Chile. Allende died in the Presidential Palace as it was attacked by Pinochet's army. Controversy still surrounds the role of Washington and the CIA in the overthrow of the popularly elected government of Allende, a self-proclaimed Marxist. For decades Allende's name and the experience of the Popular Unity government was all but erased from history, not only in Chile but internationally. This first-ever anthology, selected with an introduction by well-known historian James D. Cockcroft, presents Allende's voice and his vision of a more democratic, peaceful, and just world to a new generation.

We, Chile: Personal Testimonies of the Chilean Arpilleristas, (1996) ed. Emma Sepúlveda

In 1994, more than 20 years after the military coup of 1973, I returned to Chile to speak with the arpilleristas. While the Chileans were electing the second president of a democratic regime, Eduardo Frei, I taped the testimonies of eight women whom I had not been able to forget during my years of exile in the United States. I recorded their stories so the pain and suffering of so many human beings would not be totally in vain and so that, upon reading their testimonies, we might learn the immeasurable worth of human rights and teach future generations to defend them throughout the world.

Other resources:

- Selected Poems of Gabriela Mistral (English and Spanish Edition) (2003) V. B. Price editor, the poetry of the first Latin American (and Chilean) to win the Nobel Prize in literature.
- The Essential Neruda: Selected Poems (Bilingual Edition) (2004) Pablo Neruda, and Mark Eisner, editor. A definitive selection that draws from the entire breadth and width of Neruda's various poetic styles and themes
- Estrella distante (2010), Roberto Bolano

Carmen Rodríguez, a Chilean-born Vancouver writer, is the author of and a body to remember with, a collection of short stories, & Guerra Prolongada/Protracted War, a volume of poetry.