

P / REFERENCES OF DESIGN

“DE OTRO MODO”: SOUTHERN THAN SOUTH.

Magdalena Cattan^a, Pamela Gatica-Ramirez^{*a}, Camila Vicencioba^b

a Universidad de Chile, Chile

b Museo de Arte Contemporáneo, Chile

* pamela.gatica@uchile.cl

DOI: 10.63442/KLJI4650

KEYWORDS | DECOLONIAL DESIGN, FEMINIST DESIGN, CRAFTS, TEXTIL DESIGN, STENCIL

ABSTRACT | The evolution of design in Chile has come about through the amalgamation of knowledge that fuses the practices of local artisans and craftsmen with the economic and cultural influence coming from the United States and Europe - the global North. This mix impacts a society marked by profound social inequalities, where design sometimes finds itself in an uncomfortable position of challenging the universal norms imposed by the North. Beyond questioning colonial models, Chilean design currently finds itself in a unique socio-political context by integrating intersectional gender perspectives and reflecting on diverse and distinct Latin American cultures. Challenging the central structures that govern economic development, design takes a different perspective by embracing local visions, the anonymous voices of indigenous peoples, and intangible cultural richness. Silently, craftswomen, caregivers, artists, and those who confront precarity with their skills nurture design and, at the same time, empower people, understandings that give non-neutral agency to design to transform reality in the remoteness of large dominant centers.

“De otro modo” is an integral perspective derived from decolonial perspectives and intersectional feminisms, which aims to bring together the knowledge and doings of the narrow and long Chilean territory from its idiosyncrasies marked by inequalities, disasters, and natural riches. A territory in which designers look between the Andes Mountains and the Pacific Ocean for the well-being of life in the future. The paper describes three case studies based on the authors’ research work, which weave together historical-political contexts and socio-cultural representation to understand the current dimensions of local design.

The first case reviews the significance and resignification of women’s popular-local culture in ‘Feminist May’ (Chile, 2018). The second case analyses the aesthetic and conceptual renovation undergone by both textiles and clothing during the 1970s due to the professionalization of design in the country. In this sense, it explores the influence of the discipline on the cultural transformations of the time, highlighting the role of women designers who integrated iconographic elements of popular and indigenous culture into mass-produced objects. The third case, from a critical-decolonial perspective - informed by ethnographic and anthropological design fieldwork - reviews the discourse of representation around the link between the traditional knowledge of local crafts and the aesthetic bases of contemporary Chilean export design..

1. Introduction

Chile, located in the south of the Americas, is distinguished by its peculiar territorial configuration: an extensive and narrow strip of more than four thousand kilometres between the imposing Andes Mountain range and the vast Pacific Ocean. A recognisably seismic country, Chile's landscape ranges from deserts to glacial regions. As a Spanish-speaking nation, Chilean culture shares common colonial traits with the rest of the Americas while exhibiting unique characteristics derived from miscegenation. In contemporary times, following the period of military dictatorship (1973-1990), Chile adopted a neoliberal economic model that has been a regional standout in terms of macroeconomics. However, growing social inequalities, the extractivist approach, political tensions and other complex challenges have become more prominent in the last decade, reflecting ongoing socio-political changes. Significant social milestones have strongly influenced design studies in recent years. Notable among these events are the feminist movement of May 2018, the Social Outburst of 2019, the coronavirus pandemic of 2020, and the coming to power of the first government with a feminist agenda on its political agenda in 2022.

This context places the study of design in front of critical cultural questions that influence its practice. These questions include the consideration of maintaining classical modern design guidelines, following northern hemisphere trends, or identifying critical territories to propose transformative knowledge and practices.

Design activity and reflection in the South America do not differ significantly from what the Northern hemisphere dictates, as the idea that the practices of the developed world are always "better" than those of the underdeveloped, colonial heritage has been "normalised". Whether true or not, it is undeniable that the application of "imported" knowledge and practices inevitably takes on the influence, emphasis and values of the local context. That suggests that subjective aspects, which are constantly evolving in terms of location and form, are relevant to considering different perspectives (Flesler et al., 2018). Moreover, to see things in an 'other way, other manner'.

In this approach, as pointed out by Yuderlys Espinosa (2014), 'de otro modo' relates to the commitment to the decolonial feminist perspective, which questions the explanations developed by white-bourgeois Western theory and radically redefines the concept of 'woman', making it impossible to reconstruct it. Moreover, in collaboration with the decolonial approach, feminism is committed to reinterpreting history from a critical perspective towards modernity, not only because of its androcentrism and misogyny, as classical feminist epistemology has done but also because of its intrinsically racist and Eurocentric character.

Feminist perspectives contribute to the visualisation of the contributions of women and dissenting people, as well as the recognition of situated knowledge. This integration reflects Haraway's proposal for "an embodied objectivity that is compatible with paradoxical and critical feminist science projects: feminist objectivity simply involves the consideration of situated knowledge" (Haraway, D; 1995, p. 324). Adopting this 'embodied', affected view of design allows us to highlight pieces of knowledge and practices that enrich understanding and engagement in the field of design.

In the context of the Chilean territory, design faces economic and social challenges, often accentuating its voices to solve problems within the limits of inequitable economic development. Situating ourselves from the creation of design education, whose vanguard was the women of textile design at the University of Chile in the 1970s, as well as the reflection of industrial design when observing local crafts or the use of global DIY aesthetics to leave traces on the walls of the Chilean capital of the rage and weariness of its communities, serves the recognition of three different scenarios for a situated view of Chilean design, of a critical look at what we do and think in this territory.

1.1 Questions and Objectives

In light of the above, the question arises: How has design, both in its theoretical approach and practical application, acted as an active cultural agent that promotes an "other way" perspective in its work? Through three cases linked to a decolonial-feminist perspective, the study aims to recognise the possibilities of an "other way" of looking that can shape transformative alternatives.

1.2 Methodology

The cases studied belong to the recording of information on three spaces of Chilean culture: women in the beginnings of the formation of design in Chile, the traditions of artisan communities and the design and graphic testimony of a Chilean social landmark (October 2019).

These three cases approach from:

Case 1: The methodology used in the first case involved the historical reconstruction of an object of study, the Textile Design career at the University of Chile, through a qualitative approach and with a gender perspective. The object was determined by conducting interviews and collecting personal objects, which became the primary source of information.

Case 2: For this case, theoretical information was collected and complemented with on-site observation and personal interviews to analyse the relationship between crafts and design critically.

Case 3: A theoretical review links the graphic testimonies of the streets to the slogans inherited from the 'feminist May' of 2018, specifically the stencils produced during the 2019 social outburst in Chile.

All of them compose an interweaving of historical-political contexts and socio-cultural representation to understand the current dimensions of local design. They respond to the need to establish ways of understanding design culture as an articulating axis of new perspectives for society as a whole.

2. 'De Otro Modo' Perspective

The feminist perspective of situated knowledge enriches the (design) project and, at the same time, decolonial; as Dori Tunstall says, "decolonising design requires us to break down our basic assumptions about what design is and what it has been" (Tunstall, 2023, p.6). Enrichment grows from considering women in an active role in the weight of history and attributes related to the 'feminine' that aim to tread a new path for the study - not always comfortable (Ahmed, 2018) - of communities and their doings.

Ibarra (2023), from her studies in Brazilian territory, proposes in the case of textile processes that "they offer a means to explore themes, communicate with interdisciplinary teams and advance in the knowledge of different areas of thought. Textile language impregnates metaphors of collaboration and joint work, and the act of making transforms the metaphor into the potential for transdisciplinary practice" (p. 332); this understanding of craft activity proposes a disciplinary articulation that is no longer merely rational and/or functional, objective, but adds a subjective and affective component that reflects in the work of the communities. This thinking is in line with what Escobar (2018) has proposed to define what is "appropriate" for the design of the South, where the cosmovisions (in the case of the original peoples) and appropriate modern visions of feeling and living the South American landscape, offer a particular view that, even under heteropatriarchal and Eurocentric structures, offers a becoming of its own.

Flesler (2018), on the other hand, from Argentina, was able to verify through the experience of design workshops in the classroom that from a gender perspective, "differences and inequalities can be considered in the processes of planning and design of urban spaces, objects and communicational statements" (p.45).

In the Chilean case, whose history and landscape are often convoluted, the wide range of feminism has tried to appear in areas on different axes of inequality, feminism being "not only an egalitarian movement in general but also a radical and transformative decolonial struggle for the positive affirmation of differences between marginalised people and peoples. These differences in material positioning manifest distinct life experiences and diverse forms of knowledge" (Braidotti, 2022, p.32). Thus, the historical events that occurred during the Feminist May 2018 and the Social Outburst of 2019 concur in a precedent in the meanings in which actors considered outside of structural power (women, dissidents and others), which allows studies within culture to draw on the phenomenon to re-signify their own methodological or critical components.

Maya Ober (2023), a decolonial, depatriarchal feminist design activist, invites us to understand that design can be "a critical, situated, reflexive and socially transformative practice, engaging in struggles and developing practice on the ground" (p. 4). Different voices and ways of doing weave a broader, more diverse, and more affluent way for design and culture and fostering transformations for the well-being of communities and territories.

2.1 The Vanguard of Textile Design in Chile: A Journey to the Aesthetic and Conceptual Revolution of the 1970s by women

In a historical scenario, the evolution of design education originates from women's work in a progressive socio-political context, leaving the legacy of a "struggle" that will later be recognised by the discipline of design and the history of Chilean design.

This history took place when the first university programme in Textile Design in Chile was born in 1970, during the socialist government of Salvador Allende Gossens, under the protection of one of the oldest public institutions in the country -the University of Chile-. In this context, and over almost a decade, a team comprised almost entirely of women developed innovative weaving, printing, and clothing projects with a strong national identity, rescuing symbols and modes of production typical of peasants and indigenous Latin American culture. The latter materialises by applying these elements in textiles and garments originating within the industry.

Between 1960 and 1970, most Latin American countries, regardless of their type of government, intensified their industrialisation policies with the intention of moving from an 'easy import substitution' to a 'difficult substitution' model. Thus, efforts were concentrated on making the objects produced in the continent more complex, which implied strengthening domestic markets.

In the Chilean case, the belief that only industrialisation would make it possible to leave underdevelopment behind led to the creation or restructuring of institutions dedicated to technological research, industrial innovation and product development. Consequently, design discipline progressively integrates into the state apparatus and the discourse of modernity, considered an instrument for updating local industry. Parallel to and derived from the same belief system, the first schools of modern design emerged in the country, promoted by left-wing youth as part of a profound restructuring of higher education.

At this point, it is essential to note that the notion of design import into the country during this period came mainly from the ideas of the HfG Ulm. This German school sought to provide a rational response to technological development and its influence on everyday life that "would forge over fifteen years a project methodology that was especially important for the consolidation of design as an autonomous activity, interdisciplinary in nature" (Castillo, 2010, p. 222). In this sense, the presence in the country of the German academic Gui Bonsiepe was relevant, who, in addition to working for the International Labour Office (ILO) and the Technological Research Committee (INTEC), gave some courses at the Pontificia Universidad Católica (PUC) and worked with some students at the Universidad de Chile (UCh).



Figure 1. Printmaking Workshop Class of the Textile Design course at the University of Chile, 1971. Personal archive of Ana María Hidalgo. All rights reserved, reproduced by permission of the author.

On 26 August 1970, by decree N°10.032 issued by the Rector's Office of the University of Chile, the Textile Design course was officially created, making official a discipline practised for decades by granting a professional title to future graduates. Initially, the course had two specialisations: Weaving and Printing (Figure 1), each with a specialised workshop. Later 1974, the Costume major was added, and a typical first year was created to promote interdisciplinary work. This educational project had a curriculum that sought to promote interaction between artistic education, trades and national industry in the context of an inward-looking development model in the first stage and a socialist one in the second. In this way, and following the technological guidelines mentioned above, although the university's aspiration was for designers to join the industry in order to modernise it, they "were also interested in generating a new, different productive space that conceived of creativity and manual work" (Montalva, 2015, p.85).

Like the rest of the mentions, the curriculum (Figure 2) focused on teaching industrial procedures complemented with humanities and science subjects—the latter, in order to distance the degree from the artistic field. However, as a differentiating element in Textile Design, learning about craft trades was maintained, incorporating technical knowledge and iconographic elements of the popular and indigenous Latin American imagination into the products designed. This approach, far from being an isolated event, was part of a general phenomenon in the Santiago fashion circuit, whereby many designers sought their language through the conceptually Chilean. This movement was called *Moda Autóctona* and, according to the historian Pía Montalva (2015, p.85): "It rescues the Latin American as a source of inspiration or cultural and visual reference, but always assumes the mediation that brings the own of the time, the contemporary elements. The designer's task [...] is to resignify these contents". The task was to reinterpret these contents, resulting in a unique proposal.

PLAN DE REVISIONES DE DISEÑO TEXTIL (SUTANALONG Y TUPING)							
CURSO	LÍNEA PLÁSTICA	NOTA	LÍNEA CIENTÍFICA	NOTA	LÍNEA DISEÑO	NOTA	
2º AÑO	COMPOSICION	---	MORFOLOGIA	---	HIPOTESIS DEL ANTE	---	---
	EXPRESION GRAFICA	---	ECOLOGIA	---	ECOLOGIA	---	---
	DISEÑO ANALITICO	---	TECNOLOGIA TEXTIL	---	PSICOLOGIA	---	---
3er. AÑO	COMPOSICION	---	TECNOLOGIA TEXTIL	---	HIPOTESIS DEL ANTE	---	---
	DISEÑO ANALITICO	---	QUIMICA Y FISICA	---	ECOLOGIA	---	---
		---	TEXTIL	---		---	---
		---	SEMANTICO DE DISEÑO	---		---	---
4º AÑO	DISEÑO ANALITICO	---	QUIMICA Y FISICA	---	HIPOTESIS DEL ANTE	---	---
		---	TEXTIL	---	ECOLOGIA	---	---
		---	TECNOLOGIA TEXTIL	---	SEMANTICO DE HIPOTESIS	---	---
		---	QUIMICA DEL COLOR	---	DEL DISEÑO TEXTIL	---	---
		---	ADMINISTRACION	---		---	---
<u>ACTIVIDADES COMPLEMENTARIAS:</u>							
		---		---		---	---
		---		---		---	---
		---		---		---	---

PLAN DE REVISIONES DE DISEÑO DE VESTUARIO							
CURSO	LÍNEA PLÁSTICA	NOTA	LÍNEA CIENTÍFICA	NOTA	LÍNEA MANIPULATIVA	NOTA	LÍNEA DISEÑO
			TECNICA				
2º AÑO	COMPOSICION	---	MORFOLOGIA	---	HIPOTESIS DEL ANTE	---	---
	EXPRESION GRAFICA	---	ECOLOGIA	---	ECOLOGIA	---	---
	DISEÑO ANALITICO	---	QUIMICA Y FISICA	---		---	---
3er. AÑO	COMPOSICION	---	MATERIALES TEXTILES	---	HIPOTESIS DEL ANTE	---	---
	EXPRESION GRAFICA	---	COMPLEMENTOS DEL	---	SEMANTICO DE HIPO-	---	---
		---	VESTUARIO	---	TESIS DEL COLOR	---	---
		---		---	ECOLOGIA	---	---
4º AÑO	EXPRESION GRAFICA	---	TECNOLOGIA	---	HIPOTESIS DEL ANTE	---	---
		---	COMPLEMENTOS DEL	---	TEXTIL	---	---
		---	TEXTIL	---		---	---
		---	FUNCIONES	---		---	---
		---	ALMA VESTIMENTA	---		---	---
		---	QUIMICA DEL COLOR	---		---	---
<u>ACTIVIDADES COMPLEMENTARIAS:</u>							
		---		---		---	---
		---		---		---	---
		---		---		---	---

Figure 2. Syllabus of the mentions Prints and Textiles of the Textile Design Degree of the University of Chile. Faculty of Architecture and Urbanism of the University of Chile.

'Moda Autóctona' [Native Fashion], whose period of greatest apogee was between 1969 and 1973, prospered because it was supported and encouraged by the governments in power, mainly: "because the discourse that sustains it coincides with the Latin Americanist approaches that cross the public and cultural space of the period" (Montalva, 2015, p.84).

Regarding the latter, it is essential to note that textiles acquired a central role in the economy during the Popular Unity government. On the one hand, because of its status as an essential good, and on the other, because of its capacity to generate jobs. In particular, a relevant milestone was the nationalisation of 1971 of the prominent textile companies in the Metropolitan Region, which turned the sector into a fundamental pillar of economic nationalisation and workers' participation (Echeverría et al., 1987).

Seeing an opportunity to enrich local production in this economic growth, the University of Chile tried to incorporate its Applied Arts graduates in the factories by changing its curricula. The latter led to the creation of the Department of Design, which used professional internships to insert students into industry. In the particular case of the weaving and printing courses, this was almost exclusively thanks to two teachers: Margarita Johow, who had direct contact with important entrepreneurs in the area, and Ana María Hidalgo, who worked in Alejandro Stuyen's printing factory. At the same time, students with family connections needed to be in the course. Such was the case of Ingrid Pollak, who obtained internships for her classmates.

On the other hand, thanks to the links between Johow herself and Paulina Brugnoli, a teacher specialising in gobelin weaving, with archaeologists, researchers and government institutions, some students could carry out research with state funding. One of the most emblematic cases was the CONICYT project 207 Pre-Inca Chilean Textiles (0 to 1350 AD), awarded by both in 1970, which incorporated a group of four students: Carmen Gloria Gajardo, Liliana Prado, Gioconda Pamparana and Liliana Ulloa, who developed the thesis Industrial textile creations based on a formal selection of pre-Inca textiles researched in the museums of the Norte Grande. The project consisted of selecting, studying and recording sixty-five pieces from four national museums, on which they studied weaving techniques, types of fibre, colours and dyeing plants. With this, they designed textiles based on the reinterpretation of the archaeological pieces produced and marketed by three textile factories.

Although this project can be considered the largest due to its funding and state technical support, 10 of the 28 undergraduate theses completed by the students of the degree course had the country's indigenous and/or popular culture as a central theme, giving rise to diverse proposals for prints, fabrics and clothing. However, although the degree course was created to introduce designers to the local industry, the efforts to build a bridge between the students and the factories were mediated by specific subjects. In this sense, it was a group of female professors who organised, independently and without the university's financial support, a series of events that brought the students closer to the national reality and allowed them to develop professionally.

However, it is crucial to acknowledge that, despite the efforts of artists, designers, and the backing of the Frei Montalva and Allende administrations, the textile industry showed little interest in creating fabrics featuring indigenous motifs because of the preference among women for foreign fabrics, aiming for dresses resembling original French, Italian, German, or English designs (Montalva, 2015, p.86). Consequently, native fashion only gained traction due to its smaller-scale production and artisanal methods.

Despite this and the brevity of its existence, this educational project trained many professionals who, faced with the collapse of the textile industry, the repression of the dictatorship, or simply out of personal interest, oriented their careers towards other ways of doing the discipline. In this sense, to date, an essential group of former students has been identified within the group of graduates who have continued to develop in the textile scene until the present day, achieving great notoriety.

2.2 Exploring the Local Identity of Contemporary Design Through Crafts

Object-oriented design situates the work at a critical crossroads regarding the recognition of the locals, the colonialisms in the work, and the dialogues between designers and artisans in the space of regional Chile beyond the capital. This recognition can be seen in how artisans have incarnated their habitat in crafts, adopting materials and forms, which has directly inspired designers to recognise in it a way of doing that has been very valuable, and at the same time, in tension with the need for co-creation beyond cultural appropriation.

Crafts can be understood as an expression of the cultural landscape of their makers. They are the material representation of community narratives and singular realities, witnesses and containers of long and dynamic processes of evolution and historical-cultural phenomena, objects where the dialogues between humans and nature embody, building a deep sense of local identity (Mier y Terán 2013; Sepulveda, 2003; Turok, 1988).



Figure 3. Three generations of craftsmanship. Betancourt family's work with ox horns. Left: traditional ox horn (Achurra, 2018); Right: Necklace by Walka (Klunes, 2016).

In the case of Chile, the diversity of the landscape, with desert, ice, mountains and ocean, is rich in raw materials from north to south. The transformation of these materials into functional objects reveals a deep connection between people and territory as an essential characteristic of Chilean craftsmanship; the piece is recognised first by its material and then by the technique. Most craft traditions in Chile are rooted in local communities, where knowledge of materials and techniques is transmitted from generation to generation through practice and observation. Artisans dynamically integrate elements of their environment into their creative work, continually enriching what understood local identity - a process in constant change as cultural contexts evolve.

This notion of local identity has also influenced wider creative and Design fields. Materials, technologies and aesthetics that were once associated only with craft traditions now constitute the foundations for constructing a notion of identity unique to contemporary Chilean Design. The current generations of creators have adapted and transformed traditional practices, creating pieces that resonate in spaces of cultural exchange different from those of traditional craftsmanship. One example is the creative work of the Betancourt family, who, over three generations, have worked with ox horns, evolving from traditional use as wine glasses to the exploration of contemporary jewellery (Figure 3).

According to the Consejo Nacional de las Culturas, las Artes y el Patrimonio (2017), the relationship between artisans and designers in Chile began approximately in 1990, along with the return of democracy, when independent designers seeking to differentiate their proposals and broaden their academic bases began to investigate expressions of widespread and informal knowledge that were not accessible in formal educational spaces (CNCA, 2017). The interest of designers has evolved in recent decades, mainly due to Chile's participation in European design fairs. In 2011, state agencies ProChile and DIRAC selected a group of emerging designers to represent Chile at the 100 Design London exhibition, part of the London Design Festival. Under the curatorial leadership of Luz Méndez, products with a cohesive identity were brought together, highlighting pieces made with local materials. The final selection included objects that combined traditional carpentry skills with digital fabrication. The exhibition was entitled "Southwest View: Contemporary Design from Chile" (Figure 4). After that first experience, the presence of Chilean Design at these fairs has continued to be characterised by objects that represent a connection with local techniques and materials over other options. According to Francesca Bucci, DIRAC coordinator, Chilean materials translate a narrative connotation that materials can help characterise these creations as "Chilean", thus fostering their internationalisation (Guzmán in INE, 2018), as crafts are the creative industry that produces the highest percentage of foreign exports of cultural goods (CNCA, 2014).



Figure 4. Screenshot of 'Southwest view' catalogue, for the participation of Chile in the exhibition 100 Design London in 2011. Retrieved from PROCHILE, 2011.

Since participating in these events, the notion of Chilean Design has become associated with a distinctive aesthetic that reflects the characteristics of traditional crafts. A recent newspaper article entitled "Mapping National Design" in 2020 presents examples of artefacts where craft practices inspire the technique or materials or involve the direct participation of artisans in the manufacturing processes (Figure 5). In one example (LUP), the design team produced a recycled plastic fibre that was provided to a group of traditional basket weavers to weave baskets in combination with natural fibres. Another example (Prima) integrates traditional material, technique, and production with wicker fibres from Chimbarongo as a distinctive aesthetic feature in the cabinet design (Figure 6).

These examples show that contemporary Chilean Design has found in crafts a deep-rooted connection, a source of inspiration and knowledge guided by practice, consolidating a distinctive aesthetic, using the notion of local identity emanating from the territory to its advantage. It makes sense because crafts are the

sector most valued by the population because they are associated with a notion of "national identity" and a "sense of belonging" and represent the labour of Chilean workers, while their products are evidence of territorial diversity (País, 2016, p.47).

However, although there is a shared value base centred on highlighting the nobility of local materials and celebrating diverse 'ways of making', even when techniques, technologies and aesthetics differ, the problem lies in the fact that this model tends to view crafts as a fragmented activity, separating the value of the object-product, the artisan's expert knowledge (technical, experiential and bodily) and the narratives contained in the practice. Moreover, artisans are not included as expert creative partners but rather as providers of manufacturing services (Mier & Teran, 2013; Parada en Cattán, 2019).



Figure 5, 6. Examples of current Chilean design where the influence of artisanal techniques is visible. Left: LUP Design; Right: Prima furniture; MasDeco, 2020.

Unfortunately, despite the visibility granted by the showcase of foreign design fairs, the craft sector continues to be perceived by audiences as a "minor art" and artisans as "technical workers" having a subsidiary position compared to Design and other areas of the cultural production milieu (País, 2016). In this sense, cultural policy researcher Beatriz Navarrete reflects:

"Beyond the harsh survival under a model that ignores and marginalises them, the trades and productions grouped under this denomination -that of Popular Art and Crafts- have survived in a world that does not recognise and marginalise them. -(Popular Art and Crafts) have suffered a harsh effect of transculturation due to state policies that have tried to retranslate them to the new imperatives of globalisation". (Navarrete, 2017)

The paternalistic protective role of institutions and the market, installed through heritage preservation and promotion policies, can have a negative impact to the extent that dichotomies install turn crafts into a representation of the past (Navarrete. 2017), while Chilean Design would be the image of the present. Thus, artisans cannot imagine a future, limiting themselves to repetition to safeguard the intangible heritage.

Thus, although the linking and referencing of contemporary Chilean Design with traditional crafts would be expected to be beneficial for both sectors, it is argued that, as a result of the lack of critical reflection by the creative sector of Design, it unintentionally reinforces the subsidiary position of artisans in the local cultural milieu (Noronha, 2018). There is a great contradiction in trying to protect and promote the local - as ways of making and thinking - through its alienation and subjugation to global regulations, being, in a way, a way back to colonialism (Navarrete, 2017).

2.3 The Explosion of Feelings: Walls as a Testimony of Rage and Resistance



Figure 7. Stencil records during the 2019 social outburst in Santiago de Chile. Iconographic representations of women. Reproduced from *Iconografía del Despertar: esténcil* [Iconography of Awakening: stencil], by Ch. Soto, 2022, Impuro ediciones. All rights reserved [2022], reproduced by permission of the author.

The urban scene of the Chilean capital has been fertile territory for the graphic expression of the population's social struggles, with its most relevant moment in recent years, in which politics and activism have gained relevance.

Preceded by large student demonstrations (2006, the “Revolución pingüina” [penguin revolution], allusive to the uniform worn by secondary school students; 2011, the largest student demonstration in the return of democracy of students of all levels), in 2018, students mobilised in the so-called “Feminist May”, leaving a deep mark that prepared the ground for the “Estallido Social” [Social Explosion] that began on 18 October 2019. High school students refused to pay the metro fare, triggering an unprecedented escalation of mobilisations across the country, which led the conservative government of the time to decree a state of emergency. The demonstrations ceased with the arrival of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, but a process of constitutional change was agreed upon, which ultimately failed to materialise in 2023. For the inhabitants of Santiago, these experiences represented, in the words of one woman interviewed on the street, “living several Chiles”.

The street was the canvas for expressing the slogans and symbols of these demonstrations. Urban Iconography (Figure 7) emerges from the movement of people agitated by the protests—the language of the street in performances, posters and on walls. Various designers and other professionals took it upon

themselves to compile these icons. The hybridisation of languages emerges by using DIY techniques, stencils, collages and others. In these expressions, the imprint of the 'Feminist May' is visible in slogans such as 'No is no. No more abuse. No more abuse. Girlfriend, realise. Fight Like a Girl' indicates youth culture influenced by slogans on screens and digital platforms that repeat the same things ad infinitum. However, the appearance of these images in this context aims to challenge the social power relation (Hollows, 2001), more so because of their intensive reproduction that occupies all the walls of the city centre—resignifying the non-'gendered' citizen space (Flesler et al., 2018), as an empowered space, with the right to be inhabited even with discomfort.

On the other hand, the slogans 'Ni tuya ni yuta. Los pacos son inflamables. 1312. ACAB, All Cops Are Bastards' (Figure 8), emerges as a sign of global rage, of voices revolutionising social justice. The Chilean 'cops' are the 'pacos', the 'yuta', and occupy a large part of the messages on the stencils of the explosion, with the ferocity of a rage that no longer distinguishes the symbol from the living signifier. The violence unleashed in the streets remained in the voices of written hatred. Matapacos, the dog 'companion' of the student protests, by then already dead, emerges as one of the most recurrent symbols in the visuality and performances of the outburst. The carabineros are reflected as the 'oppressive male', in the words of Las Tesis' performance "Un violador en tu camino" (Colectivo Registro Callejero, 2019), alluding to Carabineros de Chile's advertising slogan in the 1980s: "Un amigo en tu camino"; the unbridled repression corresponds to the vicious circle (Cárdenas, & Ceballos, 2021) that perpetuates violence towards women and LGBTQ+ communities.

The stencils of the outburst (Soto, 2023) represent a discovery in popular graphics that reflects the sentiments of society in a simple and often precarious way. They are the voice of an affected culture, using what they have to complement the more enormous graphic slogans of the time. Rage manifests itself as an expression of hidden fear or sadness. It confronts the forces of desire and needs in a culture that prioritises economic growth and the value of money over other human qualities, such as affective and creative ones. This global culture adopts the Chilean accent in the metaphors created through the stencil technique and famous sayings.



Figure 8. Stencil records during the 2019 social outburst in Santiago de Chile. Slogans left: "Against patriarchy and capital I*G Women and Dissidence", right: "It wasn't my fault, where I was or how I was dressed". Reproduced from Iconografía del Despertar: esténcil [Iconography of Awakening: stencil], by Ch. Soto, 2022, Impuro ediciones. All rights reserved [2022], reproduced by permission of the author.

The stencils of the explosion represent the cultural heritage of a society that shared common feelings, fears and sadness, expressed through aggressive slogans, visual ironies and punk aesthetics that reflect a unique Latin American sentiment. These messages were made visible and joined the chorus of other citizen demonstrations. Women, intersectional feminists and LGBTQ+ communities vindicate in messages that relate to the experiences of what it is to be a woman in a hetero-patriarchal society. Visuality from the graphic becomes an archaeological object for the writing of a testimonial history (Carson & Pajackowska, 2000) about the problems of economic abuse and violence.

Although they contradict the culture of urban beautification and the academic canon, these stencils sincerely cooperate with the aesthetics of our culture based on feelings (Gatica, 2018, 2021, 2023). What is considered countercultural in the voices depicted on the walls of the capital gives form and image to popular sentiment, being an essential part of the cultural testimony and history of the country.

2.4 Recognizing Women's Contributions, Challenges, and Resistance

Due to political-social connotations, the professional practice of design in Chile is subject to the economic framework, which places it as an actor that must "give value" to consumer products and services. In this respect, the professional activity produces global pieces mediated by intermediaries who create strategies to improve sales. This economic context influences the dynamics of contemporary design, conditioning its processes and results.

From the situated, critical perspective seen in the three cases presented, we can point out that a relevant aspect to consider is the fundamental role played by women in the development and promotion of textile design - and its teaching - in Chile. It stands out how a team made up almost entirely of women carried out innovative projects, rescuing symbols and modes of production typical of popular, peasant and indigenous Latin American culture. Furthermore, despite the efforts to insert the designers into the local industry, these were mediated by female teachers who organised independent instances to bring the students closer to the national reality and allow them to develop professionally. This historical experience highlights the importance of recognising women's work in the field of design and their contribution to the cultural and economic development of the country.

On the other hand, the valuation and relationship between contemporary design and traditional crafts in Chile, valued by the population for their association with national identity and sense of belonging, and which represent the labour of Chilean workers, both men and women, is relevant. However, despite this valuation, artisans are perceived as technical workers and have a subsidiary position compared to design and other areas of the cultural production environment. This perception reflects entrenched gender dynamics in which manual work, mainly associated with women, is less valued than design, which has historically been dominated by men. Furthermore, it notes that cultural policies have contributed to the transculturation of crafts, limiting the capacity of artisans to imagine a future and relegating them to repetition to preserve intangible heritage.

Finally, the centrality of demonstrations led by women and feminists in events such as the "feminist May" and the "social outburst" provided a platform for expressing anger and discontent at patriarchy, police violence and social injustices. The slogans and symbols created at these protests reflect the struggle for gender justice, as well as resistance to male chauvinist and heteropatriarchal oppression. In this case, the stencils become a form of visual expression that makes visible the experiences of women and LGBTQ+ communities, challenging the dominant culture and contributing to the writing of a testimonial history of issues of gender-based abuse and violence. These manifestations highlight the importance of including feminist perspectives in Chile's analysis and practice of design, recognising the impact of feminist struggles in shaping contemporary society and culture.

3. Conclusions

Reflections on design and its culture from a situated and critical perspective, which seeks more significant equity and inclusion, lead us to recognise and value the work of women and dissidents. This alternative view promotes gender justice in all dimensions, advocating for a more egalitarian and diverse society.

From this perspective, which includes gender and decolonial perspectives, we seek to enrich design practice in the global south and everywhere where communities require transformations to promote their well-being and empowerment.

The particularities of Chile's territory and history have given design a character that, from a situated perspective, allows it to reflect on its work. This history and work are at the forefront of the norms that the North "dictates." However, they include local voices that may be invisible or non-existent in the economic dictates that usually govern the discipline.

Adopting an "other way" view implies a commitment to constructive critique of design, especially when it appropriates the landscape, the territories and the communities that inhabit them. In South America and beyond, this perspective allows us to recognise and address the inequities present in our societies and the urgent need for social justice.

References

- Ahmed, S. (2017). *Living a feminist life*. Duke University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1515/9780822373377>
- Braidotti, R. (2022). *Feminismo posthumano* [Posthuman feminism]. Gedisa.
- Cárdenas, J., & Ceballos, P. (2021). Análisis del discurso de resistencia feminista frente a la violencia patriarcal [Analysis of the discourse of feminist resistance to patriarchal violence]. *Revista Educación Las Américas*, 10(2), 231-244. <https://doi.org/10.35811/rea.v10i2.120>
- Carson, F., & Pajaczkowska, C. (Eds.). (2000). *Feminist visual culture*. Edinburgh University Press.
- Castillo, E. (Ed.). (2010). *Artesanos, artistas, artífices: La Escuela de Artes Aplicadas de la Universidad de Chile 1928-1968* [Craftsmen, artists, artists: The School of Applied Arts of the University of Chile 1928-1968]. Ocho Libros Editores.
- Cattan, M. (2019). Craft and design partnerships in the Chilean context: A critical perspective. *Design Journal*, 22, 967-979. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14606925.2019.1595411>
- CNCA. (2017). *Ideas matrices para un proyecto de ley de fomento y desarrollo del sector artesanal chileno* [Ideas for a draft law to promote and develop the Chilean artisanal sector]. Santiago: CNCA.
- Colectivo Registro Callejero. (2019, November 26). Performance colectivo LasTesis "Un violador en tu camino" [Collective performance LasTesis "A rapist on your way"]. Available at: <https://youtu.be/aB7r6hdo3W4>
- Echeverría, M., Frías, P., Herrera, G., & Larraín, Ch. (1987). *Industria textil y del vestuario en Chile: Evolución económica y situación de los trabajadores* [Textile and clothing industry in Chile: Economic evolution and workers' situation]. Colección Estudios Sectoriales.
- Escobar, A. (2018). *Design for the pluriverse: Radical interdependence, autonomy, and the making of worlds*. Duke University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1215/9780822371816>

Espinosa, Y., Gómez, D., & Ochoa, K. (Eds.). (2014). *Tejiendo de otro modo: Feminismo, epistemología y apuestas descoloniales en Abya Yala* [Weaving differently: Feminism, epistemology and decolonial stakes in Abya Yala]. Editorial Universidad del Cauca.

Flesler, G., Durán, V., & Gugliottella, G. (2018). Inclusión de la perspectiva de género en el campo proyectual [Inclusion of the gender perspective in the design field]. *Ciencia, Técnica y Mainstreaming Social*, 2, 43-51. <https://doi.org/10.4995/citecma.2018.8963>

Gatica, P. (2023). Designing from discomfort: Feminisms in design. *Cuadernos del Centro de Estudios de Diseño y Comunicación*, 185. <https://doi.org/10.18682/cdc.vi185.9508>

Gatica, P. (2018). Theoretical dynamics of the emotional foundation (living) in design (cultural). *RChD: Creación Y Pensamiento*, 3(4). <https://doi.org/10.5354/0719-837X.2018.49519>

IEI-Instituto de Estudios Internacionales. (2018). *Estado del diseño industrial chileno y desafíos para su internacionalización* [State of Chilean industrial design and challenges for its internationalisation]. ProChile.

Ibarra, M. (2023). Imagining a feeling-thinking design practice and research from Latin America. In *The Routledge companion to design research*. Taylor & Francis. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003182443-29>

Mier y Terán Giménez Cacho, D. (2013). A bowl is not a bowl: Diego Mier y Terán and Kythzia Barrera at TEDxDIS. [Video]. Available: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qYDDva921iw&t=372s>

Montalva, P. (2015). *Morir un poco: Moda y sociedad en Chile 1960-1976* [Dying a little: Fashion and society in Chile]. Catalonia.

Navarrete, B. (2017). In CNCA. *Ideas matrices para un proyecto de ley de fomento y desarrollo del sector artesanal chileno* [Ideas for a draft law to promote and develop the Chilean artisanal sector]. Santiago: CNCA.

Noronha, R. (2018). The collaborative turn: Challenges and limits on the construction of a common plan and on autonomía in design. *Strategic Design Research Journal*, 11(2), 125-135. <https://doi.org/10.4013/sdrj.2018.112.08>

Ober, M. (2023). Polyvocal feminist practices of design. *RChD: Creación Y Pensamiento*, 8(15), 1-6. <https://doi.org/10.5354/0719-837X.2023.72876>

Suil, K., & Gatica, P. (2021). Threads and politics: Visuality in embroidery as a historical record of the *Estallido Social Chileno 2019*. *Cuadernos del Centro de Estudios de Diseño y Comunicación*, 134. <https://doi.org/10.18682/cdc.vi134.5023>

Sapriza, G. (2012). La memoria de las mujeres en la historia reciente del cono sur [Women's memory in the recent history of the Southern Cone]. In I. Piper & B. Rojas (Eds.), *Memoria, historia y derechos humanos* (pp. 37-62). Ediciones Universidad de Chile.

Sepúlveda Llanos, F. (2003). *Artesanía como patrimonio cultural: Desarrollo, fomento y protección* [Crafts as cultural heritage: Development, promotion and protection]. Aithesis. Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile, Facultad de Filosofía y Ciencias de la Educación.

Soto, Ch. (2022). *Iconografía del despertar: Esténcil*. Impuro Ediciones.

Tunstall, E. (2023). *Decolonizing design: A cultural justice guidebook*. MIT Press. <https://doi.org/10.7551/mitpress/14743.001.0001>

Turok, M. (1988). *Cómo acercarse a la artesanía* [How to approach crafts]. Plaza y Valdes.

Vicencio, C. (2023, November 24). The textile designers of the University of Chile (1970-1980): Native fashion and industrial innovation in the democratic socialism of the Unidad Popular. In I. Campi & S. Ventosa (Coords.), *IV Coloquio de Investigadores en Textil y Moda: Tejidos, moda y cuerpos*. Vic, Spain.
https://historiadeldisseny.org/web/wp-content/uploads/IV-COLOQUIO-TEXTIL-LibroActas_LD.pdf

About the Authors:

Dr. Magdalena Cattán, PhD in Design from Edinburgh College of Art (ECA). Research crafts and trades, focusing on cultural landscapes from a critical perspective by decolonial overturning, feminisms and Design-Anthropology. She is part of the academic staff at the Department of Design at Universidad de Chile.

Dr. Pamela Petruska Gatica-Ramirez: the Chilean-Spanish Designer, Ph.D. from Universitat de Barcelona, with a Ph.D. from Universitat de Barcelona, is a unique researcher in design, affection, and gender. Her expertise in these areas makes her a valuable member of the academic staff at the Department of Design at Universidad de Chile.

Camila Vicencio Perez is a Graphic Designer and researcher in museography and Archivistics. She is part of the Museum of Contemporary Art of the University of Chile staff. She researches history and museography from a feminist perspective, giving lectures and conferences in Chilean universities, Argentina, Spain and abroad.

P / REFERENCES OF DESIGN

This contribution was presented at Cumulus Budapest 2024: P/References of Design conference, hosted by the Moholy-Nagy University of Art and Design Budapest, Hungary between May 15-17, 2024.

Conference Website

cumulusbudapest2024.mome.hu

Conference Tracks

Centres and Peripheries
Converging Bodies of Knowledge
Redefining Data Boundaries
Bridging Design and Economics
Speculative Perspectives
The Power of Immersion
The Future of Well-being
Taming Entropy: Systems Design for Climate and Change
Ways of Living Together
Cumulus PhD Network

Full Conference Proceedings

<https://cumulusbudapest2024.mome.hu/proceedings>

ISBN Volume 1: 978-952-7549-02-5 (PDF)

ISBN Volume 2: 978-952-7549-03-2 (PDF)

DOI Volume 1: <https://doi.org/10.63442/IZUP8898>

DOI Volume 2: <https://doi.org/10.63442/TADX4016>

Conference Organisers

Moholy-Nagy University of Art and Design Budapest (MOME)

mome.hu

Cumulus Association

cumulusassociation.org