



***Gringos Get Rich: Anti-Americanism in Chilean Music,* by Eunice Rojas (2023)**

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Rojas, Eunice. *Gringos Get Rich: Anti-Americanism in Chilean Music*. University of Alabama Press, 2023. 244 pp. ISBN 978-0-8173-6097-9.

Gringos Get Rich, Anti Americanism in Chilean Music by Eunice Rojas takes the reader on a journey of Chilean resistance politics and history through music. The book analyzes how music contributed to the leftist movements in Chilean politics from the 1960s up to modern times. Each of its six chapters are subdivided into sections based on a particular music artist or movement, allowing readers to easily identify the topics being discussed, which include families of musicians, the analysis of musical groups, and the way artists collaborate with each other regardless of whether they were Chilean-born or international. Arranged chronologically, each chapter covers the major political and social events through the lens of the artist and their compositions.

In "Chile is a Town South of the United States," Rojas outlines and establishes the foundation of the difficult relationship that exists between the United States and Chile by showing specific examples of moments of tension between both nations, illustrating how economy and politics affect the ways both countries have interacted historically.

Beginning in the nineteenth century with the USSS *Baltimore* incident (1891), Rojas' account highlights the events that unite, but mostly separate, both countries through the twentieth century.

"A New American Dream," covers the history of the Parra family and how the *Peña de los Parra* began as a musical resistance movement in Chile. Rojas analyzes the influence of the Parra family, showcasing how they establish the *Peña de los Parra* to serve as a platform to express their concerns regarding the recovery and preservation of Chilean traditional voice. Throughout this chapter, the narration intertwines historical and political events with an analysis of the contributions of the Parras family and the *Peña* collaborators. By dissecting each musical composition, Rojas takes the readers through an in-depth exploration of the Parra family's belief in the claim of the term "America" by the nations of South America, rather than a description of the U.S. This chapter also presents a comprehensive look at the collections of some of the most remarkable collaborators of the *Peña*, starting with Patricio Manns' *El sueño americano* (1967), whose conversation with Pablo Neruda's *Canto general* helps the reader better understand the struggles and oppression that Latin America suffered

under imperialism, first by Europe and later by the United States. This chapter also focuses on how Ronaldo Alarcón not only sings of Chile, but also of international conflict, including racial tensions that at the time ran rampant in the U.S. The exceptional Ángel Parra, who was influenced by the previous two artists, also gets a mention with the analysis of his album *Canciones funcionales* (1969), which explores how propaganda and foreign culture were inserted in Chilean households. Perhaps the most remarkable analysis in this chapter is the review of the song “La T.V.,” the last song of *Canciones funcionales* that analyzes how television impacts its viewers through subliminal messages.

“Mounting a Revolution,” takes an even deeper dive into the connection between Chilean politics and music, focusing mainly on Víctor Jara and how his political affiliations shaped his musical contribution and anti-American message. The reader follows the life and music of Jara, starting with the deep impact of Che Guevara on his life and outlining why Guevara is the subject and inspiration of many of his songs. The chapter also touches on Pablo Neruda, who, in addition to writing songs with Jara, inspired him through his poetry. Readers are also introduced to the Quilapayún group, with which Jara often collaborated, and the DICAP record label, which helped many artists with similar messages of Chilean pride and Anti-Americanism publish their work. This chapter ends with the acknowledgments of the importance of this genre in the 1970 Chilean elections, highlighting the historic moment in which newly elected President Salvador Allende recognized the importance of Jara’s work to his political campaign.

“Taking on Tío Caimán” views the years around the Allende presidency and aftermath through a different lens. This chapter introduces a new focus on international artists and their impact on Chilean societal and political movements,

starting with Dean Reed. At first, Reed was considered a mainstream pop artist and sympathizer with the movements of the right before shifting to the left and singing at the investiture of Allende, which ended in criticism from those still on the far-right. Among the artists presented in this chapter, Carlos Francisco Chang Marín stands out. A Panamanian who in his youth worked on the construction of the Panama Canal for a U.S. company, Marín’s story offers a broader portrait of the tensions in Chile to a more specific focus on how the United States – and particularly the Nixon administration – was viewed in Latin America. Rojas’ account explores not only student demonstrations but also the great conflict and political tension caused by the Vietnam War internationally. The chapter ends with the assassination of Allende, Augusto Pinochet’s coup and the capture, torture, and murder of Víctor Jara.

In “You’re not living well,” the book jumps forward fourteen years into Pinochet’s dictatorship and introduces U.S. televangelist Jimmy Swaggart, who sympathized with the Pinochet dictatorship. The chapter explores the punk movement that emerged under the Pinochet coup, during which all of the artists mentioned in the previous chapter were imprisoned, killed, or sent to exile. This is the context in which the *canto nuevo* movement emerges, which uses less explicit anti-dictatorial messaging to evade censorship. This period also sees the emergence of a new record label, Alerce, and artists such as Eduardo Peralta, who refuses the sale of his music to avoid participating in the oppressive culture of consumerism. Rojas demonstrates the rage felt by the artistic sector by pulling examples of common themes expressed within the punk movement. One such example comes from bands like Pinochet Boys or Los Prisioneros, among others, who wanted to shake the foundations of the dictatorial system they found themselves in.

“Yankee Man Monkey and Shock Value” starts with the last moments of the Pinochet dictatorship and the beginning of Chile’s transition to democracy, including the return of many artists from exile, with the return of Ángel Parra being the most remarkable due to his history in the resistance party. The book traces the rise of new artists, groups, and genres through the 1980s until 2012 and how their music and style instigated conversation with their social reality.

An epilogue provides a concise overview of recent events in Chile, revisiting the 2019 student protests and delving into the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Considered as a whole, the book offers a brief, yet insightful, understanding of Chile’s ever-evolving socio-political landscape. Rojas’ book leads the reader on a journey of Chilean history and leftist movements through music. Music is a powerful tool that transcends time, and sometimes the artists themselves, to become the anthem of a generation that brings people together through the powerful message of unity. By the end of this evocative and thoughtful analysis, readers will have a better understanding of the link between various Chilean musical eras and how artists leveraged their talents and platforms to create unity among the leftist parties of Chile and to rail against American imperialism. By creating a template for each chapter, Rojas is able to introduce historical moments in tandem with the songs and artists that defined those moments. Readers will wish to listen along with the songs Rojas has chosen to demonstrate the emotions of the Chilean people during pivotal points in their history. The book will be of interest to readers interested in Latin America leftist movements, Chilean history, traditional and modern music, and cultural studies.