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## 1973: Chilean academics in the Emergency

*Abstract:* Following the military coup d'état on 11 September 1973, the Chilean academic field went through a significant process of reconfiguration as thousands of students, teachers and researchers were excluded, numerous centres of study were closed, and areas of research and careers were terminated. In response, expressions of solidarity multiplied around the world. In the United Kingdom, British academics – mainly those involved in Latin American studies and development studies – were the first to get organized under the name Academics for Chile, in order to support their Chilean peers affected by the military coup. These endeavours were channelled through a programme of scholarships managed by the World University Service, United Kingdom (WUS UK). The paper focuses on that Scholarship Programme for Chilean Refugees. This programme is described as an experience born where British academia and the political world intersected. I propose a trans-national view of the phenomenon of exile that highlights particular nexuses – academic links, and political and social networks – between different national communities.

*Key Words:* Chilean academic exiles, World University Service United Kingdom, scholarship programme

The Chilean political refugee is a familiar figure not only because of the impact of the military coup of 11 September 1973, but also because of the international recognition that had been accorded to the social changes that had been underway in Chile since 1964 – firstly, the “Revolution in Freedom” of the Christian Democratic administration, and then, the

“Chilean way towards Socialism”<sup>1</sup>, headed by Popular Unity (PU). During this period, many experts and intellectuals from across the world visited Chile to observe this experience at first hand. In addition, Santiago de Chile became the hub of a dynamic regional academic circuit.<sup>2</sup>

Salvador Allende Gossens was elected on 3 November 1970. The electoral victory of a Socialist candidate seemed to open a historic chance to build, democratically, an alternative to the socialism adopted in Cuba or Eastern Europe. His programme generated massive support and great expectations in European intellectual and political circles. This enthusiasm, which has been the subject of several studies, explains the broad solidarity that Chilean exiles received after the legitimate government of Allende was crushed by military forces.<sup>3</sup>

One of these expressions of international solidarity with the victims of the military regime was *Academics for Chile* (AFC). This was the organization that gave the impetus to the scholarship programme run by the *World University Service, United Kingdom* (WUS UK), which is the main interest of this paper. In order to examine this programme, I have broken it down into three stages. The first is the period of the programme’s foundation, before it had any official funds. The second is the stage of the programme’s expansion; while the third stage covers the reorientation and return programmes. The programme emerged from the intersection between the British academic field and the political world. Through a critical reading of the theoretical and methodological tools provided by Pierre Bourdieu,<sup>4</sup> I intend to find a balance between structure and agency, focusing both on the trajectory of the agents in their exile and on the recipients in British society. These academic nexus, political encounters and social networks created through the programme, highlight the particular cultural transfers<sup>5</sup> that were involved in this exile, which was a truly international experience.

Although some authors have claimed that there were as many as one million Chilean exiles,<sup>6</sup> it is difficult to quantify this forced migration. This is largely because the exiles had very

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<sup>1</sup> Ann Zammit, ed., *The Chilean Road to Socialism*, Austin 1973.

<sup>2</sup> Fernanda Beigel, *Dependency Analysis. The creation of New social Theory*, in: *Latin America. The ISA Handbook of Diverse Sociological Traditions*, London 2009, 189-201.

<sup>3</sup> Mark Falcoff, *Modern Chile 1970-1989. A critical history*, New Jersey 1989.

<sup>4</sup> Pierre Bourdieu, *Homo Academicus*, Paris 1984.

<sup>5</sup> Michel Espagne, *Les transferts culturels franco-allemands*, Paris 1999.

<sup>6</sup> Fernando Montupil, *Exilio, Derechos Humanos y Democracia. El exilio chileno en Europa*, Coordinación Europea de Comités Pro Retorno, Santiago de Chile 1993.

different legal statuses, depending on how they had come to enter their countries of exile – some had just come in on tourist visas, while others were officially considered refugees. In this paper, we disregard the legal aspects<sup>7</sup> of this process, and propose instead to take a sociological approach to academic exile. In fact, some of the Chilean exiles had not been prevented from remaining in or expelled from, Chile. However, most of them were unable to practise their profession or continue their studies for the reasons mentioned before. Similarly, many of them had suffered persecution, or imprisonment, or had been living underground. There were many ways in which the regime's policies gave people cause to leave Chile.

The sources for this research were mainly obtained on a dozen field trips to Chile between 2007 and 2009 and a research stay in the United Kingdom, during 2009. The research was complicated by a lack of documentary records, which stemmed from the fact that the object of study was situated historically within a period of dictatorship. The records of the programme in Chile had vanished, and personal archives had been systematically destroyed in order to protect people's life and security. This meant that many alternative sources and methodological approaches were required. Firstly, I used an ethnographic approach based on interviews and life stories. Secondly, I undertook exhaustive and meticulous documentary research in public and private archives and diplomatic offices in Chile and the United Kingdom. I also researched the records of academic institutions, and of non-governmental organizations involved in defending human rights. It was very difficult to track down former grant holders from this programme, as there are no records containing their files. I located each interviewee through contacts made with other interviewees.

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<sup>7</sup> We refer here strictly to the category of refugee, as opposed to the category of Genevese Statutory refugee, proposed by Dani  l Joly in her book *Heaven or Hell? Asylum Policies and Refugee in Europe*, Oxford 1996. According to Joly, the main difference between a refugee and an economic migrant is the positive connotation of the latter. In communities of forced migrants, there is a sort of reluctance to uproot, and a complete lack of positive motivations to settle anywhere. Furthermore, the term "refugee", according to Joly, acquires a collective meaning. The legal definition of exile has been criticized by many authors. Fanny Jedlicky has observed that this category gets distorted to the logic of state "affaires" since the granting of refugee status is subject to the needs and the political choices of the receiving country. See Fanny Jedlicky, *De l'exil   h  ro  que    l'ill  gitimit   du retornado. Les retours des familles de r  fugi  s chiliens*, in: *Anuario de Estudios Americanos*, vol. 64, num. 1, (January-June, 2007), 87-110.

Needless to say, the memory of past events is affected by representations, position-taking and current political struggles, which made it necessary to pay special attention to the “biographical illusions” that people create in order to impose a degree of coherence on their lives.<sup>8</sup> It was also difficult for me to deal with my own empathy towards the interviewees as victims of a dictatorial process, and towards the British academics who helped the Chilean exiles. This all required a great deal of reflection. Taking all these issues into account, I asked for permission to publish the fragments of the interviews included in this paper. I have used pseudonyms to preserve the former grant holders’ identity when they expressly requested it, and have used real names when they authorized the quotes.

### Military Coup d’état in Chile, September 1973

“Estamos tratando de mejorar el nivel de enseñanza que se entrega;  
Para ello hemos eliminado los activistas, sean docentes o estudiantes  
y conseguido profesores de calidad”

Coronel de Ejército Eugenio Reyes,  
Rector Delegado de la Universidad Técnica del Estado  
Octubre de 1974<sup>9</sup>

The military coup of 1973 involved not only the overthrow of a democratically elected president but the interruption of a long period of democratic stability.<sup>10</sup> As for the possibility of a military coup d’état in Chile, Simon Collier and William Sater have pointed out that

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<sup>8</sup> Pierre Bourdieu, *L’illusion biographique* in: *Actes de la Recherche en Science Sociales*, 62/63 (June 1986), 69-72.

<sup>9</sup> "We are trying to improve the level of teaching given, therefore we have eliminated the activists, either teachers or students, and we have got instead high quality teachers" Col. Eugenio Reyes. Delegate Vice-Chancellor of the Universidad Técnica del Estado, October 1974. Cit. Silver y Mery (seudónimos), *Las universidades chilenas y la intervención militar*, mimeo, Santiago de Chile 1975, 44.

<sup>10</sup> Leslie Bethell, ed., *Chile desde la independencia*, Santiago de Chile 2009; Sofía Correa Sutil et al., *Historia del Siglo XX Chileno*, Santiago de Chile 2001.

towards the late 1960s "the Chilean People believed themselves to be immune against this virus in particular".<sup>11</sup> Until the military coup, the political party system that operated in Chile was the distinctive characteristic that differentiated this country from others in the region, especially those of the Southern Cone like Argentina and Brazil, which had clearly developed national popular regimes.<sup>12</sup>

After seizing power in Chile in 1973, the military regime outlawed political parties, dissolved the National Congress and suspended civil rights with its proclamation of the State of Siege and Emergency. The regime was characterized by a concentration of political power in the hands of Augusto Pinochet<sup>13</sup> over a long period.<sup>14</sup> The Chilean military regime and the supporters of the Doctrine of National Security justified their position by using an ideological discourse that they had a mission to fulfil: to restore the real Chilean nationality, which had been endangered by the PU government and by foreign elements.

Several studies have analyzed the causes of the coup which interrupted the PU project.<sup>15</sup> The fact that the United States was involved in intervention,<sup>16</sup> aimed at destabilizing Allende's government, is well known. Other authors have looked for ways of accounting for the behavior of political agents inside Chile. Moulian<sup>17</sup> has emphasized that both PU and the Christian Democrats were unable to negotiate and forge the sort of unity that might have presented viable alternatives to the military coup.

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<sup>11</sup> Simon Collier y William Sater, *Historia de Chile 1808-1994*, Madrid 1998: 281.

<sup>12</sup> Alan Angell, *Partidos políticos y movimientos obrero en Chile*, México 1974; Alain Rouquié, *Poder militar y sociedad política en la Argentina*, Buenos Aires 1981.

<sup>13</sup> Augusto Pinochet proclaimed himself as "Supreme Chief of the Nation" on 27 June, 1974 by a Law Decree 527. Afterwards, the title was officially substituted by the traditional "President of the Republic" by Law Decree 806.

<sup>14</sup> Sofía Correa Sutil et al., *Historia del Siglo XX Chileno*, Editorial Sudamericana, 2001.

<sup>15</sup> Tomás Moulian in: Emir Sader, Juan Carlos Gómez Leyton and Horacio Tarcus, *Tomas Moulian: Itinerario de un intelectual chileno*, in: *Critica y emancipación*, vol. I (June 2008), 129-174; Manuel Antonio Garretón, *La crisis de la democracia, el golpe militar y el proyecto contrarrevolucionario*, Documento de Trabajo FLACSO, Serie Estudios Políticos, num. 30, Chile 1993; Simon Collier and William Sater, *Historia de Chile 1808-1994*, Madrid 1998.

<sup>16</sup> See *Cover Action in Chile 1963-1973*, Government Press, Washington 1975.

<sup>17</sup> Moulian, *ibid.*

Whatever might have been, in fact throughout the seventeen years of dictatorship, there were constant and systematic violations of human rights,<sup>18</sup> including torture, extrajudicial detentions, councils of war, enforced disappearances, processes of internal and external exile, tracking down and assassination. The abuses reported ranked Chile alongside countries like Argentina, among the most violent dictatorships in South America.<sup>19</sup>

### The effects of the military regime on the academic field

The Chilean higher education system was dynamic and highly institutionalized, largely supported by the State since the mid-1950s. Santiago de Chile, the capital city, was regarded as an appealing academic axis by the intellectuals of the region,<sup>20</sup> especially by Brazilian and Argentinean exiles, and also by the numerous specialists working there for international organizations.<sup>21</sup> The University Reform of 1967 had served to radicalize students and intellectuals, and the victory of Salvador Allende had reinforced this trend in the academic field. This meant that research and teaching institutions were severely affected by the military coup. The new rulers used politicization as a justification for dismissing students, teachers and researchers; closing institutions and research centres and also for the imprisonment, persecution and forced exile of academics. The social sciences were declared to be dangerous or considered “conflictual”. A policy of violent political control was combined with the

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<sup>18</sup> Hugh O’Shaughnessy, *Pinochet. The Politics of Torture*, New York 2000.

<sup>19</sup> Report of the Comisión Nacional de Verdad y Reconciliación, Chile 1991; Report of the Comisión Nacional sobre Prisión Política y Tortura, Chile 2004.

<sup>20</sup> Fernanda Beigel, *La FLACSO chilena y la regionalización de las Ciencias Sociales en América Latina (1957-1973)*, in: *Revista Mexicana de Sociología*, vol. 71 (April-June 2009), 319-349; Manuel Antonio Garretón et al., *Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Mexico and Uruguay. Social Sciences in Latin America: a comparative perspective (1930-2003)*, in: *Social Science Information*, vol. 44, 2005, 557-593; Rolando Franco, *La FLACSO clásica (1957-1973)*, Santiago de Chile 2007.

<sup>21</sup> These included: United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and Caribbean; the Latin American and Caribbean Institute for Economic and Social Planning; the Latin American School of Social Sciences; the Regional Centre of Training and Demographic Research for Latin America; the Regional Office for the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations; the Regional Bureau for Education in Latin America and the Caribbean; the Sub-regional Office of the International Labour Organization.

development of private education and with curricular changes that excluded social sciences.<sup>22</sup> In response, an alternative process of institutional development for social sciences emerged, throughout the Independent Academic Centres.<sup>23</sup>

No matter which purification strategies the authorities used, they all had the same objective, to remove ideological agents and political activists from the universities.<sup>24</sup> As a result of the military intervention, purification processes, closure of academic spaces and the reduction of the state higher education budget, there was a massive exodus of teachers, students, researchers and non-teaching staff. The contraction of the academic labour market meant that many scholars and students had to abandon Chile. A new chapter in the history of Chile started, a time when thousands of Chilean citizens could no longer live in their own homeland.

### Responses to the academic exiles in the United Kingdom

The military coup d'état in Chile drew strong condemnation from around the world. The images of the air raid over the La Moneda Presidential Palace were watched worldwide – this was the first coup d'état to be broadcast on television. The condemnation expressed by a vast sector of the international community was reinforced by the depiction of the military riding roughshod over democratic institutions. Many international organizations added their voices to demands for respect for human rights and for the restoration of democracy, including the United Nations Organization (UN), the Organization of American States, Amnesty International, the Socialist International, the International Association of Jurists, religious movements, the International Red Cross, the Office of the United Nations High

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<sup>22</sup> José Joaquín Brunner, De la universidad vigilada a la universidad empresa. La educación superior en Chile, in: *Revista Nueva Sociedad*, 84, (August-September 1986), 140-146.

<sup>23</sup> José Joaquín Brunner and Alicia Barrios, *Inquisición, mercado y filantropía. Ciencias Sociales y autoritarismo en Argentina, Brasil, Chile y Uruguay*, Santiago de Chile 1987.

<sup>24</sup> During the first years of the military intervention "25% of the teaching staff in the different disciplines, were excluded from the universities, between 10% and 15% of the non-academic staff and 15% to 18% of the students. The total number of students expelled was over 20,000", Manuel Antonio Garretón and Hernán Pozo, *Las universidades chilenas y los derechos humanos*, Documento de Trabajo, Programa FLACSO, Santiago de Chile 1984, 14.

Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR); the International Organization for Migration, the European Parliament.

The end of Salvador Allende's government dashed the hopes that left-wing parties and international movements had held for this unprecedented historical experience: the construction of a socialist society on the basis of democratic elections. Following the coup, people who had supported Allende's political project were prominent among those who criticized the dictatorship and expressed their solidarity with the victims of the regime.<sup>25</sup> However, solidarity was also expressed by many who had never sympathized with Salvador Allende, but strongly opposed the military coup.

In the United Kingdom, the Conservative Prime Minister Edward Heath recognized Augusto Pinochet Ugarte's government on 22 September 1973,<sup>26</sup> following the traditional approach of British diplomacy of recognizing governments had control of the national territory. The British Conservative government (1970-1974) did not adopt a policy of granting asylum to Chilean exiles. It was not until there was a change of ruling party that the United Kingdom admitted Chilean refugees. There were numerous political and solidarity actions in support of admitting Chilean exiles to Britain and aimed at sabotaging the Chilean dictatorship. These were supported by members of the Labour Party (in opposition until 1974), trade unions, members of other left-wing British parties, religious organizations and human rights movements along with a group of young British people whose interest had been attracted by the experience of the PU in Chile, but had been particularly motivated by the military coup.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> Alan Angell, International support for the Chilean opposition, 1973-1989: political parties and the role of exiles, in: Laurence Whitehead, ed., *The International Dimensions of Democratization, Europe and the Americas*, Oxford 2001, 175-200.

<sup>26</sup> According to confidential comments of Vice Admiral Oscar Buzeta, British Foreign Secretary Sir Alec Douglas Home, on announcing Britain's recognition of the Pinochet government, "put especial emphasis in the fact that the act of recognition of a regime did not imply by any standards an approval of it in moral or ideological terms." OFICIO CONFIDENCIAL 30, DRI. From Vice Admiral Oscar Buzeta to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, London, October 5, 1973. Documentary Archive Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Chile. File Great Britain.

<sup>27</sup> Together with the scholarship programme for Chilean academics, there were three main organizations working for solidarity with the exiles and denouncing the military dictatorship, namely: the Joint Working Group for Refugees from Chile; Chile Solidarity Campaign and Chile Committee



When we asked our British interviewees about their memories of the impression left by the Chilean military coup, the general response was that it was as shocking as the Spanish Civil War had been for previous generations.

Some British responses to the Chilean military dictatorship were also grounded in the United Kingdom's own political history and in a tradition of contacts. Chile had forged links with the British Labour Party through the Chilean Radical Party, both of which were members of the Socialist International. Moreover, during Salvador Allende's administration, representatives of the Chilean working class had held ministerial posts, which had reinforced sympathy for the PU project.

British political history in the 20th century has been characterized by the alternation of two political parties in government: the Conservative Party, with a history traceable back to before the 19th century, and the Labour Party, created in 1900. Britain's a two-party system had given only limited representation for smaller political parties in Parliament, even though some of them, like the Communist Party, played an important role in certain social movements and among intellectuals in the sixties and seventies.

Around the end of the 1950s and the beginning of the 1960s there also were important changes in the British left-wing intellectual scene. In 1958, certain intellectual circles grew away from Moscow orthodoxy and created the *New Left Review*. Several social movements and campaigns emerged. One of the most important was the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, headed by philosopher Bertrand Russell. "The movement was extremely important because it indicated the beginning of movements outside party dynamics and the influence of State dependence. It showed once more the political volatility of the British society."<sup>28</sup> Opposition to nuclear weapons was followed by widespread criticism of the

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for Human Rights. See Daniéle Joly, Britains and its Refugees: the case of Chileans, in: *Migration*, vol. I (July 1987), 91-108.

These three organizations were not state-run or initiated. In all three cases; their executive secretaries had lived in Chile prior to the military coup, during Salvador Allende's government. Their stays in Chile changed the course of their lives by radicalizing their political views. Interviews with Mike Gatehouse (Chile Solidarity Campaign), to Gordon Hutchison (Joint Working Group for Refugees from Chile) and to Wendy Tyndale (Chile Committee for Human Rights) by Paola Bayle.

<sup>28</sup> Antonio Martín Cabello, *La Escuela de Birmingham*. El Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies y el origen de los estudios culturales, Madrid 2006.

Vietnam War, especially among young people and students, which went with a more general deep disapproval of the US. There was also an ongoing struggle against the policy of apartheid in South Africa. Those who supported the Chileans were part of a generation which, in general terms, had attended secondary school and university at a time when there was widespread commitment to third-world humanitarian causes and considerable criticism of Britain's international stance. These processes of political radicalization were accompanied by what Andrew Marwick has described as a period of cultural revolution, between 1958 and 1975, defined by the consolidation of a largely youthful market for culture, with bands being formed in industrial cities across Britain that were able to gain international popularity. Marwick argues that these cultural changes were fostered by expansion in three areas of state activity: education for large sectors of society, a series of contacts abroad, and the consolidation of society with less censorship.<sup>29</sup> When Edward Heath became Prime Minister (1970-1974), he had to deal with serious economic problems,<sup>30</sup> long periods of workers' strikes and a worsening of the conflicts within Ireland. The Prime Minister aggravated the trade union movement's hostility by introducing legislation to tackle the conflict between workers and employers in favour of the latter. Ultimately, mineworkers struck across Britain, leading to the Labour Party's return in 1974.<sup>31</sup>

Meanwhile, new universities and polytechnics were being opened, questioning the prestige of the old British universities.<sup>32</sup> This process was accompanied by an increase in state assistance for students, which allowed students from average socioeconomic backgrounds to attend university. At the same time, Britain was implementing a comprehensive education system, which involved reorganizing secondary schooling with flexible methods aimed at fostering students' abilities and adapting the content of education in accordance with the students' interests.

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<sup>29</sup> Arthur Marwick, *The arts, books, media and entertainments in Britain since 1945*, in: James Obelkevich, Jim Obelkevich, Peter Catterall, eds., *Understanding Post-War British Society*, London 1994, 178-191; Arthur Marwick, *British society since 1945*, Harmondsworth 1996.

<sup>30</sup> Walter Laqueur, *La Europa de nuestro tiempo*, Buenos Aires 1992.

<sup>31</sup> Colin Leys, *Politics in Britain. From Labourism to Thatcherism*, London and New York 1983.

<sup>32</sup> Burton Clark, *The higher education system. Academic Organization in Cross-National Perspective*, California 1983.

This, then, was the context in which the programme of scholarships for exiled Chilean academics was born. It was initiated by British academics, many of who had had links with Chile and/or Latin America prior to 1973 – they had either been living in the country conducting research, or had chosen Chile as the object of their studies. Some of them had formed close bonds with Chilean colleagues and academic organizations.<sup>33</sup> Institutionally, most of the British academics with links with Chilean academics affected by the military coup, came from the newly-developing areas of Latin American studies<sup>34</sup> and/or Development Studies.

Academics for Chile (AFC) was one of the first groups to be organized in Britain to help the victims of the military coup. The group adopted that name in order to differentiate itself from other organizations that would be associated directly with political sympathy or activity. Even though Allendes administration had gained support from some British academics already familiar with Latin America, AFC focused on the defence of academic autonomy and human rights. It presented Chilean students as intellectually highly-trained and critically aware.

AFC held its first General Meeting on 13 October 1973 at the London School of Economics and Political Science. It created a working group, comprised of Alan Angell as Executive Secretary, Christian Anglade, President and David Rock, Treasurer. In 1973, Angell was university lecturer at St. Anthony's College, Oxford University, and therefore had the prestige of belonging to the oldest university in the country. His colleagues considered that Angell's reputation would ensure that the task in hand was carried out well. Christian Anglade was member of the University of Essex Government Department. Essex was one of the new universities at this time. In 1968 it had set up one of the most dynamic study centres on Latin America. David Rock was the Director of the Centre of Latin American Studies at Cambridge University, another institution with an international reputation.

The specific objectives formulated by the AFC were to provide support to all academics and students that had taken refuge from the military oppression in the United Kingdom and to academics that had remained in Chile and fallen victim to repression; to seek out information

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<sup>33</sup> Most British academics involved in this solidarity work had been in Chile before the coup conducting research in various areas: political studies, development studies, among others.

<sup>34</sup> Victor Bulmer-Thomas, ed., *Britain and Latin American: a changing relationship*, Cambridge, 1989.

about repression against academics and academic institutions in Chile; and to coordinate activities with other British organizations or institutions pursuing the same aims.<sup>35</sup> Eventually, the group began to become known in British academic field. University staff across Britain who supported AFC's cause organized local committees in their institutions. A recurrent task was sending letters to universities requesting assistance by waiving tuition fees. As it became apparent that the situation in Chile was likely to last for some time, and as repression against academic institutions and personnel began to be more open, AFC members decided to find an organization through which they could channel their concerns: WUS UK. AFC was merely an informal organization with neither the funds nor the legal status to develop large-scale operations.

### The World University Service, United Kingdom (WUS UK)

WUS UK<sup>36</sup> was a part of the World University Service: an international organization which worked in three distinctive areas: education, development and human rights. It was created in 1920 as the "World Student Christian Federation", and renamed "European Student Relief" in order to help students affected by the First World War. During the Second World War, it changed its name to "International Student Service" (ISS), and helped thousands of former prisoners of war continue their studies, providing support for reconstructing universities destroyed in the war. At this time, the organisation concentrated its activities in Europe. From the 1950s onwards, it took the name of WUS and its main area of activity veered towards Southern countries, in Asia, Africa, and Latin America. It had reconsidered its objectives, putting greater emphasis upon responsibility of education in countries and community development. Many WUS national committees<sup>37</sup> were created to foster higher education and to develop projects to look after the needs of foreign students in different countries.

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<sup>35</sup> See "Academics for Chile", document attached to a letter addressed to Walter Adams, LSE Director, on November 21, 1973, London signed by Alan Angell, London in: File Academics for Chile, London School of Economics and Political Sciences Archives, London.

<sup>36</sup> In 2007, WUS-UK was renamed Education Action, and its current focus is on research and development.

<sup>37</sup> The working structure of WUS was concentrated in the National Committees, made up of academics from different societies and people involved in the defence of human rights. The highest body in the WUS was the General Assembly (taking place every three years) at which representatives of the

WUS UK had aid programmes in Rhodesia, Nicaragua and Malawi, among other places. By 1973, WUS UK was developing programmes for Ugandan refugees in the United Kingdom and for Czechoslovakian students after the so-called "Prague Spring".<sup>38</sup> Thanks to this NGO,<sup>39</sup> many students at different stages of their education were found places in British colleges, universities and polytechnics. Its funds came primarily from donations given by academics, British companies and financial sponsors called the "Friends of WUS". The body itself was made up of teachers and students at British universities. WUS UK was autonomous from WUS International regarding the programmes it developed, especially those to be implemented locally or at national level. WUS UK and AFC joined forces to assist Chilean academics affected by the military coup.

### WUS UK Chilean Refugee Scholarship Programme (CRSP): Foundation Stage

During this first stage, from the last months of 1973 to July 1974, WUS UK concentrated its efforts on searching for vacancies in universities and polytechnics for Chilean academics

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National Committees had the right to vote. Additionally, there was an Executive Committee consisting of thirteen members representing all the regions who were responsible for the general policy of the organization together with the Assembly. There was also an Executive Bureau responsible for coordinating the National Committees and then an International Secretary, with headquarters in Geneva, in charge of WUS undertakings.

<sup>38</sup> Before the arrival of Chilean academics, refugees in the United Kingdom mainly came from other European countries, and had become refugees as a result of the First and Second World Wars or had fled the authoritarian communist regimes. The Ugandan Asian and Vietnamese exiles constituted major exceptions to this, but the Chilean exiles were the first group associated with left-wing politics.

<sup>39</sup> Providing assistance for academic refugees in the United Kingdom has been the main task of the Council for Assisting Refugee Academics (CARA). This organization was established in 1933 as the Academic Assistance Council and its original objective was to assist the Jews in exile in UK. In 1936 it acquired the name of Society for the Protection of Science and Learning, SPSL, and in 1997 it was renamed CARA. It worked in difficult situations to promote the admission of immigrants. Once the Second World War was over, the SPSL, led by Esther Simpson as Executive Secretary, continued its campaign in Britain for admission and correct treatment of academic refugees by the British authorities. In the 1970s, chiefly as a result of the urgency of the needs of Chilean exiles, WUS UK began to fulfill the role that the SPSL had developed since the 1930s; Jeremy Seabrook, *The Refuge and the Fortress. Britain and the flight from tyranny*, Great Britain 2009.

having difficulties remaining in or returning to Chile. At the same time, they appealed for financial support to provide social assistance for the Chilean refugees and continued AFC's campaign to get universities either to waive tuition fees altogether for Chilean students, or at least to offer a discount. At that time, this was still a small-scale programme. It was not until February 1974, with the election of Labour Prime Minister Harold Wilson, that Chilean exiles began to be a topic of concern on the government agenda.

By May 1974 and still lacking official funds, WUS UK was already active in three areas: the registration of candidates, central coordination and local activities. As regards candidates' registration, information was transferred through various channels: Consejo Latinoamericano de Ciencias Sociales (the Latin American Social Sciences Council – in Spanish CLACSO) ; letters sent by refugees in the UK to an AFC member; Comisión Evangélica Latinoamericana de Educación Cristiana (Latin American Evangelic Commission for Christian Education –in Spanish CEDALEC) in Lima, Peru; the WUS International in Geneva, the British Council in Chile; Unión de Universidades Latinoamericanas (Latin American Universities Federation) in Mexico; Consejo Superior de Universidades en Centro América (Universities Council in Central America) in Costa Rica and the UNHCR. Out of all these organizations, for those who resided in Latin America, CLACSO was designated as the official body for registration and for collating information obtained from various sources.

By that time, WUS UK had set out the following requirements for candidates to be eligible for assistance:

“[...] full Curriculum Vitae including details of publications; course of study or nature of research that candidate require; preference for any particular university; the priority that candidate attaches to coming to the United Kingdom; use of English; dependents; possibilities of finding finance (e.g. grant of International agency); religion; future address or best method of contact.”<sup>40</sup>

On the national level, WUS UK sent CVs to universities and polytechnics all over the country while it looked for sources of finance. A Chilean Committee had been created within WUS UK

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<sup>40</sup> World University Service with Academics for Chile. Placement of academic and student refugees from Chile. WUS Report about their activities attached to a letter sent to Walter Adams, on May 24 1974, LSE Director, signed by Alan Phillips, General Secretary. in: File Academics for Chile, London School of Economics and Political Sciences Archives, London.

to coordinate this work. Local activities were held at several universities, organized by academics promoting solidarity with their Chilean peers. At this stage, their work was of crucial importance – they were able to secure full funding for university placements for around forty Chilean. Many of them were already studying in the United Kingdom or engaged in some other academic-related activity before the coup. Either their scholarship had been affected by the institutional crisis in their homeland, or they could not return for security reasons. A vital contribution of funds for the administrative side of the programme at this initial stage was made by the Ford Foundation.

### Elections in the United Kingdom and the onset of a new stage in the programme

With the victory of the Labour Party in the general elections of February 1974, the situation changed outright for the Chilean academics in emergency. Political conditions became relatively favourable for the Chilean exiles. The new government adopted a two-pronged strategy which denounced Chile's human rights record while avoiding any irreversible damage to commercial relationships between the two countries. On March 1974, Foreign Secretary James Callaghan (1974-1976) announced in the House of Commons:

“Our policy towards the military junta will be governed by a desire to see democracy restored and human rights fully respected there. To this end we shall take part in any future representations to be made by the United Nations on human rights in Chile, and our ambassador has been instructed to represent strongly to the military junta our concern at the treatment of prisoners. Aid will be suspended...A project naval training exercise has been cancelled. Existing contracts are being urgently reviewed, but we shall not grant new export licenses for arms. I am glad to inform the House that the Home Secretary will consider applications from Chilean refugees sympathetically.”<sup>41</sup>

Between 1974-1979, diplomatic relationships between the UK and Chile were somewhat unstable, especially when it was revealed that a British citizen had been tortured in Chile. This led to the withdrawal of the British Ambassador on 30 December 1975. Official condemnation of the military regime was intensified as a result of pressure from the trade

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<sup>41</sup> James Callaghan. House of Commons, March 27, 1974, Oral Answers, pp. 424. File FCO 7/2605, British Policy towards Chile, National Archives, London.

union movement and left-wing political parties. During Labour's time in power, approximately three thousand Chilean citizens arrived in the United Kingdom.<sup>42</sup> This lasted until Margaret Thatcher, who was hostile to migration in general, took over in 1979. While the Labour government did not develop an optimal host policy, the Chilean exiles were supported by various sectors, including workers, political and social militants, and students. Overall, the Chileans interviewed stated that the British had been extremely generous and supportive.

The suspension of technical assistance to Chile was central to the WUS UK programme. When Judith Hart was appointed to the Ministry of Overseas Development (ODM), WUS UK members looked forward to new financial possibilities. Judith Hart was well known for her support for those working with exiled Chileans. As soon as she took office, she announced to the Cabinet on 27 March 1974, the suspension of technical assistance to Chile on the grounds that political conditions there did not allow this aid to be deployed in development programmes that would benefit most of society.

WUS UK negotiated with and lobbied ministers and MPs to gain financial support from the ODM to the programme. The funds previously allotted to Chile's technical assistance<sup>43</sup> were reallocated to an NGO (WUS UK) that would promote the future development of Chile through education. The idea behind this political decision was that once democracy restored in Chile, this academic community in exile would return to help the country's development.

The British government's agreement to finance the scholarship programme gave it a dimension which WUS UK members and the original AFC group had not expected. From the second half of 1974 until 1986, the WUS UK Chilean Refugee Scholarship Programme received £11,188,736 from the ODM and 900 Chilean students were granted scholarships for post-graduate, graduate and further education in British universities, polytechnics and colleges. Selection criteria for awarding scholarships were agreed in 1974 between those administering the programme and those providing the finance.

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<sup>42</sup> Diana Kay, *Chileans in exile. Private struggles, public lives*, England 1987.

<sup>43</sup> By 1974, Chile was receiving £400,000 per year for technical assistance from the British government. From this sum, £130,000 was earmarked for providing grants for training, and £270,000 was to pay for experts. (Judith Hart to the Prime Minister, Harold Wilson, London, March 7, 1974. OD 28/372 Chile; Suspension of Aid following Military Coup, National Archives, London). Hart's new policy did not affect existing scholarships for Chilean students in UK.



These criteria were closely related to the objectives both of the source of finance and those of the WUS (education, exile and development). Since the funds were provided neither by the Home Office (responsible for the exiles in the United Kingdom) nor by the Department of Education and Science, but by the ODM, a development component had to be included in the selection criteria.

Initially, a committee to select award-holders was formed, chaired by Dudley Seers. In 1975, as a result of the increasing demand on the programme, additional selection panels were required. The "In UK Committee" headed by James Topping, dealt with applications made from within the United Kingdom, while the "Latin American Committee", headed by Emanuel de Kadt, evaluated those from Latin America. These committees had to include an ODM representative and came under the Policy Committee, headed by Seers and composed of Alan Angell, Christian Anglade, George Brown, Lionel Butler, Emanuel de Kadt, John King, Gerard Martin, Peter Mee, Leo Pyle, David Skidmore, Clifford Smith, James Topping, Ian Wright and Ann Zammit. A Committee for Extension and Expansion was also created to assess applications for the renewal of scholarships. From 1979 onwards, this scheme was restructured as a single select committee, the Combined Awards Committee consisting of Ann Zammit, Christian Anglade, Gerard Martin and David Skidmore.

Dudley Seers played a crucial role in the WUS UK selection process. He was one of founders of the Institute of Development Studies (IDS) at Sussex University. Seers was also well regarded within the British state power field for his path as ODM General Director for Economic Planning (1964-1967) and in other international organizations.<sup>44</sup> On questions of economic development, Seers' voice was authoritative both in state power field and in academic circles. This view of Seers was shared by Judith Hart, who justified financing this programme in terms of development assistance.<sup>45</sup> Additionally, since the 1950s Seers had had strong links with academic institutions and political circles in Chile. He had worked for the

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<sup>44</sup> Seers was Director of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA, 1963-1964). Additionally, he worked as advisor on development for various governments, for the World Bank Group (WBG), the UN, and the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). He was also president of the European Association of Development, Research and Training Institutions (EADI).

<sup>45</sup> Judith Hart, *Aid and Liberation: A socialist study of aid politics*, London 1973.

United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and Caribbean (CEPAL in Spanish) as Chief of Economic Reports (1957-1963).

CLACSO played a very important role in the pre-selection of Chilean academics. Just a few days after the coup CLACSO had devised a variety of strategies to relocate academics to institutions within Latin America. It had to modify its policy of retaining Chilean academics within Latin America in view of the scale and urgency of the massive exodus from Chile. CLACSO<sup>46</sup> devised various strategies and programmes for Chilean, Uruguayan and Argentinean victims of the wave of dictatorships which spread across the Southern Cone. The Executive Secretary worked closely with a committee of Chilean academics at FLACSO's headquarters in Chile. When the political situation in Argentina made it difficult for CLACSO to receive applications there, the Chilean Committee in Santiago de Chile took on the task. After 1976, the year of the military coup in Argentina, many CLACSO members involved in implementing the relocation policy moved to the United Kingdom. Some of them maintained their connections with WUS UK as award-holders and/or as collaborators with the programme.

The requirements for awarding scholarships stipulated that the applicant had to be a political refugee or that his/her studies had been affected/interrupted by the military coup. Scholarships also had to be for studies in areas linked to development, and applicants had to be of a high academic standard. Eventually, these criteria were softened.

#### *1) Criterion of Social Need (Humanitarian)*

Although it covered a wide range of situations, in general terms, “need” or “social need” referred to the reasons why people from academia had to go into exile or why they could not return to Chile. This criterion varied at different stages of the programme, and according to the political situation within Chile. At first, it had been envisaged that the programme would be for academics who had their activities interrupted by the military coup: students, teachers, researchers or other people with academic career who were unable to continue with them for diverse reasons. However, the type and degree of need was different in each individual case.

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<sup>46</sup> Paola Bayle, *Emergencia Académica en el Cono Sur. El programa de reubicación de Cientistas Sociales*, in: *Íconos, Revista de Ciencias Sociales*, 30, FLACSO, (January 2008), 51-63.

Some academics urgently needed to leave the country for security reasons, while others were at lesser risk, although that cannot be proved a posteriori. There were also individuals living in clandestinity, political prisoners, exiles that were already safe in the United Kingdom, among others. For each group, the scholarship had differing implications and meaning.

According to the testimony of a British member of the selection committee, although all the Chilean applicants fulfilled the requisite of “need”, for some it meant a real possibility of being released from prison thanks to the visa issued by the UK whilst for others, it was a chance to continue with their academic career or studies. Moreover, an award-holder acquired refugee status in the United Kingdom, which meant that he or she could get a visa more easily than other exiles. The assessment committee had to cope with these pressures in the selection process.

Initially, scholarships were awarded to Chileans on the basis of their academic record. However, from 1975 onwards, the criterion of need began to have a greater weight and the WUS UK started to give scholarships to those arriving in the United Kingdom under the auspices of other organizations, even if they did not meet all the academic requirements. This policy narrowed the gap between supposed elite which had been educated in Chile – and could access a scholarship due to their academic and social backgrounds – and other groups of exiles who lacked this background at the same level. The dilemma faced by the selection committee in each case was how to avoid devaluing the academic criteria if too much emphasis was placed upon the criteria of need.

Requests for scholarships were a continuous source of pressure for WUS UK since the programme was a privilege available to Chilean exiles in the United Kingdom. Getting a place or a position in academia and a subsidy represented a welcome opportunity in a traumatic situation like exile. Furthermore, the need to leave Chile was a very important criterion in the programme, especially when receiving a visa enabled people to get released from prison. In 1975 the Chilean government began to allow political prisoners to have their prison sentences commuted to banishment if they could obtain a permit to enter another country. This meant that a scholarship in Britain meant freedom and exile, and the criterion of need began to acquire more importance.

## 2) *The Developmental criterion*

This criterion stipulated that the award-holder would receive training in the United Kingdom in order to make a material contribution to the social and economic development of Chile. According to a Ministry document "scholarships will not be awarded for the study of Humanities, Fine Arts, cultural projects, etc."<sup>47</sup> This criterion was one of the first to be softened, generating debates around what should be understood by "development" and what would constitute a contribution to Chilean society. The academic committee managed to gain acceptance for its point of view on what issues or disciplines met this criterion. Seers not only had a very broad knowledge about development, which enabled him to discuss the issue theoretically, but his government experience meant that he also knew how to deal with ministry officials and their language.

In difficult cases, for example, an application related to fine arts or cinema, the argumentation was that all knowledge acquired would be valuable for the future of Chile and would contribute to the general education and culture of the country. Alan Phillips, a former responsible of the programme explained,

"It was much more difficult to justify to the Overseas Development Ministry a development related award to a philosopher. Nevertheless the argument we used was that a philosopher was someone that Chile would need later for its development, as a small part of the broad spectrum of talents needed to help rebuild universities and intellectual thinking."<sup>48</sup>

Another member declared,

"Judith Hart and the WUS understood the future importance of allowing Chilean academics to continue with their intellectual activities. They wanted to protect a group that would be able to contribute with the country in the future. It was a very liberal project, a social, democratic and pluralistic project."<sup>49</sup>

In order to justify the funds allotted, the Ministry had to report the Cabinet that this was a development programme. Likewise, the department had to show that these development policies were not linked to any political or ideological standpoint, as Labour members had

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<sup>47</sup> Circular of Social Affairs and Training Department, ODM; 19 in WUS UK, A study in exile, A report on the WUS UK Chilean Refugee scholarship programme, UK 1986.

<sup>48</sup> Phillips, Alan, former General Secretary WUS UK, Interview May 2009

<sup>49</sup> Philip Rudge, former WUS UK member – reorientation programme, Interview April, 2009.

argued when they were in opposition (1970-1974) and when they defined their position in relation to aid policies for developing nations. Therefore, the argument was that these scholars would return to Chile and apply their knowledge to further the nation's development.

### *3) Academic Qualifications*

This criterion was initially the main one, since the programme was designed for academics that had to meet the requirements of this activity once living in the United Kingdom. Alan Angell recognized that "we had to guarantee a certain level of academic integrity and transparency. This was far from being a group of left-wing academics giving scholarships to their friends".<sup>50</sup> Academic records were evaluated on the basis of the applicant's CV. Sometimes, owing to the circumstances, this was incomplete or unavailable. In such cases, evaluations from CLACSO or recommendations from Chilean peers acquainted with the applicant were relied upon. As one former award-holder recalled:

"When I arrived to the FLACSO where this group working for WUS UK scholarships was, I met many academics that knew me from university, all of them were known and they also knew that I had been a good student. I presented my CV but most of my papers and certificates had remained in the institution where I used to work. I can't remember why I left them there in the first place! But after the coup it was hard to find them because the place had been taken by the military forces and it was not safe to go back just for a CV! But these academics knew me so that I did not have to give many explanations."<sup>51</sup>

### *Academic criteria vs. Humanitarian criteria?*

The scholarship programme aimed at reaching a balance between three aspects: academic capital, social need, and relevance to the criterion of "development", although this last aspect was soon redefined. A key informant, who was very close to the programme, stated

"[...] probably, in a few cases if they had applied for a regular programme of scholarships from Chile, they might not have been awarded. But all of them needed basic qualifications, Chilean academic titles or at least being advanced enough in

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<sup>50</sup> Alan Angell, former AFC member – former AFC member, selection process member WUS UK programme for Chileans, Interview April 2009

<sup>51</sup> Pedro. I have interviewed ten ex award holders but have decided to preserve their anonymity.

their studies, as proven by certificates, to show that they were eligible for the scholarship. They were also interviewed. If they did not seem to be able to do the course, there was no possibility of a grant. As far as I can remember, there never was a relaxation in academic standards to adapt to individual cases."<sup>52</sup>

Indeed, many Chilean applicants to the programme had an outstanding academic record, which meant that there could be no objection to their selection. This was also the case with less high-powered applicants in a situation of genuine urgency. WUS UK members recalled that they did not have to face any serious dilemmas in the selection process because the basic idea was to include all those who met the requirements. There was no strict limit on the number of scholarships. All the members of the committee interviewed agreed on this point: if an applicant met the minimum of the requirements for eligibility, they would seek funding.

In general terms, the scholarship consisted of an award of financial aid for study at an academic institution for two, three or four years. There was also the possibility of renewal or extension for specific cases to be evaluated by the Extension Committee. The scholarship covered family benefits (spouses and children, as appropriate) and tuition fees. To receive an award, the applicant first had to have been accepted by a British academic institution, and WUS UK took care of registration and any other expenses involved. For the award-holder, the scholarship was intended to be full-time, and the stipend was considered – by the award-holders themselves – to be enough to enable them to live in dignity in the United Kingdom. Like other Chilean exiles, the beneficiaries received assistance from the Joint Working Group for Chilean Refugees in settling in Britain.

#### *The role of British academic institutions in exiles' admission.*

British universities and polytechnics had a fundamental role in the programme. The AFC and WUS UK looked for supporters in almost all British universities, especially in study centres about Latin America. Once the WUS UK had received a CV and knew the applicant's profile, they considered what might be an appropriate University or department for him/her. Then they started the process of applying for admission to this university or department, since without a place, the scholarship could not be awarded. Frequently, universities offered vacancies in advance for Chilean students because their arrival was expected both

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<sup>52</sup> Carlos Fortín, Chilean Academic in United Kingdom. WUS UK, Interview March 2009.

academically and politically. The WUS UK used to receive letters from universities saying "we have place for a Chilean student, we have lodging for a Chilean student, we have everything for a Chilean student, please, send us a Chilean student!" remembered a British academic.<sup>53</sup>

As we have noted, in many cases students, academics and teachers had to leave the country without being able to bring their certificates, titles, credentials and so on with them. This meant that some admissions were made on the basis of little information about the applicant, since the emergency situation made it impossible to follow regular procedures. WUS UK tried to gather as much information as possible in order to present an appropriate CV for evaluation purposes.

British institutions were flexible towards Chilean exiles not only in academic but also in administrative matters. Academic flexibility was needed because the documents to prove the applicant's qualifications were, sometimes, unavailable, while administrative flexibility allowed the timetable for regular admission to be accelerated in order to expedite the arrival of Chilean academics in the United Kingdom. According to the testimony of a former award-holder, when arriving at the institute, he was called for an interview:

"I was asked what I have studied in Chile and I answered I have studied History for five years, then, they wanted to know whether I had any document, and I told them I had not. They told me that it was all right, that they believed me and asked me to present an essay or monograph about a subject I liked within thirty days more. In this way my studies were validated. There (in the UK) *runs* the principle of good-faith, I told them I had studied History for five years and they told me it was all right."<sup>54</sup>

This experience may not have been a general rule but it shows the good reception that Chilean exiles received in the British academic field. Universities found alternative ways of evaluating the applicant's academic level, such as presenting previous papers, small research projects or undertaking some qualification courses. The British academics we interviewed for this study considered that Chileans had a high intellectual level, and could think critically. The arrival of the Chileans was seen as providing research centres on Latin America with a

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<sup>53</sup> Alan Angell, former AFC member, selection process member WUS UK programme for Chileans, Interview April 2009.

<sup>54</sup> Juan. I have interviewed ten former award holders but we prefer to preserve their anonymity.

more dynamic element. The exiles' experience of struggle (militant capital) was highly regarded among their peers and British teachers.

The CRSP was a nationwide programme that found placements for students all over the country, although Chilean students preferred to remain in London. A WUS UK report of 1986 lists the academic institutions that had admitted the greatest numbers of award-holders: University of Swansea, 47; University of Essex, 42; Middlesex Polytechnic, 47; Institute of Education University of London, 39; and the North East London Polytechnic, 40. This list is clearly incomplete, giving information on just 215 cases, whereas the total number of scholarships awarded was 900. There were Chilean academics in almost all British universities and in various polytechnics and colleges.

The academic committee responsible for the selection evaluated the applicants' academic records and tried to satisfy their interests. Once the award-holder had arrived in the United Kingdom, he or she had the option of choosing another institution or course by following the specific procedures of each institution. Once award-holder was enrolled, the WUS UK did not intervene in academic issues that were the concern of the hosting institutions. They just helped Chilean students adapt to their new environment by explaining how the institutions functioned and by giving support and help with orientation that would repay itself in positive academic results. In spite of all the different elements – political, ideological, and humanitarian – which came together in this programme, it tried to avoid encroaching upon the relative autonomy of the academic field in relation to other fields.

#### *WUS UK Contact Network: Social Capital*

The WUS UK built up a strong network of contacts in Latin America. It worked closely with CLACSO; Chilean academics (in FLACSO); the Intergovernmental Committee for European Migration (ICEM), the British Embassies in Argentina and Chile, the Red Cross and Chilean human rights organizations such as the Vicaría de la Solidaridad of the Archbishopric of Santiago. In the United Kingdom, WUS UK had the support of the majority of universities and polytechnics, thanks to the efforts of teachers and students actively committed to the refugees' cause. It also worked with the JWG, participating in its committee, and coordinated actions with the Chile Committee for Human Rights. As for the Chile Solidarity Campaign, the official position of the programme was to avoid political exposure, so there were few institutional links between these organizations, even though many WUS UK members



participated individually in the political campaign. As for the organizations for refugees, WUS UK maintained close connection with the Standing Conference on Refugees (SCOR), the British Council for Aid to Refugees (BCAR) and The Society for the Protection of Science and Learning (SPSL).

Some of the organizations concerned with Chilean exiles in the United Kingdom contested the WUS UK initiative, arguing that it just protected an academic elite. To what extent was this so? The data show that during the first years of the programme, awards were granted to people with high-level academic capital and sufficient social and cultural capital. As the programme expanded, however, the socioeconomic profile of the award-holders changed. Scholarships were awarded to young academics or advanced students who had accumulated neither academic nor social capital. This was a group of young people who had entered higher education during the mass expansion of higher education in the 1950s and 1960s. Allende's government had deepened this process, and had helped workers and peasants get into university by increasing expenditure on higher education and by boosting the number of grants. Yet, certain social limitations certainly remained. It was in the nature of an academic programme that awards were going to go to "academics and not miners or workers."<sup>55</sup> It was beyond the scope of the programme to solve pre-existing class differences.

### *Some figures*

Initially, the programme was oriented to areas of study that would help foster Chile's development once political conditions allowed the exiles to return. The common assumption here is that, for example, engineering or some other practical subject would better contribute to a nation's development. However, in this programme, the social sciences, in the broadest sense, were the most popular with students. In Chile, it was the social science institutions and people active in that sector which had been most affected by the military regime's repressive and disciplinary policies, and this was reflected in the profile of the exiles. The award-holders we interviewed agreed that they had been able to study subjects linked to their interests. A former award-holder commented that

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<sup>55</sup> Angell, Alan – former AFC member, selection process member WUS UK programme for Chileans, Interview April 2009.

"[...] our main interest was liberal arts<sup>56</sup> for development (laughs). That is why we [Chilean students] were privileged compared with other students from Zimbabwe or Angola for example, they had to study agriculture, livestock, use of water resources and we studied history [...]."<sup>57</sup>

Thirty-three per cent of the 900 award-holders, that is to say, 297 Chilean students, pursued their studies in the social sciences. This was the highest percentage of all the disciplines. Of this 297, four pursued studies in further-education programmes (advanced and non-advanced), 147 studied at undergraduate level, 116 took postgraduate studies and 30 did a PhD. By 1986, 183 (61%) had finished their studies, 94 had obtained first degrees, 64 had gained advanced degrees, and 22 had got PhD's. Of all the award-holders, 574, almost 64 per cent, completed their studies in different disciplines.<sup>58</sup>

Universities were the main institutions hosting award-holders. Of a total of 581 award-holders who began their studies at British universities, 437 were admitted into postgraduate programmes, 144 into undergraduate programmes and 47 into further-education programmes. 172 Chileans began their studies in polytechnics, and among them 47 enrolled in programmes of further education, 135 in undergraduate programmes and 46 in postgraduate studies. The rest of the award-holders pursued their studies in colleges.<sup>59</sup> Of the 900 award-holders, 606 were men and 294 women; 40 per cent of them were 25 to 29 years old when they began their studies. The proportion of women increased from 1976/77 as a result of the pressure they exerted to enter the programme.

A 1986 report noted that undergraduate students had been less successful in finishing their studies than those in postgraduate programmes. The causes were attributed to the differences between the Chilean university system and the British, where the curriculum was demanding.

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<sup>56</sup> Social science is commonly used as an umbrella term to refer to a plurality of fields outside of the natural sciences. These fields include: anthropology, archaeology, comparative musicology, communication studies, cultural studies, demography, economics, history, human geography, international development, international relations, linguistics, media studies, philology, political science, psychology, social work and sociology.

<sup>57</sup> Leandro. I have interviewed ten former award holders but we prefer to preserve their anonymity.

<sup>58</sup> WUS UK, A study in exile, A report on the WUS UK Chilean Refugee scholarship programme, UK 1986.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid.

Additionally, as the WUS UK programme adopted more flexible academic criteria, in order to include Chilean students at genuine risk, it made awards to young exiles without the necessary academic, cultural and social capital, and this was later reflected in the results.

### The Third Stage: reorientation and return programme

From its inception, this programme sustained the idea that those who had benefited would return to Chile when the political situation would allow it. The ODM, which financed the scholarships, was confident that the beneficiaries would work for Chile's development once democracy had been restored. In March 1974, when she was still outlining her policy towards Chile, Judith Hart hinted that a return policy should be part of this scholarship programme financed by the ODM. WUS UK was on difficult ground, because when they started to outline the programme for return, conditions in Chile were totally unfavourable. Towards 1978-79, a slow process of return began, often in clandestinity, organised by parties and political movements.<sup>60</sup> Not all the Chilean exiles, who were spread over more than fifty countries – this was an exile with the characteristics of a diaspora – were prepared to return against their wishes. For those who had been expelled from Chile and banned from re-entering, it was the Chilean government which could decide arbitrarily whether someone would be readmitted. There were other factors involved too, not least the question of finding work. Decisions about returning were even more complicated for those who had been hosted in countries with a degree of state social security. The fact that Pinochet remained in power for a long time also militated against plans to return since many of the exiles had begun to adapt and to forge social links in their new countries.

In 1977 the feasibility of relocating the award-holders, ideally to Chile, or to other developing countries, began to be explored. This gave rise to the Programme for Reorientation and Return, solely for former WUS UK award-holders. The findings on exploratory missions to

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<sup>60</sup> Loreto Rebolledo, *Memorias del Desarraigo. Testimonios de exilio y retorno de hombres y mujeres de Chile*, Santiago de Chile 2006; Carmen Norambuena, *Exilio y retorno. Chile 1973-1994*, in: Mario Garcés et al., eds., *Memoria para un nuevo siglo. Chile, miradas a la segunda mitad del siglo XX*, Santiago 2000, 173-188; Elizabeth Lira and Brian Loveman, *Políticas de reparación 1990-2004*, Santiago de Chile 2005.

Latin America were not encouraging. The possible destination countries were already saturated with Chileans, and the funds required to place them in accordance with their studies were not available. The programme also explored possibilities in African countries, as a kind of South-South cooperation. Between 1977 and 1986, WUS UK succeeded in relocating 253 former award-holders through this initiative, which involved finding them work in accordance with their specialism and paying relocation expenses. Of these 253 cases, 198 returned to Chile, 44 moved to other Latin American countries, and 11 to other developing countries. The compromise of returning acquired a different dimension once WUS UK and WUS International launched their joint efforts, funded by the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA). The WUS Chile National Committee had the main responsibility for the programme. This committee was composed of Chilean academic agents and representatives of political and human rights organizations. Although the analysis of the programme is beyond the scope of this paper, we should note that this programme allowed 2.500 award holders and their families to return from different countries with a one-year-grant. This mechanism helped recruitment to those independent research centres which already existed and fostered the creation of new ones.

The return programme carried out by WUS Chile was primarily academic, but it also undertook projects for other social sectors in need, such as ex-political prisoners, and unemployed or intermittently employed youth among others. With the return to democracy, the government launched in 1990 the *Oficina Nacional de Retorno* (ONR – National Department of Return) in charge of the return to Chile of thousands of exiles, which took on the responsibilities of WUS Chile and many other organizations involved in this process.

### **A final evaluation of the programme's success**

“Some of the award-holders had lived through horrifying experiences and were in danger when applying for a scholarship. This programme cannot be compared to the normal British Council Scholarship programmes, where it was possible to go to the Embassy, fill an application form, return home and keep studying, while awaiting the outcome. The two procedures were like chalk and cheese!”<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>61</sup> Alan Phillips, former General Secretary, WUS UK, Interview May 2009.

A scholarship programme should normally be considered successful when the award-holders are able to complete their studies and find a place in the professional labour market.

However, such an evaluation is inadequate in this case, since this programme was positioned at the point where academia and politics intersected. The programme was designed for an academic community in exile with various levels of academic and social capital. Its intention was to allow them to further their education abroad and ultimately return to their country in order to contribute with the nation's development.

Various factors hindered the award-holders from completing their studies, mainly language difficulties and the psychological effects of uprooting and social change. As members of the selection committee attested, none of the applicants was sufficiently proficient in English. The programme promoted English courses run by other organizations working with exiles, but some award-holders noted that these courses were not enough. One recalled that

"[...] the language was a serious problem for everybody, an enormous difficulty. I felt a considerable pressure from the WUS on me to begin my studies, they phoned and wrote pushing me to begin, so I went to English classes and to university at the same time, and I had to begin my studies immediately, it was very hard. The same happened to many fellows, some entered a course by mistake or did not understand the classes and finally they quit. It was very sad because I knew an engineer that abandoned everything."<sup>62</sup>

WUS UK members acknowledged these problems, however, these difficulties were unavoidable in a programme assisting refugees coming from a country that was very different, culturally speaking, from the United Kingdom. In addition, the British government had not developed a suitable policy to assist refugees once they were in the country. Many of the award-holders had arrived in the United Kingdom seeking asylum, rather than a place where they could develop academically. They were not really ready to be immediately plunged into academic life. The wide range of situations obliged WUS UK to adapt and learn as it went along. A British academic involved in selecting applicants observed,

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<sup>62</sup> Silvia. I have interviewed ten ex award holders but we prefer to preserve their anonymity.

"In some cases they had actual barriers – language and the like. But if one also pays attention to the psychological state produced by exile, the worries these people had, thinking continuously about what might be happening to their families in Chile... I don't know. I wonder – if things were the other way round and I had found myself in exile, could I have made the same intellectual efforts as they were asked to make?"<sup>63</sup>

Indeed, the WUS UK programme had to find a balance between humanitarian and academic criteria, while trying not to sacrifice either – not an easy task to fulfil in every case. The distinct characteristics of this programme, which made it quite unlike any other scholarship programme not aimed at exiles, meant that evaluations also had to be different. We can stress that it was a humanitarian programme that helped save lives – in the most extreme cases – or to make the whole experience of being uprooted more productive and less traumatic. However, we should remember that this programme enabled hundreds of students to continue with their academic careers when they could no longer do so in Chile. In the UK, British people who were involved in support work with the exiled Chileans went on to do the same kind of work in other geographical areas such as Central America. The Chilean case helped develop knowledge in different areas, including human rights and development policies. Through this experience the British involved gained experience of struggle, “militant capital”,<sup>64</sup> which they later invested in other areas.

When Margaret Thatcher became Prime Minister in 1979, WUS UK members had the feeling that nothing would be the same again. It was also around that time that mass exile came to an end. Consequently, demand for scholarships decreased and WUS UK focused on a new stage, working for the return of exiles to Chile. Although Margaret Thatcher's government did not close the programme, the influx of Chileans and other immigrants into Britain began to diminish and to encounter serious obstacles. In the final analysis, this programme was a product of an endogenous process of political radicalization within British academic field.

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<sup>63</sup> Ann Zammit, former WUS UK – selection process member WUS UK programme for Chileans, Interview December 2009.

<sup>64</sup> Frédérique Matonti and Franck Poupeu, *Le capital militant. Essai de définition*, in : *Actes de la recherche en Sciences Sociales*, 155 (2004), 5-12.

The decision to fund a programme of this nature was taken in the political sphere – a sphere to which many academics were linked.

### Note about the interviews

I have conducted several interviews in the United Kingdom, Chile, and Buenos Aires. The list of interviewees is as follows:

Alan Phillips, former General Secretary, WUS UK (May 2009-Brighton, UK)

Liz Fraser, former Chile Team, SPLS, WUS UK member (May 2009-London, UK)

Alan Angell, former AFC member –selection process member WUS UK programme for Chileans (April 2009-Oxford, UK)

Gerard Martin, British academic, selection process member WUS UK programme for Chileans (April, 2009-London, UK)

Ann Zammit, former WUS UK – selection process member WUS UK programme for Chileans (December 2009) Telephone interview.

Emanuel de Kadt, selection process member WUS UK programme for Chileans (March, 2009-Chile)

John King, former WUS UK member (April, 2009- Coventry, UK)

Marilyn Thompson, former WUS UK member (May, 2009-London, UK)

Pauline Martin, former WUS UK member (April, 2009-Oxford, UK)

Sebastian Brett, former WUS UK member (March, 2009-Chile)

Philip Rudge, former WUS UK member – reorientation programme (April, 2009-London, UK)

Enrique Oteiza, former Executive Secretary CLACSO (Nov., 2006 – March, 2007; March, 2009-Buenos Aires)

Eduardo Santos, CLACSO (December, 2007-Chile)

Antonio Fortín, CLACSO (January, 2009-Chile)

Roberto Pizarro, CLACSO (May, 2007-Chile)

Ricardo Lagos, former head of WUS UK return programme in Santiago de Chile (January, 2009-Chile)

Eugenia Hola, former WUS UK Chile Committee in Santiago de Chile (January, 2009-Chile)

Manuel Antonio Garretón, former head WUS UK Chile Committee in Santiago de Chile (March, 2009-Chile)

José Bengoa, former head of WUS Chile (January, 2009-Chile)

Ximena Erazo, International WUS member (December, 2008-Chile)

Ángela Jeria de Bachelet, WUS Chile (December, 2008-Chile)

Carlos Fortín, Chilean Academic in United Kingdom. WUS UK (March, 2009-Chile)

Mike Gatehouse, Chile Solidarity Campaign Secretary (April, 2009-Wales, UK)

Gordon Hutchison, Joint Working Group for Refugees from Chile Secretary (April, 2009-London, UK)

Wendy Tyndale, Chile Committee for Human Rights Secretary (December, 2009) Telephone Interview.

Claire Dixon, Chile Committee for Human Rights Secretary (April, 2009-London, UK)

I have interviewed ten former award holders but we prefer to preserve their anonymity.

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“Academics for Chile”, document attached to a letter addressed to Walter Adams, LSE Director, on November 21, 1973, London signed by Alan Angell, London in: File Academics for Chile, London School of Economics and Political Sciences Archives, London.