

Title of the proposal: Political Messianism, Left-wing Hegemonic Masculinity, and the Idea of the New Man in the Chilean New Song

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Abstract

The New Song has been one of the most studied Chilean musical phenomena. Especially during the last two decades, research on this musical movement has expanded significantly, addressing issues such as its stylistic characteristics (Torres 1980; Advis 2000), its links with the political left (J. Rodríguez 2011; McSherry 2017; Schmiedecke 2022), its insertion in folk and Andean music (O. Rodríguez 1988; Rios 2008), its relationship with the artistic avant-garde (Peña 2018; Herrera 2018), its religious aspect (Vilches 2011; Guerra 2014; Rojas 2020), its gender performances (Party 2019; Rojas 2022), and its international connections (J. Rodríguez 2016; Mamani 2018; Karmy & Schmiedecke 2020; Gavagnin, Jordán & Rodríguez 2022; Freedman 2022).

Within this panorama, I propose to relate two of these topics: the religious dimension and gender performance in the New Song. To achieve this, I take the categories of political messianism (Benjamin 1991; Dussel 2010) and hegemonic masculinity (Connell 2005; Messerschmidt & Messner 2018), which find a synthesis in the idea of the “new man”. On the one hand, the movement put forward an idea of the new man that correlated Marxist thought, especially through Ernesto Guevara, with Christianity. In this way, the new man of the New Song would live a life dedicated to others, and sacrifice himself for the revolution without expecting anything in return. On the other hand, this idea of the new man proposed by the movement was associated with an ambiguous and contradictory masculinity, which, while proclaiming its support for women's liberation, legitimised unequal gender relations between men and women, between masculinity and femininity, as well as between different possible types of masculinity. Therefore, my intention is to address the political, religious, and gender conflicts regarding the new man not only by reviewing songs but also the ideas, discourses, and behaviours of the musicians of the movement.

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