

CHILE

Beatriz Allende: A Revolutionary Life in Cold War Latin America. By Tanya Harmer. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2020. Pp. 384. \$34.95 cloth; e-book \$26.99. doi:10.1017/tam.2021.38

This compelling, elegantly-crafted biography convincingly reevaluates Beatriz Allende—daughter of the famous Chilean president Salvador Allende—as an important leader in her own right. Refuting portrayals of Beatriz as a passive victim, Tanya Harmer shows instead that Beatriz played a key role within Chile’s socialist Left, both during the Popular Unity’s period in power (1970–73) and in her solidarity work conducted from exile in Cuba after the 1973 coup. Yet, the book is also far more than an individual life story. Harmer uses Beatriz and her generation to illuminate the cultural and political conflicts at the heart of the Cold War and Latin America’s “long 1960s,” including competing visions of reform and revolution, increased political mobilization of women and youth, and the hypnotic pull of the Cuban Revolution.

Using private archives, interviews, and other new sources, Harmer deftly reconstructs Beatriz’s role as interlocutor between the armed New Left of her generation and the constitutionally oriented Old Left of her father’s generation. From the mid 1960s onward, Beatriz sympathized with and cultivated contacts among armed leftist groups such as the Movimiento de Izquierda Revolucionaria (MIR), the Ejército de Liberación Nacional (ELN), and La Organa. After Allende’s election in 1970, she drew on those contacts to organize her father’s security team and to bring in groups of radical youths for informal advisory sessions. Harmer uses these overlapping social and political networks to argue against too neatly separating the different tendencies within the Chilean Left. Salvador Allende did not reject the armed Left, she argues, but sought to incorporate it. And despite his cautious approach to the United States, Allende expressed his solidarity with foreign revolutionary movements, often relying on Beatriz as his “parallel and unofficial foreign minister” (170) to do so.

Harmer lauds Beatriz’s behind-the-scenes organizational work. However, she also makes it clear that Beatriz was relegated to such roles because she was a woman. Indeed, one of the biography’s great strengths is to capture the poignancy of being a radical woman in the era of revolutionary masculinity. Beatriz felt the call to arms just as strongly as her male peers, but unlike many of them, she was denied serious military training. ELN leaders appreciated her rearguard support, but they prevented her from joining the group’s insurgency in Bolivia in the late 1960s. And after the 1973 coup, she begged to be sent to the Chilean underground but was restrained by the Cubans. Most tragically, she wanted to stay in the presidential palace with her father during the coup. But Allende ordered her and other women to leave, defying her revolutionary determination to die at his side.

Nevertheless, as Harmer admits, Beatriz’s views on gender were complex. Beatriz challenged conventional femininity in practice, but, like others on the Left, she feared

feminism would detract from the paramount goal of taking power. Nor did her rejection of conventional gender roles necessarily extend to the private sphere. As a woman of privilege, she relied on domestic workers, first in Chile and later in Cuba. When the Cuban government fired and forcibly relocated her domestic servant for being a lesbian, Beatriz apparently condoned the punitive measure, or at least did not denounce it. She tacitly accepted her father's extramarital affairs and perhaps also her own husband's. Even though Harmer's book shows that the perceived transgression of gender norms fueled the Chilean Right in this period, a more extended discussion of the debates taking place within Beatriz's leftist circles over issues such as sexuality, morality, or idealized models of romantic partnerships might have enriched our understanding of her world even further.

Beatriz's ongoing ties with Cuba, including her marriage to a Cuban diplomat, allows Harmer to provide an insightful and evocative account of Cuba's role in the region in the 1960s and '70s. Although the broad outlines of Cuba's explosive impact on youths and the Latin American Left are well known, Harmer increases our understanding significantly by illuminating multiple flows between Cuba and Chile in this period, including regional solidarity events held in Cuba, insurgent groups' trips to the island for military training, and high-profile diplomatic exchanges, such as Fidel Castro's month-long visit to Chile in 1971.

Perhaps most fascinating is the crucial role Cuba played for Chilean exiles after the 1973 coup. Harmer shows that the Cuban leadership carefully managed the narrative of Allende's death in the immediate aftermath of the coup. She also documents the support Cuba provided for exiles' solidarity initiatives, in which Beatriz played a leading role. But Beatriz's frustration with the futility of those initiatives, Cuba's waning revolutionary fever, and the pain of exile all contributed to her growing depression. This book makes it clear that Chile lost a vital if unsung leader when Beatriz took her own life in 1977.

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ARGENTINA'S PIQUETERO MOVEMENT

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One of the most notable social and political transformations in Argentina in recent decades has been the growth of urban poverty and the organization of the poor into a