The Chilean Arpilleristas: Changing National Politics Through Tapestry Work.

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Comments
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Abstract
At present, a popular opinion maintains that the education of countries benefits a society's economic and social development and improves individuals' well-being. Economic studies and statistics have proven this idea to be true, however there are other processes by which women attain a higher quality of living and can change a nation's political system. Although this scenario is altogether hypothetical and its occurrence is well documented...
Pinochet dictatorship (1973-1989), the Chilean *arpilleristas* combined their collective memories of brutality with their traditional gender roles to at first privately share grievances of their "disappeared" loved ones and eventually protest the regime in place. These poverty-stricken women of shanty towns met in clandestine workshops and formed a grassroots organization to create tapestries woven from their own garments and hair to sell to foreign markets. The *arpilleristas* soon realized the power held by their collective memory and tapestry work. Politically mobilized outwardly protest the government's attempts to conceal and ignore their memories. National and international attention to their cause resulted in democracy's defeat of Pinochet's regime. This essay will show how a collective memory framework of persecution led to a political awakening for these women. An uncover that perhaps the most enduring political movements whose blood, sweat, and tears are found within its basis.