

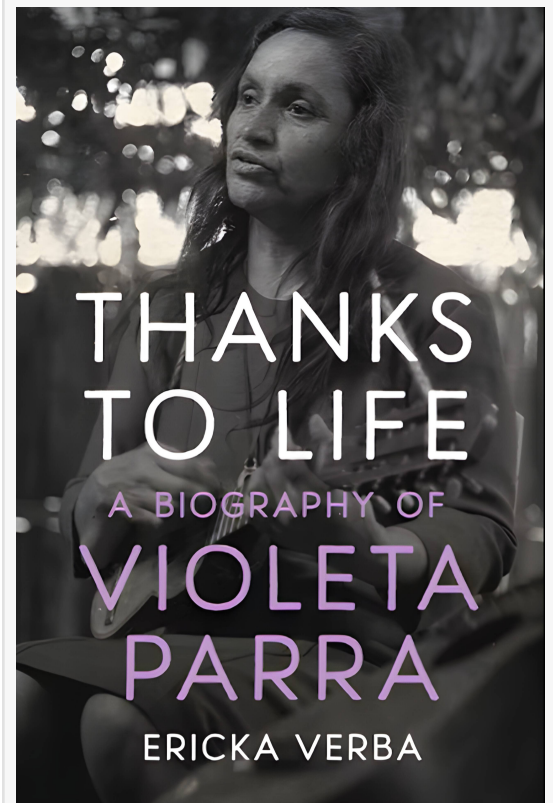
# New Biography of Chilean Icon Violeta Parra Illuminates Her Transformative Role in Music and Politics

*The definitive biography of Violeta Parra, who exposed social injustices in Latin America to the world through her songwriting and became a symbol of resistance*

LOS ANGELES, CA, UNITED STATES, January 13, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [Ericka Kim Verba](#) has spent over four decades researching the life and legacy of Chilean folksinger Violeta Parra (1917–1967). Parra, an icon of resistance and inspiration to generations of artists and activists worldwide, is celebrated for her pivotal role in the Chilean folk revival and the Nueva Canción (New Song) protest music movement. Verba's forthcoming biography of Parra, "[Thanks to Life](#)," will be published by [The University of North Carolina Press](#) on January 14, 2025.

In it, Verba explores Parra's radical life and multifaceted artistic career that carried her across Latin America and both sides of the Iron Curtain in Europe. A professor of Latin American Studies at California State University, Los Angeles, and a musician herself, Verba was introduced to Parra's work in the 1970s by a Chilean family of musicians and artists who fostered her love of Latin American music and political awakening. Drawing on decades of meticulous research, Verba paints a vivid and nuanced picture of Parra's life and legacy, from her modest beginnings in Southern Chile to her enduring influence as an inspiration to social movements in Latin America and throughout the world.

What sets Verba's biography apart is its exploration of Parra's complex psyche, her self-constructed identities (and their conflicts), all contextualized within the social and political landscapes of her travels throughout Latin America and Europe at the height of the Cold War. This examination of Parra's creative, political, and personal life illuminates the depth and agency of Parra's journey as she invented and reinvented herself in her struggle to be recognized as an artist on her own terms.



"Thanks to Life" by Ericka Kim Verba

J. Patrice McSherry, professor emeritus and author of "Chilean New Song: The Political Power of Music", notes, "Ericka Verba has produced a richly detailed and enlightening study of a complex woman who shattered gender, racial, and class barriers."

David Spener, professor at Trinity University, adds, "Verba's lifelong engagement with Parra's songs and poetry enables her to seamlessly weave the artist's verses into the historian's account. It's both aesthetically pleasing and deeply insightful. A must-read for students of Parra's life and works."

The biography gets its title from Parra's iconic song, "Gracias a la vida" (Thanks to Life), which has been embraced by a diverse range of artists including Kacey Musgraves, Shakira, Yo-Yo Ma, and Mercedes Sosa. A powerful example of how music transcends genres and borders, "Thanks to Life" resonates in today's divided political climate, underscoring the power of art as a force for change. With this book, Verba shares Parra's enduring legacy with new audiences and generations.



Ericka Kim Verba, professor of Latin American studies at California State University, Los Angeles

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A profound and insightful look at the life of one of Latin America's most influential and complex modern artists.”

*Patricia Vilches, author of "Salvador Allende and the Villa San Luis"*

#### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Ericka Kim Verba is a professor of Latin American studies at California State University, Los Angeles.

#### ABOUT THE BOOK

Written by Ericka Kim Verba and published on January 14, 2025, by The University of North Carolina Press, "Thanks to Life" paints a vivid and nuanced picture of Chilean folksinger Violeta Parra. From her modest beginnings in southern Chile to her untimely death, Parra was an

exceptionally complex and talented woman who exposed social injustice in Latin America to the world through her powerful songwriting.

#### MEDIA CONTACT

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