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‘How could I not participate?’: Mapuche students in Santiago and Temuco and their construction of an indigenous urban identity

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‘How could I not participate?’

Mapuche students in Santiago and Temuco and their construction of an indigenous urban identity

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Introduction

The sun shines in smog-filled Santiago when the *kimelfe* (indigenous teacher) crushes a bunch of fragrant leaves in a bowl of water and lets us breathe in the scent. She tells us to think of positive things and let our spirits be filled with comfort. I am in a *ruka* (house) in the neighbourhood of San Miguel, Santiago de Chile, where Mapuche who live in the city get together to learn *Mapudungun*, the Mapuche language, and to practise their culture. There are people of all ages, most of them clothed in traditional Mapuche dress. Some mothers have brought their children with them. A week later, I meet with Francisco (24), a Mapuche student who participates in the language classes in San Miguel. He tells me how being indigenous in the city can sometimes be challenging, and how he constructs and assert his identity as a young urban Mapuche. Some 600 kilometres to the south, a few months later, I am invited to attend an important Mapuche ceremony. The rainy, green hills just outside of the city of Temuco set the scene for this *ngillatun*, in which hundreds of people dance, eat and make music together. My roommate in Temuco, Emilia, shows me how to dance by using the green branch we picked from a tree earlier. Although she lives and studies in the city, she explains how her proximity to the countryside really helps her to connect with her Mapuche identity.

The experiences of Francisco and Emilia differ greatly. Francisco sometimes feels removed from the Mapuche who live in the south, but he has also found identity and community among the Mapuche in Santiago. Emilia, on the other hand, has more direct access to Mapuche cultural and spiritual expressions, but encounters other forms of challenges for being indigenous. Both are young students who live in the city, and whose existence as city youth strongly influence their lives. At the same time, they are also indigenous, which sometimes involves a worldview and spirituality that directly contradicts the beliefs and practices of Chilean urban student life.

Worldwide, an estimated 4.5 billion people live in cities, a large part of which are under 25 years old (World Bank 2022; UN-Habitat 2013). This number is growing: estimates state that by 2030, over 50% of the urban population will be younger than 35 (UN-Habitat 2023). The percentage of youth living in cities in the Global South is even bigger. In Latin America, the population in cities is expected to grow with 55% between 2000 and 2030 (UN-Habitat 2013, 4). Although the study of youth has become a large field of studies that researches a wide range of topics, there is a lack of literature on the lives and challenges of young people who live in cities. Most literature on urban youth is focussed on issues like poverty and marginalization, and largely researches cities in the Global North (Simmons 2014; Dimitriadis 2008; Mason 2018). However, with the expected growth of young populations in cities in especially the Global South, it is important to pay closer attention to 'the lives of 'ordinary young people'' in urban spaces in the Global South (Vandegrift 2015, 150).

The lack of literature on urban youth outside of the Global North contrasts the abundance of research into questions of 'indigenousness and indigeneity' (Weaver 2000, 221). As a term that gained traction in the 1990's, both inside and outside of academia, indigeneity has become a concept that encompasses the lives of indigenous peoples around the world. For a long time, the general idea of indigenous peoples was that they were mostly rural, and bound to a certain place (Alfred and Corntassel 2005; Cowlishaw 2003; Radcliffe 2017). However, there is a growing amount of literature that examines indigeneity in the context of migration and urban spaces (Delugan 2010; Dorries 2022; Merino et al. 2020).

In this thesis, I seek to combine the study of urban youth in the Global South with the concept of indigeneity, to gain a more comprehensive understanding of identity formation among specifically *young* urban indigenous people. To learn how indigeneity and urban youth intersect for Mapuche students in the city, I use the case of Mapuche youth in two cities in Chile, the capital Santiago, and Temuco, in the Araucanía region. The Mapuche are the biggest indigenous group in Chile, and although they are historically the inhabitants of the southern Araucanía region, nowadays many of them live in Santiago (Brablec 2021). The Mapuche living in the Araucanía are severely

affected by a conflict between the state and some Mapuche communities (Richards 2013a).The specific context for this research will be the *revuelta social*, a series of mass protests in 2019-2020, in which many Chileans took to the streets to protest against the government. The mobilizations saw a leading role for urban youngsters, particularly students, and it can be seen as a form of civil resistance using nonviolent means, including marches, strikes, and walkouts to challenge the political status quo and the economic hegemony of the neoliberal system that has been upheld by the political elite since the 1990's (Chenoweth 2021; Richards 2013a). While young people have been at the forefront of social mobilizations in Chile for decades, the protests saw an unprecedented number of Mapuche cultural expressions, such as the use of the Mapuche flags, or graffiti in Mapudungun (Cummings 2015; Márquez 2020). This calls for a closer examination of how young Mapuche in both cities constructed and asserted their identity as indigenous, young and urban in the context of the revuelta social.

The central question of this thesis is: *how is collective identity constructed among young Mapuche students in tertiary education in an urban context in Chile?* To answer this question, this thesis asks the following subquestions: how do young Mapuche construct their identity as both urban and Mapuche? How do the mobilizations in the context of the revuelta social interact with their identities as student, indigenous, and urban? Which differences in collective indigenous identity formation can be observed between students from Temuco and Santiago, and how did they play a role during the revuelta social?

Answering these questions will help to contextualise theories of indigeneity and urban youth and apply them to the Chilean context. It will also help to better understand how urbanity and overlapping identities play a role in the creation of a collective identity in the face of mass mobilizations. Lastly, analysing the differences and similarities between young Mapuche in these two cities can shed a light on how regionality and centralization have shaped the identities of indigenous people in Chile.

The results of this thesis are based on a number of interviews with young people who lived in either Santiago or Temuco, although one of the interviewees grew up in Santiago, but currently studies in the northern city of Arica. All of the interviews were in tertiary education at the time this research took place. The cities of Santiago and Temuco were specifically chosen because of their historical significance to the Mapuche. Temuco is the capital city of the Araucanía region, which is the ancestral homeland of the Mapuche (Richards 2013a). Histories of colonialism and displacement have led to many Mapuche families relocating to Santiago, which now houses a large percentage of Mapuche, as discussed in chapter 3 of this thesis (Brablec 2018).

All of the students that I interviewed for this research, save one, identified as Mapuche. In total, 13 students were interviewed between July 2022 and January 2023, in addition to two experts. One of those experts was Nancy Nicul Lincoleo, a Mapuche activist who was an organizer of various activities for indigenous people in Santiago. The other expert I spoke to was Fabien le Bonniec, professor of anthropology at the *Universidad Católica* in Temuco. All of the interviews were recorded, but unfortunately some of the recordings were lost due to the theft of my phone. The quotes in this thesis are directly translated from Spanish (for a translation of Spanish and Mapudungun words, see annex 2: glossary). To protect the identity of the interviewee, only first names and the age of the person are given. In addition to the interviews, I made use of participant observation by visiting ceremonies, language classes and a number of movie screenings. I also took pictures of graffiti that I saw in the streets in both Santiago and Temuco. Although my research took place over two years after the end of the protests, there was a lot of graffiti still visible in the public space. Unless specified otherwise, all the pictures in this thesis are made by the author. In addition to the interviews and participant observation, I gathered data trough newspaper articles that I found through various sources, mainly social media and the internet. Academic articles and books were used to support the theoretical background of this thesis. Knowledge about Mapuche practices and words comes mostly from my roommate in Temuco, Emilia, and her mother Juanita, and from the book *Tayiñ Mapuche Kimün* (Mapuche epistemology- wisdom and knowledge) by Juan Ñanculef Huaiquinao (2016).

This thesis consists of four parts. The first chapter of this thesis draws up the theoretical background for the research. This chapter revolves around three main topics: indigeneity, social movements and urban youth. The first part of chapter 1 analyses what it means to be indigenous. Chapter 1.2 examines how social movements and collective identity formation interact and can influence each other, while the third section of chapter 1 showcases how the study of urban youth has evolved over time and how we can scrutinize the way in which urban youth is often seen. Chapter 2 discusses the socio-historical context of the position of Mapuche in three phases: colonial Chile and the republic, the Pinochet dictatorship, and the return to democracy in the early 1990's. This chapter also includes an overview of the main student protests in the 21st century, as this will help contextualise the role of students in the 2019 revuelta social.

Chapter 3 and 4 form the main analytical body of this thesis. In chapter 3, after a brief overview of my data gathering process, I analyse how the Mapuche students shape and negotiate their identity as young, urban and Mapuche, in order to answer this thesis' first sub-question. The first part of this analysis discusses the self-identification of young urban Mapuche. This is contrasted by the last part of the chapter, where the students' opinions on what it means to be a young Mapuche are analysed in light of outsiders' perspective of indigeneity, either academics, older Mapuche or non-Mapuche Chileans. In chapter 4, the focus lies on the second sub-question of this thesis, on the role of overlapping identities during the revuelta social. In this chapter, I analyse how and why indigenous and student groups participated in the revuelta social. I argue that the students' participation was motivated by a strong criticism of the neoliberal policies of the state, like most non-Mapuche Chileans. Sub-question three, on the differences between indigenous collective identity formation between youth from Santiago and Temuco, will be considered in both chapter 3 and 4. This thesis ends with a summary of the results, a conclusion and some recommendations for further research.

Indigeneity, collective identity and urban youth

Chapter 1: theoretical framework

The aim of this chapter is to provide a theoretical background for the three concepts that are used in this thesis, namely indigeneity, urban youth studies, and collective identity in the context of social movements. The chapter will start with a discussion of the concept of indigeneity, showing that modern thinking on indigeneity is influenced by the debate whether indigenous identity is constructed or primordial. It also discusses how indigeneity as a concept has been used as a political tool, both by and against indigenous people. Section 1.2 explores how theories on social movements have evolved, and how the concept of collective identity formation in the context of social movements has come to the forefront of the debate. Taking a step further, this section analyses how intersectionality and overlapping identities play a role in identity making in social movements. The last part of this chapter explores theories on Urban youth, and how thinking about young people has changed throughout history. An important part of this section is dedicated to a discussion of Critical Youth Studies (CYS) and youth studies in the global south, as his holds the most relevance for this thesis.

1.1 Indigeneity

Studying 'indigenous' peoples has a long history, particularly in the field of anthropology. However, the term 'indigeneity' as a way to denominate the first inhabitants of a specific place is a relatively recent addition to the broader field of social sciences. The concept gained recognition in an international context through the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which was approved by 143 countries in 2007 (Hérnandez Castillo 2010, 381). However, indigeneity as an identifying factor for certain groups within states had already appeared on the UN's radar decades before. Already in 1967, Hernán Santa Cruz, a Special Rapporteur for the UN tasked with investigating discrimination against racial minorities, asserted that his report did not comprehensively consider discrimination against indigenous peoples, stating:

> 'For a more thorough analysis of the extent of the problem and the national and international measures needed to solve it, the Special Rapporteur
> considers that the competent organs of the United Nations in co-operation with the specialized agencies [..] should make a complete and comprehensive study of this problem.' (Martínez Cobo 1972, 3)

This recommendation led to the formation of the Working Group on Indigenous Populations in 1982, which spurred nearly 40 years of programmes and conventions regarding the issue[1]. The Declaration of 2007 internationally recognized the rights of indigenous peoples as a distinct group.

What is indigeneity?

Within the academic field, there is a consensus among scholars from different disciplines that Indigeneity as a concept is hard to define in a way that is universally accepted. Many countries wield different definitions of what constitutes an indigenous person or people, and within academia many scholars focus on distinct parts of indigeneity. Most scholars situate the concept within the literature on (post-)colonialism. For example, Alfred and Corntassel (2005) focus on how indigenous identity was and is formed in opposition to colonizing forces. It is important to note that, while the term 'post-colonial' makes it seem like colonialism is a finished project, for many people in the world, 'colonialism is not dead' (Weaver 2000, 223). Most scholars explicitly or implicitly accept that one of

[1] For a historical overview, see the United Nations website: https://www.un.org/development/desa/indigenouspeoples/about-us.html

the overarching characteristics of being indigenous is that they are still (being) colonized. Here, one of the most important debates on indigeneity comes to light: the question whether indigenous peoples are indigenous because meet certain criteria, or whether they are indigenous because of their relation with their colonizers and other members of their group. Merlan (2009) explores this difference between 'criterial' and 'relational' definitions of indigeneity. Criterial definitions often focus on a set of characteristics that are conditional to one's identification as indigenous. Relational definitions of indigeneity, on the other hand, are much more focused on the characteristics that distinguish an indigenous group from others. Or, as Radcliffe (2015) states, 'Indigeneity can be defined as the socio-spatial processes and practices whereby Indigenous people and places are determined as distinct (ontologically, epistemologically, culturally, in sovereignty, etc.) to dominant universals.' (221).

Criterial definitions of indigeneity are explored by TallBear (2013) and Wade (2013), both anthropologists. TallBear, who is Native American, investigates the growing field of genomic research among indigenous populations in that country. Although it might seem useful to chart the genetic heritage of a person to determine whether they are indigenous, the author argues that this is often to the detriment of indigenous populations, as they are subjected to narrow categories of who do and do not belong. This new form of colonialism, or 'biocolonalism', can weaken indigenous people's rights to self-determination and self-articulation (512). Wade (2013), researching genomic mapping projects in Colombia, Brazil and Mexico, shows how these programmes often reinforce racial stereotypes of indigeneity. Unlike TallBear, who argues that the creation of a genetic category for indigenous peoples could be detrimental, Wade shows how cultural notions of indigeneity are maintained despite the genetic proof that most, if not all, populations in these countries are mixed (*mestizo*) to some extent. Here, a difference in scholarship between North American and Latin American themes of indigeneity can be seen.

An often-mentioned characteristic of indigeneity is that it is tied to a specific place. As Alfred and Corntassel (2005) define it, '[i]t is this oppositional, *place-based existence*[2], along with the consciousness of being in struggle against the dispossessing and demeaning fact of colonization by foreign peoples, that fundamentally distinguishes Indigenous peoples from other peoples of the world'. (597). Others have expanded on this idea of geographic connection (Cowlishaw 2003; Radcliffe 2015). However, this notion has also received criticism, as many indigenous people have (forcibly or voluntarily) moved to other places. For example, Delugan (2010) and Dorries (2022) focus on indigenous populations that have moved to urban centres, showing that indigenous identity can be reproduced outside of the rural places that many assume are essential to being indigenous. Seeing that 'Indigenous cultures have always been dynamic rather than static' (Weaver 2000, 227), classifying indigenous peoples as 'people of the land' would be colonial erasure of the realities many indigenous persons face.

The anthropologist Kuper's criticism of indigeneity as a theoretical concept gained a lot of attention in the field of anthropology in the early 2000's. According to this scholar, positioning indigeneity as a category harks back to the early years of anthropological essentialism, in which the now abandoned notion of *race* is being replaced with *culture*, maintaining the indigenous as a static 'other' (Barnard 2006, 10–11). Kuper's assertions received much criticism, with many scholars arguing that, even though the academic definition of indigeneity was not perfect, having the concept as a category meant that indigenous peoples all over the world would be able to demand their rights as a people (Barnard 2006; Guenther et al. 2006).

Settler colonialism

While most criterial definitions of indigeneity focus on inherent traits that make a person or group indigenous, relational definitions, on the other hand, often take into consideration how indigeneity as an identity is shaped in connection with other groups in society. For many scholars, these 'other

[2] Emphasis mine

groups' are the colonists who arrived in a region and started a culture of dominance and hegemony that relegated those who were there first to a place of cultural and social submission. However, 'others' can also be groups that share these characteristics, but are considered distinct from indigenous groups, such as people from African descent or peasants (Wade 2013; Burman 2014; Hérnandez Castillo 2010).

Most scholars that see indigeneity as a relational process of identification study so-called 'settler' colonies. These are colonies that experienced a 'permanent settler presence' (Maddison 2013, 228), as opposed to 'extractive' colonialism, which were mostly used for the extraction of natural resource. As Maddison (2013) states, settler colonies never lived through a process of decolonization (288). Also called 'internal colonialism', this field of study concerns itself with societies that have historically had a large influx of colonizers who did not return to their homeland and dominated the cultural formation of the colony (Weaver 2000, 223). Most literature on indigeneity in settler colonies focuses on the anglophone countries, notably the US, Canada and Australia, and to a lesser extent South Africa (e.g. Cowlishaw 2003; Maddison 2013; Plaice 2010; Alfred and Corntassel 2005). It is interesting to notice that many scholars in the field of settler colonialism are in disagreement on whether Latin America is a settler colony or an extractive colony. For example, Maddison (2013), in their description of settler colonies, categorizes South America as an extractive colony for having gone through a 'decolonizing gesture' (288). Weaver (2000), naming both extractive colonies and settler colonies, refrains from placing Latin America in either category at all. Others (e.g. Hérnandez Castillo 2010; Radcliffe 2015) do consider Latin America a region that meets the requirements to be considered a settler colony. A prominent feature of settler colonialism is that colonialism is an ongoing process, in which processes of dominance and systems of inequality are kept in place. Thus, it can be seen as an 'ongoing effect, not a singular event' (Radcliffe 2015, 224). Although Latin America has a somewhat ambiguous place in the literature on settler colonialism, it can be assumed that legacies of colonialism are still at work in the region (Richards 2013). Despite the historical (and contemporary) extractivism that characterizes Latin America, in this thesis I will assume that Latin America can be considered a settler colony, following the line of thought presented by Radcliffe (2015) and Hernandez Castillo (2010).

Indigeneity as a political strategy

The question 'who is indigenous' is not only a theoretical one, but also has practical implications. A substantial number of scholars within the field of indigeneity sees the category of indigenous as a political tool, both for people who identify as indigenous, and for states who are dealing with indigenous themes. Most of the literature that studies the politization of indigenous identity focus on the Latin American region. The adoption of a new constitution in Bolivia in 2009 under president Evo Morales inspired many to analyse the 'indigeneity rhetoric' as a way for marginalized peoples to gain more rights and recognition (Burman 2014). A similar process is explored by Latorre (2013), who investigates an extractive conflict in Ecuador where a local indigenous group claims 'ancestrality' in order to protect their environment. On a broader scale, Escárcega (2010) shows how indigeneity has been incorporated into the UN system. The author considers this recognition of indigenous rights and peoplehood as a mechanism for marginalized and discriminated people to generate international support for their claims (4). Gregg (2019) makes a similar assumption, focussing on the human rights implication of the acceptance of indigenous rights, and states that the connection between human rights and indigenous recognition on the international stage is a political tool that gives legitimacy to indigenous claims.

However, there is another side to this coin. Some scholars have pointed out that the global indigeneity framework (Merlan 2009) has also been used as a way for governments to impose their control on indigenous populations. This calls back to TallBear (2013) and their critical assessment of the use of genomic testing to determine one's 'indigenousness'. Cowlishaw (2003) illustrates this for the case of Australia, where the state is imposing their views on who is an 'authentic' aboriginal on indigenous populations as a way to legitimize or delegitimize their demands for more rights. And

although the case of indigenous recognition in Bolivia seems to be empowering, this country's continued extractivism shows that policy is not always in accordance with practice (Lalander 2017). Perhaps the most comprehensive conceptualization of the way in which states co-opt discourses on indigeneity is neoliberal multiculturalism. In many Latin American countries, the 'return to democracy' in the 1990's (or sometimes earlier) meant the adoption of a neoliberal economic system, which was meant to incorporate the region into the world economy (Hérnandez Castillo 2010). This process was often accompanied by a focus on multiculturalism. This meant that indigenous rights were formally recognized, while indigenous peoples were still being pushed to participate within the framework of global neoliberalism. In practice, this implied the promotion of art, music and other cultural expressions, but no solutions to poverty or other problems that indigenous people might face beyond that. Or, as Richards (2013a) puts it, neoliberal multiculturalism is a way for states to 'promote formal recognition of indigenous rights without accompanying it with the redistribution of socioeconomic resources that could make that recognition meaningful.' (11). As a result of this, the indigenous person that accepts the neoliberal system and works within it, is seen as the *Indio permitido* (authorized Indian), whereas indigenous people who refuses to participate is demonized and rejected as an insurrectionary Indian (*Indio insurrecto*) (Richards 2013a, 102; Burman 2014, 253).

The extensive literature on indigeneity shows how the concept is not only gaining traction in the academia, but also the political sphere. While there is a debate among scholars what indigeneity entails exactly, most agree that indigenous identity is constructed in relation with other people, both in-group and out-group. In addition, conceptualising indigeneity has a political component as well, which both states and indigenous groups can use to further their interests. The following section discusses how collective identity is shaped in the context of social movements, and how activism potentially shapes identities.

1.2: Collective identity and social movements

The study of social movements nowadays is well incorporated in the field of sociology. In the 1970's, when research into social movements was just beginning to gain traction, most literature took a more 'economic' perspective on social movements. It was thought that people would participate in collective action because it benefitted them, or because inaction would cost them more (Rohlinger and Gentile 2017, 11). In early social movement theory, there are two main perspectives on social movements, namely resource mobilization theory and political process theory. Resource mobilization theory (RMT) argues that social movements need material, human and moral resources to survive and thrive. Seeing that an adequate mobilization of these resources would necessitate a strong managerial structure, this theory speculates that social movements eventually evolve into social movement organizations (Rohlinger and Gentile 2017, 12; Diani 1992). Political process theory (PPT), on the other hand, is rooted in political science, and it analyses the more political aspects of collective action. However, instead of focussing on resources, PPT is more concerned with power relations and political opportunities[3] that allow social movement actors to bring about change (Rohlinger and Gentile 2017, 13).

By the 1990's, it had become clear that structural approaches to social movements, like political process and resource mobilization theory, were unable to tell the whole story about social movements and collective action. Scholars criticised the strong emphasis on strategy and a lack of consideration for cultural factors such as framing, emotions, and collective identity formation (Rohlinger and Gentile 2017, 15; Polletta and Jasper 2001). While some researchers systemically

[3] Political opportunity refers to the favourable political circumstances that enable policy change. This is, for example, when the structure of the state and its institutions allows for social movement actors to confront the government. Repression of activism by the state and alliances with elite political actors also play a role in the political opportunities that social movements encounter. Political opportunity is an important analytical tool for sociologists, because it helps to understand the differences between real, or 'objective opportunity', and political opportunity as perceived by social movement actors (Rohlinger and Gentile 2017, 14).

analysed social movements and power structures in the so-called dynamics of contention approach (Rohlinger and Gentile 2017, 15; McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly 2001), for this research the cultural turn in social movement research is more relevant.

Cultural approaches to social movements put a greater emphasis on agency instead of circumstances. For example, an element of activism that gained traction in the cultural turn was the factor of emotion. Emotions can be useful for social movements to promote their cause to the wider public, or to attract participants (Rohlinger and Gentile 2017, 17). Another point of interest that gained attention in the cultural turn is framing. Benford and Snow (2000) review the concept of framing within the context of social movement research. According to the authors, the 1990's saw an increase in literature on collective action frames and framing processes in social movements. The term 'framing' here refers to 'an active, processual phenomenon that implies agency and contention at the level of reality construction.' (Benford and Snow 2000, 614). In other words, social movement actors actively construct meaning in a dynamic process that goes against the status quo, and that can also sometimes change meaning. The outcomes of this action constitute the collective action frame, or 'action-oriented sets of beliefs and meanings that inspire and legitimate the activities and campaigns of a social movement organization.' (Benford and Snow 2000, 614). Considering frames and framing in social movement research is important, because it illuminates how social movement actors can influence public debate. There are three elements to these collective action frames. Injustice frames involve a collective anger at the at perceived injustices that motivate political action. Agency frames are about the awareness that things can be changed through collective action. Lastly, identity frames lead to the formation of a collective identity based on this collective action, often coupled with a shared sense of 'the other', or the people not involved in the same struggle (Gamson 2011, 464). Thirdly, the cultural turn put a greater emphasis on the role of collective identity in social movements, which has a lot of overlap with the collective identity frames as presented by Benford and Snow (2000). According to the authors, collective identity is instrumental in learning how social movements emerge, evolve and continue to exist (631). Personal and collective identities often have a strong connection with movement participation. The next section will discuss this in more detail.

Collective identity

Identity is often considered as something that exists within the individual person, and the way they are perceived by others, a set of personal characteristics that is constructed during childhood, which does not significantly change once it is consolidated (van Meijl 2010, 64; Sökefeld 1999, 417). This 'individual self' is what makes an individual unique (Brewer and Gardner 1996, 83). This notion has become increasingly challenged with globalisation and the development of multicultural societies (Brewer and Gardner 1996, 83). In the same process, the notion of 'culture' has also changed, from being perceived as an essentialist structure of characteristics shared by a group of people, to a more heterogeneous complex of identities that interact with political and cultural processes, and with other groups (van Meijl 2010, 64). These changes in thinking about identity -or identities- and culture, have helped to look at group identities and dynamics in a different light. The view that identity was something exclusively individual and unchanging has been slowly replaced by the idea that it is produced and reproduced in relation with other people and groups, and that it changes over time, or according to group dynamics (van Meijl 2010). As van Meijl (2010) argues, 'identity […] is increasingly regarded as a kind of nexus at which different constructions of self coincide, and sometimes also collide.' (71). In other words, the 'individual self' exists at the same time as the 'social self' (Brewer and Gardner 1996, 83). Brewer and Gardner (1996) distinguish between the interpersonal self, which is are formed in personal relationships, and collective identity, which denotes a more impersonal membership or participation in larger groups (83-84). Snow and Corrigall (2015) formulate this differently, discerning personal identity (the individual self), social identity (the interpersonal self) and collective identity (174-175). According to the authors, collective identity involves a shared sense of 'we-ness' (173) and a general consensus of who does not belong to the group, a shared 'other' (Snow

and Corrigall-Brown 2015; Eisenstadt and Giesen 1995, 74; Simon and Klandermans 2001, 321). Polletta and Jasper (2001) provide a more pointed definition of the concept of collective identity:

> 'An individual's cognitive, moral, and emotional connection with a broader community, category, practice, or institution. It is a perception of a shared status or relation, which may be imagined rather than experienced directly, and it is distinct from personal identities, although it may form part of a personal identity.' (285).

Within social movement studies, collective identity has become an important concept that can help better understand the emergence of social movements. Poletta and jasper (2001) identify four questions about collective action that structural understandings of social movements can not sufficiently explain, but that can be answered when looking at them through the lens of collective identity (284). Firstly, the question *why*, as opposed to *how*, social movements emerge. Collective identity influences people's views on social justice and their readiness to participate in protests and other forms of collective action (Simon and Klandermans 2001, 320). According to Poletta and Jasper (2001), '[b]y examining the formation of collective identities, scholars would shed light on the macrohistorical [*sic*] context within which movements emerge.' (284). Secondly, the concept of collective identity helps to understand why people would choose to participate in a movement, even though they did not directly benefit from it. If someone identifies with the cause of a social movement, this provides an intrinsic motivation that negates the need for a material reward. In the same sense, collective identity also influences the movement's strategic choices, the authors' third point at issue. The concept of collective identity helps explain why social movements or their leaders might choose one form of action above the others. Lastly, Poletta and Jasper argue, collective identity can help explain how social movements are not only *influenced by*, but also *have an influence on* culture and society.

Simon and Klandermans (2001) explain how one's collective identity not always presents itself the same way all the time. How a person experiences and expresses their identity in a group depends on the context, situation and social setting. Jasper and Poletta (2001) agree, stating that collective identity is not fixed, but exists in relation with others, both in-group and out-group. This illustrates that ultimately, collective identity is 'a process rather than a property' (Snow and Corrigall-Brown 2015, 175). This means that people can have multiple, overlapping identities that become visible or dormant according to the group or social context that a person exists in. It also means that different categories of identity can influence a person's identification and sense of belonging in different ways in the same context. For example, an indigenous person participating in an indigenous activity might be influenced by their gender and age. Later, this same person might identify themselves with an age-based group, for example students, but put their identity as an indigenous person on the proverbial back burner.

The complexity and fluidity of identification processes and intersectionality has become more researched in the past two decades. For example, Vasquez (2010) researches the ways in which gender, race and nationality intersect in, and have influence on the lives of third generation Mexicans in the US. The author shows how Mexican Americans have 'plural' identities, and can be included in more than one racial group (46). Gender and colour intersect with this, because women are often exoticized, while men are perceived as dangerous, and dark-skinned individuals are many times singled out as 'more different' than lighter-skinned people. The author notes that there is a strong sense of overlapping identities here, with Mexican Americans identifying as both Hispanic (in the context of the US) and Mexican. Duany (2010) observes a similar phenomenon in the case of Puerto Ricans who live in Florida. Many members of this group self-identify as white, Puerto Rican, and sometimes Hispanic. The author states that for this group 'questions of identity remain extremely elusive, as they may define themselves as a "racial," ethnic, national, or transnational group, as well as part of a larger Latino community, according to various political projects, social and geographic locations, and historical moments.' (92).

This complexity of mixed and overlapping identities does not only run along racial or ethnic lines, but can also involve regional or national identity, as Cooper and Gibbs Knotts (2013) show in their analysis of regional identification in the American South in the US. The authors conclude that regional and national identities can and do often overlap. Interestingly, the study shows that older generations have a stronger identification with the region (in this case Appalachian or Southerner) than younger people (11). Generational differences are an important element in the research of this thesis (see chapter 3), which makes these authors' observations all the more relevant for this thesis. The same is true for the analysis of the identity formation of people based in urban or rural places. Lyons and Utych (2023) similarly research the role of identity in urban and rural areas in the US, and how others perceive people that come from cities or from rural places. The authors observe that community type can play a role in people's formation of a collective identity, but that rural people's identification with rural places is often stronger than urban people's sense of belonging to the city (98). In addition, the identification along age lines observed by Cooper and Gibbs Knotts is further elaborated on by Ross and Rouse (2022) in the case of climate concern and identification with the climate movement among Latino's from the Millennial and Gen-Z generations. The authors illustrate how young people of Latino background are disproportionately affected by climate change (Ballew et al. 2019). Their age means that they will bear the brunt of the environmental problems caused by current inaction against climate change. At the same time, Latinos are more likely to be affected by climate change than non-Latino people (Ross and Rouse 2022, 1106). The fact that young Latinos are doubly afflicted by the dangers of climate change also means that they have stronger concerns towards this topic, as the authors show. Although the context of the research mentioned here differs from the context of this thesis, it is relevant to consider these studies. In the literature on collective identities, age is often seen as a factor for identification with a certain group, as is the case in the research by Cooper and Gibbs Knotts (2013). However, the study by Ross and Rouse (2022) shows that belonging to a particular age group or generation (for example Millennial of Gen-Z) is a cause for collective identity in itself. Furthermore, the identification with a specific geographical area (like the Southern States in the US) can be a collective identity, but, as Lyons and Utych (2023) have shown, simply being from the city or from a rural place is sometimes a collective identity. This relates to the topic of this thesis, because the identification with youth and urbanity is important for the Mapuche interviewed for this research, as shown in chapter 3.

A number of scholars have analysed the role of overlapping identities in social movements. Within this literature, two strands of research become visible. The first considers how social movements emerge and survive when their activism cuts across lines that normally divide society. For example, Basir, Ruebottom, and Auster (2022) research the role of heterogeneous identities among the women's movement in Libya. The authors assert that when it comes to differences in collective identities within social movements, there is a lack of research on 'the tension between unity and heterogeneity in the development of collective identity' (1608). In their research, it becomes evident that the participation of both local women ('insiders') and diasporized women ('outsiders') in the social uprising that ousted the Libyan dictator Gaddafi shifted perspectives on their collective identities (1609). It becomes clear that women living in Libya used their status as insider to gather information and show an activist present, while women abroad utilized the fact that they were outside of the country to promote their cause internationally. Here, the intersection of multiple identities (woman, Libyan, insider/outsider) became a tool for the social movement to organize and bring attention to their cause. However, over time, the divide between insider and outsider women became too pronounced, and the joint social movement fell apart because of internal tensions and outside oppression (Basir, Ruebottom, and Auster 2022). Another example of social movements transcending the boundaries of different collective identities is provided by Gamson (2011). Using the example of the 2011 Arab Spring and the Israeli Summer, the author shows how potential cleavage lines that normally divide a society can be bridged in situations of collective action or social movement emergence. Factors like religion or ethnicity, both of which are very divisive in the Middle East, can sometimes be ignored when people from different backgrounds come together in support of a common cause.

The second strand of literature on complex collective identities in social movements considers how overlapping identities strengthen a person's role in or identification with an activist group. This is explored by Terriquez (2015) in the case of Queer activism among undocumented youth in the US. Here, the focus lies more on the way in which multiple identities play a role in social movement participation. Undocumented and queer youth are doubly affected by systematic injustices, as is the case for young Mexican Americans being doubly affected by climate change (see Lyons and Utych (2023) above). Young queer people are more likely to participate in social movements that their straight counterparts (343). In addition, their status as undocumented 'catalyzed [*sic*] intersectional mobilization, that is, high levels of activism and commitment among movement participants who represent a disadvantaged subgroup within a broader marginalized constituency.' (Terriquez 2015, 345). This is not a case of different collective identities coming together in a social movement, but more how a person's own belonging to different groups can intersect in their participation in social movements. Both of these perspectives are important to consider in the context of this thesis. The first shows how social movement participation can create a shared identity among people from different backgrounds, something that was also visible in Chile's revuelta social. The second perspective can be more appropriately applied to the Mapuche students interviewed for this thesis, because they reported that their identities as students -or young people- and as Mapuche influenced their participation in the revuelta Social. This will be explored more in-depth in chapter 4.

The role of overlapping identities shows that the concept of collective identity is not always simple and straightforward. The examples mentioned here illustrate how different identities can become visible or ignored based on social context. At the same time, their intersection can lead to a stronger social awareness and even to heightened social movement participation. Lastly, these cases show that divided collective identities can be ignored or scaled down when a reason for another collective identification emerges, for example in the context of a shared cause or when a perceived grievance affects different societal groups in a similar way.

1.3 Critical youth studies and urban youth

The section before shows how collective identification among youth can influence their participation in social movements. This is important to consider, because the central stage of this thesis is Chile's revuelta social. In this context youth activism was of vital importance in the emergence and continuity of the social uprising and movement, as will be explored more in-depth in chapter 2. The coming section discusses youth studies and youth in an urban context.

The study of youth took shape in the late nineteenth century, when young people increasingly entered the workforce and became an important driver of economic development. During the twentieth century, the study of youth culture and subcultures started to gain more traction (Talburt and Lesko 2014). Nowadays, the field of youth studies can be divided into two main traditions, 'transitional youth studies' and the study of youth culture (Furlong, Woodman, and Wyn 2011, 365). The first stems from the nineteenth and early twentieth century custom of researching youth in the context of economic possibilities, or the transition from child to economic participant, whereas the latter tradition focuses on the distinct cultural practices of youth, an interest that became more prominent in the 1970's (Furlong, Woodman, and Wyn 2011, 358). The 'transitions' strand of youth studies today is mostly concerned with the economic position of youth, especially since the shift towards a neoliberal economic system in the 1970's (Woodman and Bennett 2015, 3). Scientists became concerned with the rise in youth unemployment in a time when an increasing number of young people finish tertiary education (Woodman and Bennett 2015). This trend makes the transition from child to adult more troubled than before (Woodman and Bennett 2015, 3). In contrast, the 'cultures' strand of youth studies examines youth subcultures and consumption, focussing mostly on lifestyles that challenge societal norms (Woodman and Bennett 2015, 4; Furlong, Woodman, and Wyn 2011, 356). Although there is a clear difference between the two strands, both in topic an in

methodology, there have been calls to consider both perspectives when it comes to studying youth (for a more in-depth analysis, see Furlong, Woodman and Wyn (2011), and Woodman and Bennett (2015)).

A criticism of 'classical' youth studies that has been brought forward by some scholars is that it leaves certain crucial factors out. As this historic cycle of youth studies shows, the field can act as a one-way mirror into the lives of adolescents: young people are observed, but they have no way of observing back, as the only thing they see is themselves reflected back to them. Moreover, there is a lack of interest in decisive factors such as race, class, gender and origin, and how these intersect (Ibrahim 2014, xv). In recent years, the field of Critical Youth Studies (CYS) has emerged to broaden these horizons and embed youth studies in a wider sociological context. As Ibrahim (2014) puts it:

> 'We use *critical* to identify the critical theoretical notion that the study of youth is political; the context of being a youth has everything to do with how agencies of power work, and how this work affects young women and men.' (xvi, emphasis in the original)

In other words, CYS sees young people not as a category, but as members of society who actively participate in it (Quijada Cerecer, Cahill, and Bradley 2013). Within the framework of critical youth studies, there is considerable attention for the role of neoliberalism and the lives of young people in a capitalist society (Woodman and Bennett 2015, 3). Young people are urged to become consumers and to participate in the capitalist labour force, a position that is particularly difficult for youth of disadvantaged backgrounds (Smyth 2014). For example, Petrone, González Ybarra, and Rink (2021) focus on the case of native American youth in the USA. The authors argue that current theories of child and youth development 'often build upon and reify settler colonialism and white supremacy', which seriously obstruct indigenous ways of knowing (584). The authors take a critical approach towards child developmentalism, making clear how colonial perspectives permeate youth studies. The authors take a critical look at the way youth is researched in the context of colonialism and how this impacts young indigenous people by using the terms *anti-colonial*, which is directly challenging colonial ways of thinking, and *indigenizing*, or the centralization of indigenous knowledge in research (586). It is interesting to note that the authors see settler colonialism as fulfilling the same role for native peoples that the earliest youth studies did for young people: assimilation into the dominant system and culture (589). This means that for indigenous youth, colonialism and youth studies -which is heavily influenced by colonialist thinking- form a twofold problem that push them into the direction of the neoliberal system with little regard for indigenous practices, knowledge or culture. In other words, there is what can be called a 'double othering' at work when it comes to indigenous youth in youth studies. Therefore, Petrone, González Ybarra, and Rink (2021) propose a more critical look at youth studies, in which indigenous perspectives and voices are taken into account. An argument similar to this is made by Aufseeser (2015), who researches the case of child labour in Peru, and how international standardized ideas of childhood and adolescent development may not be realistic in his case. The author illuminates how international organizations like the UN or the International Labour Organization dictate the laws countries should adopt regarding youth and work, combating child labour and informality and promoting access to education. While this is of course beneficial for children who are growing up, in the context of developing countries like Peru these policies can negatively impact young people's access to work and income. Furthermore, there are some who criticise these organisations for having 'idealized understandings of childhood and youth', while 'promoting neoliberal economic and social policies that make these childhoods unlikely' (Aufseeser 2015, 184). Both of these studies, although they focus on different types of cases, similarly critique conventional youth studies and -implicitly or explicitly- the role of colonialism and neoliberalism, illustrating how critical youth studies attempts to reshape and rethink the way in which we view young people and their development.

Seeing that a large number of youths live in cities, especially in the global south, there is a growing interest in urban youth and urban youth in the 'developing world.' Studying urban youth can be complicated, because they 'develop "hyphenated selves," which can be viewed as a constructive, adaptive, and thoughtful narrative of self that responds to shifting social and political contexts and oppression in lived experiences.' (Delgado 2015, 21). The literature on urban youth is diverse, and considers many different cases and focus points. Mason (2018), for example, analyses cultures of consumption among Somali youth in urban centres in the UK. In a similar vein, Flynn and Mathias (2020) point to the disadvantages city youth face, such as poverty and crime. The study of 'diasporized' youth is also prevalent in the study of urban youth (Simmons 2014). Domínguez, Overholser, and Sampson (2022) focus on youth's participation in community- based organisations and the way in which this influences young people's agency and involvement in societal engagement.

Within the field of youth studies, urban youth are often researched in the context of marginalized communities and racialized realities. As is the problem with youth studies as a whole, the focus in urban youth research on the challenges young people face often results in the 'othering' of city youth, according to Dimitriadis (2008, 1). The tendency of sociology and anthropology to 'study' urban youth as if they are an exotic 'other' mirrors the way in which native peoples used to be studied, according to the author (6). Fox and Fine (2013) agree with this, stating: 'we believe that there is no other group that has been systematically researched and written about without their consent, wisdom, outrage or their right to re-present.' (321). The authors believe that urban youth research has in many cases committed 'epistemological violence' towards young urban people by inventing and perpetuating social categories and stereotypes, without regard for the input from these youth (321). In another work, Dimitriadis (2011) also scrutinizes this lack of critical questioning of social categories that city youth are often put in (497). Allen-Handy and Thomas-EL (2022) pose a similar argument, stating that the term urban youth is often used to describe people of colour, children of low economic status, or other marginalised urban communities. They show how agency and civic engagement often empower urban youth. These perspectives from what could be considered critical urban youth studies show how important it is to understand urban youth as complex individuals, outside of the boundaries of categorizations and assumptions.

Although there are some commonalities in the experiences of young people in cities globally, there are certain characteristics that pertain specifically to urban youth in the Global South. More recently, there has been an expansion of literature regarding youth in non-western countries and their experiences. For example, Cooper, Swartz, and Mahali (2019) illustrate how economic inequality and histories of colonialism influence the lives of city youth living in the southern hemisphere. Similarly, Saraví (2022), analysing the specific case of youth in Latin America, adds to this by highlighting how socio-economic stratification causes a social fragmentation and a loss of social cohesion that affect the everyday lives of young people in the region (204). Donald and Krahn (2014) argue that the 19th-century idea of prepping youngsters for the labour force is still a priority in today's youth policy. The authors explain that this particularly affects young people from indigenous background, as indigeneity often does not conform to the rules of a neoliberal society (117). This has also become increasingly the case for non-indigenous youth, as Giroux (2015) argues. Like others have said, youth under neoliberalism is either seen as a category for consumption, or a category for causing problems. Giroux contends that modernity, with its promises of progress and emancipation has become an empty, commodified concept under neoliberalism, and that young people have become disillusioned with this empty promise (223). While some, especially youth from marginalized groups, may suffer under this more than others, this disillusionment with neoliberalism is something that unites most young people.

As mentioned before, youth studies outside of CYS have a tendency to see youth through the lens of dominant, western ideologies. A look at the literature on urban youth shows that critical (urban) youth studies often take a different perspective, advocating for the voices of young people to be heard. In addition, there is a strong criticism of the current neoliberal system and its effect on children and adolescents. The context of the city makes this even more complex, as urban areas often function as economic or neoliberal centres, and as places where social divisions between groups are

even more strongly pronounced. The overlap between critical youth studies and the study of urban youth is especially relevant when it comes to urban youth in the global south, as it provides us with tools to analyse youth in relation to concepts such as colonialism, racial inequality and global power relations.

In this chapter, I brought together insights from three debates: indigeneity, collective identity and urban youth. The central question of this thesis can be found at the intersection of these three concepts. Although indigeneity is hard to define in concise terms, the ongoing colonization of native peoples and their relational identity (Merlan 2009) is something that most scholars agree is part of being indigenous. At the same time, indigeneity can be used as a political tool, both for people who identify as indigenous, and by the state. This intersects with the study of collective identity, specifically within social movements, as explored in the second part of this chapter. Collective identity is something that plays a very important role in the emergence and proliferation of social movements. A shared sense of 'we' can motivate people to join a collective action, and having a mutual 'other' often adds to their perceived grievances or injustices. Collective indigenous identity is one of these motivators for people to join a social movement, and activism can inform the formation of indigenous identity. In the context of the revuelta social, this can be seen in young urban Mapuche, as will be shown in chapters three and four. Youth studies, and specifically the study of urban youth intersects with this research too. The emergence of critical youth studies led to a greater focus on listening to youth, instead of writing about them. This strand of research also criticises the neoliberal system and the way in which it pushes youth to become active consumers. As will be seen in chapter 4, this criticism of neoliberalism was a very important factor in the 2019 protests in Chile. The concepts that are explored in the current chapter will help contextualise how collective identity is constructed among young Mapuche students in Santiago and Temuco in the context of the revuelta social.

Colonialism, resistance, and social mobilizations

Chapter 2: contextualisation

The aim of this chapter is to provide a contextualisation for the research conducted for this thesis. To that end, this chapter will present an overview of the Mapuche people in what is now Chilean territory. The chapter will start with an historical discussion of the country's colonial foundations (1500-1818), the continuation of colonial policies under the Chilean Republic (1818- 1960's) and how colonialism has affected the Mapuche. This part will finish with the agrarian reforms in the 1960's and the military dictatorship (1973-1990), and will show how the Mapuche participated in or resisted these political processes.
In the second part of the chapter, I will go into detail about the democratic transition in the 1990's and the role of social movements during the period of 1990 until today. Here, I will focus in particular on the Mapuche political movement and the cycles of student protests that started in the 2000's. The last part of the chapter will focus on the 2019 revuelta social and the role of urban youth in this particular protest cycle.

2.1 Colonialism, resistance and the state

Before the arrival of the Spanish in the Americas in 1492, and their steady conquest of the continent, the territory that now spans Chile and partially Argentina, was inhabited by a collective of indigenous peoples who lived in small groups, practiced agriculture and mostly shared a common language (Collier and Sater 2023, 4). The Mapuche[4] people practiced agriculture and were organised in small groups the size of a village (Collier and Sater 2023, 4; Winn et al. 2013, 61; Melin Pehuen, Mansilla Quiñones, and Royo Letelier 2019, 81). Due to its relative isolation from the other Spanish colonies, it took a while for European colonizers to settle in Chile. Pedro de Valdivia is known for being the main conquistador of the territory that is now Chile. His steady invasion encountered resistance from the Mapuche people, who in the colonial documents are called 'Araucanians' (*Araucanos*). Battle ensued, and many indigenous inhabitants were executed and tortured (Reyes Sánchez and Pérez 2023). In 1553, Pedro de Valdivia was captured and killed by Mapuche forces (Collier and Sater 2023, 5). After a number of armed conflicts with the Spaniards, the conquest came to a halt at the Bío Bío river, which became the frontier between the Spanish empire above, and the free territory of the Mapuche below. This boundary remained long after Chile had gained its independence, a rather uncommon phenomenon in the all-conquering Empire (Collier and Sater 2023, 4-5).

In contrast to most Spanish Latin American colonies, Chile was mostly used for agriculture, as the country had little to offer in term of precious materials at the time (breve historia49). Its small deposits of gold were quickly depleted, so the colonizers turned to agriculture as their main source of income. With the impression that the land was just there for the taking, the Crown and Spanish governors granted large pieces of land to their loyal supporters (Collier and Sater 2023, 8). The establishment of the large land-owning elite also meant the creation of a racial hierarchy, where those of mixed Spanish and indigenous descent were considered the lower class (Collier and Sater 2023, 9). The arrival of the colonizers and subsequent conquest strongly impacted the Mapuche way of life. The 'Araucanians' that lived below the Bío Bío River remained free from colonial rule, and exchanged goods and services with the Spanish that took possession of the territory above the Bío Bío (Winn et al. 2013, 62). The indigenous peoples that lived above the river were forced to work for the Spanish in what is called the '*encomienda* system', a form of indentured servitude to the rancher (Collier and Sater 2023, 8; Winn et al. 2013, 63). The economic system of the colony did not generate a lot of wealth for the Crown (Sepúlveda 2018, 49). Most of its products were produced for the internal market, not for exportation. Nevertheless, the great *haciendas* of the landowners and their

[4] Mapuche means 'people of the land'

cowboys known as '*huasos*' are still considered integral parts of Chilean culture today (Winn et al. 2013, 64; Barr Melej 1998, 60).

The spread of Enlightenment ideas and its influence on independence movements around the world led to many colonies separating from their colonizers, including Chile in 1818 (Collier and Sater 2023, 40). The young Chilean republic maintained most of its colonial foundations, both politically and economically. The country benefitted mostly form its natural resources. Silver, copper, and later nitrate exports brought in moderate wealth, although they also made the country vulnerable to external financial shocks (Collier and Sater 2023; Siavelis 2017). There were some political upheavals and a few civil wars between the different parliamentary factions (most notably the civil war in 1891), but Chile is known for its generally strong support of democratic institutions and civilian rule (Siavelis 2017, 141-142). Its relative stability over the course of history fuelled the belief in Chile's 'exceptionalism' and special status among the often-tumultuous nations of Latin America (Fischer 2014).
After Chile became independent, the autonomy of the Mapuche below the Bío Bío became increasingly threatened by the growing influx of foreigners who wanted the land for agriculture. In addition, the Mapuche were seen as a 'savage' race that impeded the development of Chile as a modern state (Nahuelpan Moreno and Antimil Caniupan 2019, 218). In a twenty-year process officially labelled the 'Pacification of the Araucanía,' the Chilean government began to slowly move down the frontier (Richards 2013a, 39). Despite Mapuche resistance, in 1883, the conquest was completed and the Araucanía was made a province of the Chilean state (Nahuelpan Moreno and Antimil Caniupan 2019, 219). This opened the way for settlers to sometimes buy, but mostly misappropriate Mapuche lands. The Mapuche themselves were relocated to a number of *reducciones*, some 475.000 hectares that were officially considered Mapuche land (Collier and Sater 2023, 103). Pairican and Urrutia (2021) call this 'internal colonialism', where a state maintains its colonizing practices even after it has gained independence from its own colonizer (2). The loss of livestock and land caused many Mapuche to fall into poverty, a history that affects later generations of Mapuche until today. Along with the loss of their territories, the Mapuche experienced a decline in social and cultural traditions. In attempts to assimilate them into the state, indigenous people were forcibly 'converted' to Catholicism, expected to speak Spanish instead of their native *Mapudungun* and forced to attend Spanish schools (Moya-Santiagos and Quiroga-Curín 2022, 3).

During the first half of the 20th century, Chile experienced a change in its sociopolitical landscape. Disagreements on the influence of the Church and the solution to the 'social question' led to the creation of a number of new political parties and the growth of socialist and communist groups within Chilean society (Siavelis 2017). The political hegemony of large business and property owners came to a (temporary) end in 1964, with the election of the centrist Eduardo Frei (1964-1970) of the centrist Christian Democratic Party (Siavelis 2017, 146-147). He focussed on social policies, promoting the economic development of the urban poor. More importantly, he promoted the unionization of rural workers and the expropriation of the large agricultural estates that had dominated Chile's political and economic system for such a long time. Eager for change, campesinos started seizing these lands in so-called *tomas,* which was strongly opposed by the landowners, sometimes with fatal consequences (Collier and Sater 2023, 334). In addition, Frei implemented a cautious 'chilenisation'[5] of the copper mines, the country's most lucrative source of income, that were owned by foreign companies.
In 1970, Frei was succeeded by the world's first openly Marxist president that was democratically elected. (Siavelis 2017, 141). This Salvador Allende, and his Unidad Popular (UP) party would govern the country for three years. In many ways, he continued and expanded Frei's socialist politics, much to the dismay of the right (and the USA) (Siavelis 2017, 149). He was very popular among students, the urban poor and rural campesinos, but was regarded with suspicion by the political elite and the

[5] Also called 'agreed nationalisation', see Collier and Sater 336.

US. Allende implemented many social policies, accelerated the agrarian reform and expanded the nationalisation of natural resources, mostly copper. Although the government did not necessarily make policy aimed towards the indigenous peoples of Chile, the UP's focus on de development of the countryside and support for the campesinos positively impacted the Mapuche as well (Carter 2010, 6; Moya-Santiagos and Quiroga-Curín 2022, 3). Many Mapuche supported Allende during his election campaign and government, often joining the UP or other leftist organizations. Frei's agrarian policy had benefitted them, and Allende's accelerated reforms improved their condition even more (Richards 2013b, 35). Allende and the UP mentioned the Mapuche in their discourse, but often lumped them together with the *campesinos*, poor rural workers. Minister of Agriculture Jaques Chonchol stated:

> 'We do not believe that there is a basic conflict between the Indigenous and the non-Indigenous. … This is not a racial problem; it is a problem of poor, oppressed and exploited campesinos, many of whom have been robbed of their lands for generations using legal and illegal means.' (Pairican and Urrutia 2021, 7)

According to Pairican and Urrutia (2021), the Mapuche in the leftist movements often shared this sentiment, recognizing that they shared a class struggle with the non-indigenous rural poor. In reaction to the seizures of land, owners of the large estates organized themselves, protesting against the agrarian reforms and the government in general, further adding to the already tense political situation (Carter 2010). It is important to consider that, while a part of the Mapuche community rallied behind the government or leftist parties, there was in no way a consensus among the Mapuche about which political direction to follow. As Caniuqueo (2020) asserts, there is a strong tendency among scholars to situate the Mapuche among the political left during the Frei and Allende years. Instead, according to Caniuqueo, the Mapuche saw in the leftist movement as a 'circumstantial ally' that would help them get the lands back that were stolen from them by the Chilean state (564).

Despite his popularity, Allende's government was met with increasing difficulties. The nationalisation of copper did not yield the expected boom in revenue. On the contrary; the UP's overall economic strategy failed to generate economic growth and led to high inflation and cost of living (Collier and Sater 2023, 369). Unhelpfully, the US implemented a credit squeeze, impeding Chile's ability to take out loans from American banks (Collier and Sater 2023, 359). Like in the other Southern Cone countries, the CIA is suspected to have meddled in Chile's internal affairs during this time in order to further the USA's agenda (Siavelis 2017, 152). Domestically, the president encountered strong opposition from the traditional political elites, which mostly consisted of large landowners and industrialists. At the same time, the more radical left wing insisted that the 'revolutionary process' was not developing fast enough, creating a tense division between the political parties (Collier and Sater 2023, 371). From 1970 onward, many Mapuche organizations and communities in the Cautín province participated in a series of *tomas*, where they forcibly took over the *fundos,* the big haciendas that exist on Mapuche lands, in a process that later would be called the *Cautinazo* (Richards 2013a, 58; Pairican and Urrutia 2021). They sometimes joined forces with leftist guerrilla movements that fought for campesino rights, agricultural reforms and land restitution to the Mapuche (Casagrande 2022, 152; Bengoa 2012, 96) In their view, seizing the large estates was a way to get back the territories that they lost under Spanish rule and during the 'pacification of the Araucanía'.

The military dictatorship

By 1793, the pressure on the government had become extreme. The economic malaise and ideological differences generated a lot of tension. This came to a height on the 11th of September 1973, when the armed forces forcefully overthrew the government and installed a military junta, led by general Augusto Pinochet (Collier and Sater 2023, 383). Pinochet 'engaged in one of the most

monetarist and liberal free-market experiments in the world.' (Siavelis 2017, 153). In the process, he dismantled many of his predecessor's policies, including the nationalization of natural resources and the agrarian reforms. At first, the economic policy of the regime proved disastrous, with a strong decline of state revenue and a rise of poverty. However, from the mid-1970's onward, a group of young economists, nicknamed the Chicago boys[6], devised plans to stabilize the economy. Between 1977 and 1981, the economy grew considerably and poverty declined (Siavelis 2017, 153; Clark 2017, 1360). Yet, a large share of the Chilean population did not benefit from these changes, as the economic system remained highly unequal, with most of the wealth controlled by the richer segments of society (Silva 1991, 349). The military coup and the dictatorship that followed put a drastic end to the tentative changes that benefitted the Mapuche under Allende (Richards 2013a, 59). Mapuche ancestral lands had to make way for economic development. Decree Law 2568, adopted in 1979, allowed for the privatisation of Mapuche territories in favour of the development of a free market agrarian system. Most of the land that was given to Mapuche communities through the agrarian reform before, was now re-dispossessed and returned to the rich landowners, or sold to the highest bidder, which were mostly timber companies cutting down the endemic forest to plant nonnative species. The remaining land, instead of handing it over to the community, was given to Mapuche families, which were given a certificate of 'private property' (Bengoa 2012, 96; Richards 2013a, 60).

In contrast to this economic liberalism, Chile was not very free in terms of politics. In the first few years of the dictatorship, Pinochet persecuted many members of the communist and socialist parties, including the Mapuche that were involved with the leftist movement (Bengoa 2012, 96). During this time, those who were arrested were often tortured and killed (Siavelis 2017, 152). Many were detained in clandestine prisons and labour camps, living under extreme conditions. Pinochet's regime also used the tactic of forced disappearance, where the body of a murdered prisoner is 'made' to disappear, often by throwing them in the sea or burying them in hidden mass graves. Up until today, over 1000 political prisoners from that time remain missing (Collins 2018, 23). According to a report published after the end of the dictatorship, almost 2300 people lost their lives between 1973 and 1990 due to political violence (Comisión Nacional de Verdad y Reconciliación 1991, 1122). In addition, many political opponents fled the country, seeking refuge in other Latin American countries, or in the US and western Europe (Siavelis 2017, 152). These political exiles often remained involved in their home country's political affairs, setting up activist networks and lobbying with governments to speak out against the injustices that were happening in Chile (Perry 2016; Collins 2022, 64). Culturally, Pinochet promoted the 'chilenisation' of the population, arguing in favour of a racial and ethnic uniformity, as opposed to his predecessor's views on ethnic heterogeneity (Crago 2017, 69; Pairican and Urrutia 2021, 11). He again put into use the old colonial term 'Araucanos' to describe the Mapuche, stating that they were the first 'real' Chileans. At the same time, the dictator was quick to claim that the Mapuche had ceased to exist, because 'we are all Chileans now.' (Pairican and Urrutia 2021, 11). During this time, there was a growth in Mapuche organizations that promoted cultural practices and at the same time attempted to form a defence against the expropriation of Mapuche lands.

To legitimise his rule, Pinochet proposed a new constitution that would extend his presidential powers and military influence, while limiting the authority of Congress (Collier and Sater 2023, 388). Importantly, this 1980 constitution heavily protected private property and cemented neoliberalism as the 'official' economic system. In short; 'The Constitution of 1980 thus embodied the ideals of a-politicism, technocratic efficiency, anti-communism and laissez-faire economics that the military regime of Pinochet had already been implementing.' (Couso 2012, 411). The neoliberal policies that Pinochet adapted to stimulate economic growth also sowed the seed for the Mapuche struggle for land and recognition that currently plays out in the south. As Richards (2013) argues: 'The redispossession [*sic*] of Mapuche communities under Pinochet's rule is the immediate antecedent of present-day conflicts among the communities, local farmers, timber companies, and the state.' (61)

[6] because they had all studied economy at the University of Chicago

Indeed, as Carter (2010) argues, 'One crucial outcome of the dictatorship period (1973–1990) for the Mapuche movement was the strengthened awareness of a Mapuche identity separate from a Chilean identity.' (67).

2.2 Mapuche social movements since the democratic transition

Pinochet's military rule came to an ironic democratic end in 1989. As written in the 1980 constitution, the President would rule for eight years, after which a public referendum would be held to determine whether Chileans wanted to continue with Pinochet, or if they wanted to elect another president (Collier and Sater 2023, 389). The majority voted against military rule, ending a 17-year dictatorship and starting the democratic transition. The first democratic government after the dictatorship, led by Patricio Aylwin, was mostly concerned with carrying out this transition peacefully. Aylwin appointed a committee that was responsible for investigating the crimes of the military junta. The resulting report gave a comprehensive overview of the human rights abuses during the dictatorship. Unfortunately, the Amnesty Laws of 1978 prohibited the prosecution of those who had committed human rights abuses between the coup and March 1978 (Collins 2022, 68). This impunity was extra painful for the families that had lost loved ones at the hand of the dictatorship. Although the democratic transition appeared to be successful, the political equilibrium was very precarious in the 1990's, with the military and Pinochet still holding high positions in government (Collier and Sater 2023, 417). At the same time, from 2000 onward, Chile saw a growing number of protests and mobilizations. For this thesis, the most important movements are the conflicts between Mapuche groups and the state, and the student protests, both of which will be explored below.

Araucanía: Mapuche resistance against the state

According to Bengoa (2012), during the first half of the twentieth century, the Mapuche participated in politics, calling for a 'respectful integration' into society (Bengoa 2012, 95). However, their alliance with the political right did not yield the desired results, as the Mapuche did not get their lands back and did not see a meaningful alleviation of poverty in their communities. For this reason, many Mapuche switched sides and participated in the overtaking of large estates during the time of the Unidad Popular (bengoa96). However, despite this involvement in the political system, Mapuche political affiliation is not easily constricted to the left or right binary, as for the larger part of Chilean history they have worked within these frameworks to achieve their own objectives (Crago 2017, 61).

The 1980's signified a departure from Mapuche involvement in mainstream politics in favour of a discussion more focussed on ethno-centrism and territorial and cultural autonomy (Carter 2010, 59). One of the first organisations was *Admapu*, created in 1980. This organisation was mostly comprised of Mapuche leaders that had been part of the political left before the dictatorship (Martínez Neira and Rodríguez 2015, 600). According to Martinez and Rodriquez (2015), the case of *Admapu* shows a tension between ethnic demands, such as the restitution of lands, and partisan demands, such as a focus on class struggle. Rifts in the organisation along ideological lines led to the formation of multiple Mapuche alliances by the end of the 1980's. Nowadays, there is a number of Mapuche organizations that all to a

Image 1: graffiti that says 'forestry industry, go away.' (Temuco)

lesser or greater extent fight for recognition and autonomy, such as *Akiñ Wallmapu Ngulam*, the Mapuche Nationalist Party Wallmapuwen, and the *Coordinadora de Comunidades en Conflicto Arauco-Malleco* (CAM) (*image 2*) (Kowalczyk 2013).

Image 2: graffiti in Temuco that says: 'CAM, go away'.

After the transition to democracy, a number of these Mapuche organizations signed the Treaty of Nueva Imperial. In this accord with the centre-left *Concertación* coalition, they promised to endorse this fraction's presidential candidate, while the Concertación affirmed that they would put indigenous issues on the agenda. This led, among other things, to the establishment of the CONADI[7], the National Corporation for Indigenous Development (Kowalczyk 2013, 127). This organisation is tasked meant to promote indigenous interests throughout the country and assist communities in expressing their ideas on how their communities should function. They are also responsible for the Land and Water Fund, tasked with buying up lands and handing them over to indigenous groups (Rodríguez and Carruthers 2008, 5). However, many authors criticise the CONADI's effectiveness, arguing that the government uses it for servicing the interests of the dominant neoliberal system instead of promoting Mapuche rights. For example, the organization's first director was dismissed by the government for opposing the construction of hydroelectric dams that would have inundated for a large part Mapuche lands (Carter 2010, 71). Cases like these led to many Mapuche organizations renouncing their ties with the leftist parties in favour of a greater autonomy, with some leaders deciding that direct action was to be favoured over attempts to reach their goals though political participation (Kowalczyk 2013, 127, 130; Carter 2010, 71).

According to the latest census, 12,8% of the Chilean population considers itself indigenous, of which 80%, or 1,7 million people, identifies as Mapuche (Instituto Nacional de Estadísticas - Chile 2018). Many of them live the southern Araucanía region, and around 35% of the Mapuche live in Santiago (Brablec 2018, 2). Their language is *Mapudungun*, the 'language of the land', which has around 144.00 active speakers in Chile. It is not recognized as an official language in Chile nor Argentina and historically here has been little state effort to promote the language. Almost all Mapuche who speak Mapudungun are bilingual Spanish speakers, and a large part of the Mapuche population does not speak the language at all (Sadowsky et al. 2013). The younger generations, and the Mapuche who live in the cities are observed to have a lower rate of Mapudungun speakers (Smeets 2008, 12; Course 2018, 10). Course (2018) remarks that the language is highly symbolic and ritualistic in nature, and that it is seen as having a power that goes beyond that which is said (12).

In addition to language, rituals and cosmovision play an important role in Mapuche culture. According to the Mapuche worldview, the People and the Land are intrinsically intertwined, making the natural world something that not only carries economic significance, but also a large part of Mapuche identification. Thus, the loss of territory and lands, as happened during colonial times and again during the dictatorship, causes both material and spiritual impoverishment (Ranjan, Castillo, and Morales 2021, 2). The importance of nature can be seen in corresponding rituals. The most important ritual in Mapuche cosmovision is the *Nguillatun*, an event that is sometimes described as a fertility ritual (Course 2012, 1), but that can also be translated as 'to buy and/or request something, in exchange for a commitment.' (Ñanculef Huaiquinao 2016, 94).

[7] *Corporación Nacional para el Desarrollo Indigena*

Mapuche cosmovision can intersect with politics, and historical events have impacted spiritual beliefs. For example, Bacigalupo (2018) analyses the case of the 'undead,' victims of both the forced colonization in the nineteenth century and of the Pinochet regime who have not received proper burial rites, which prevents their spirit from finding peace. Instead, the Mapuche who live in the area encounter these spirits haunting rivers and bridges, wreaking havoc on those who transgress against social norms and customs, and especially those who pollute the river they inhabit (242, 245). Memory, which has been such an important topic in Chilean politics since the democratic transition, is inherently exclusionary of the Mapuche victims of state violence, because of discrimination by the state and 'because Mapuche do not see themselves in such narrative frameworks.' (Bacigalupo 2018, 233). Instead, the Mapuche use a spiritual and ritual context to frame these histories of colonialism, dispossession and disappearance.

Mapuche cosmovision and way of thinking are in stark contrast with the neoliberal notions of progress and modernity that is prevalent in Chilean society. Indigenous worldview is considered inferior to the way of thinking of the *winka*, or no-Mapuche (Nahuelpan Moreno and Antimil Caniupan 2019, 230). Still, there is a lack of education on indigenous knowledge and interculturality in universities, according to Sepulveda (2019, 147). The discrimination and adverse reactions to cultural expressions that they encountered, and the subsequent attempt at assimilation that many Mapuche started meant that certain forms of culture and traditions were 'lost' or 'muted' to fit into the new neoliberal 'civilised' society, especially in cities like Santiago (Nahuelpan Moreno and Antimil Caniupan 2019, 229; Sepúlveda Sánchez 2019, 146). In this sense, even in current society, the Mapuche are still being colonized (Weaver 2000).

Perhaps the most obvious intersection between politics and cosmovision is seen in the land conflict. As mentioned above, land carries more than just an economic significance to the Mapuche, because it interconnects both with *being* Mapuche and with the responsibility of taking care of the earth in return for peace and prosperity (Ranjan, Castillo, and Morales 2021; Ñanculef Huaiquinao 2016, 94). Land redistribution is an important topic in the Mapuche fight for recognition, along with other issues such as the racism and discrimination that many Mapuche experience, as well as precarious living conditions.

The continuation of Pinochet's neoliberal system under the democratic governments has fuelled the struggle for land and autonomy for the Mapuche in the south. The forestry industry and hydroelectric dams are the biggest targets of criticism. A series of laws implemented by Pinochet made it appealing for timber companies to settle in what is mostly Mapuche territory (Quiroz-Aminao and Malhue Torres 2020, 528). To increase exports, the governments since the democratic transition have been promoting the timber industry, often subsidizing these companies (Richards 2013a, 72). The plantations with mainly nonnative eucalyptus and pine trees utilize large plots of land and excessive amounts of water, turning the region into a 'green desert,' which damages the lands that the Mapuche communities use (*image 1*) (Carter 2010, 72; Hale and Millaman Reinao 2018, 310). The effects of the extractivist industry in the South of Chile on the Mapuche and small-scale farmers (two identities that often overlap) should not be underestimated. The environmental degradation, along with the loss of culturally significant territory severely threatens the livelihoods of the Mapuche people (Hale and Millaman Reinao 2018, 306).

Since the 1990's, conflicts between Mapuche communities and large landowners such as timber companies have increased rapidly. In 1997, a group of activists in Lumaco set a number of trucks on fire that belonged to a forestry company, to protest the harvest of a plantation that was raised on Mapuche lands (Rodríguez and Carruthers 2008, 10). Since then, the conflict has grown into a struggle for self-determination between the Mapuche and the state. The *tomas* of lands, a strategy that was employed by campesinos during de Frei and Allende governments, were now used by Mapuche activists to take back the lands that they perceived as historically theirs. In addition, setting fire to farm equipment and machinery was also used as a way to express discontent with the possession of Mapuche lands by large landholders. There have also been instances where Mapuche activists burned down churches (Collier and Sater 2023, 479-480). According to the MACEDA database, designed to keep track of the conflict, there have been over 2600 occurrences between

1990 and 2016 (Cayul et al. 2022). The State often responds with heavy crackdowns on the protesters, which sometimes leads to fatalities. Often, the anti-terrorism legislation adapted in 1979 under Pinochet (eichler360) is employed, imprisoning activists and convicting them as terrorists (Eichler and Barnier-Khawam 2021, 362). In addition, the Araucanía region, where most of the Mapuche conflict takes place, saw a heightened presence of police and special forces, with the government creating special units to combat the protests, among which the '*Commando Jungla*', a name inspired by Colombia's counter-narcotics units, promoting the allegations of the Mapuche territorial struggle as a terrorist movement (Eichler and Barnier-Khawam 2021, 361).

In the eyes of the Mapuche activists, the struggle for land rights is framed as a way to fight against the injustices perpetrated against the Mapuche by both the colonial and later the Chilean governments. This can be seen in the way Mapuche activists who were killed in protests are venerated as martyrs, and how those who are imprisoned for their activism are declared Mapuche political prisoners (Collier and Sater 2023, 478; Rekedal 2019, 79). Many Mapuche feel that the Chilean government continues the historical trend of siding with private companies instead of indigenous communities (Rodríguez and Carruthers 2008, 7). The historical and current injustices against the Mapuche lead to the creation of an 'other' in the form of the state, military and police. The construction of a collective identity through ethnic and cultural similarities is strengthened by the perception of the police and state as a common enemy. It is possible that this conflict provoked the image of the Mapuche as being anti-police and anti-government, which might have contributed to the popularity of Mapuche cultural expressions during the 2019 protests in Santiago and other cities. This will be explored more in-depth in chapter 4.

2.3 Urban youth, protests, and the revuelta social

In addition to the Mapuche, a second important demographic in post-dictatorship protests are students. Two protest cycles, in 2006 and 2011, spurred a series of changes in the educational system. Although there had been student protests before this, these two became emblematic of social movement dynamics in Chile after the transition to democracy and are more relevant for this thesis. The 2006 protests were dubbed the *Pingüino* Movement, after the school uniforms of the high school students, which resembled penguins (Donoso 2013, 2). The protesters, some 700.000 high school students, teachers, parents and supporters, demanded educational reform (Siavelis 2017, 162). Specifically, they wanted the government to take measures to level the playing field in education by providing free public transportation and making it less expensive to take university entrance exams (Collier and Sater 2023, 451).

After first ignoring the protests, president Bachelet eventually did implement some changes to the educational system according to the students' demands. The results, however, did not satisfy the students, and in 2011, a new wave of mass protests emerged, this time among university students. The 2011 protests can be seen as a continuation of the *Pingüino* protests. Indeed, many of the protesters had also participated in the 2006 protests and were disappointed with the lack of positive outcomes for the educational system (Cummings 2015, 70; Donoso 2023, 392). The students again demanded free, quality education for all Chileans, along with some other demands such as student debt relief and higher government spending on public universities (Collier and Sater 2023, 458). Moreover, the students recognized that real, lasting change in the educational system would require the complete overturning of the 1980 Pinochet constitution (Donoso 2023, 398). The students, who often presented themselves as *la generación sin miedo* (the generation without fear), showed a political involvement that broke the apathy caused by the dictatorship (Cummings 2015, 66). The fact that they were the children born after the dictatorship created a shared sense of identity for the protesters, which helped them mobilize and present their grievances. According to Cummings (2015), the creation of this collective identity led to the students' conviction that their protest would not have a destabilizing effect on Chilean democracy. Most importantly, it created a unity among the students: 'For the students, being born into democracy was used as a justification for not being

fearful and for fighting for democratic values; it was a reason to feel empowered and take action.' (Cummings 2015, 67). The creation of a collective identity helped to shed a light on the injustices of the educational system (see Donoso 2013, 17). By framing their struggle in the context of a wider political debate, the students gained a lot of attention for the way in which the current government policy perpetuates inequality.

The revuelta social

The importance of student activism also became evident during the mass mobilizations in 2019, often named the revuelta social. According to Palacios-Valladares (2020), the protests were a turning point in Chilean politics (218). Although there had been earlier smaller protests since the democratic transition, most notably the 2006 and 2011 student protests, the year 2019 saw a full-scale explosion of demonstrations, primarily caused by a small increase in metro fares. Although at first, students protested the price hike, the movement quickly became a larger protest, in which most strata of society participated. The initial demands of the movement were healthcare reforms and a reform of the educational system (Dides 2021). The neoliberal constitution that was implemented during the Pinochet dictatorship on the one hand fostered economic growth and made Chile one of the most successful countries in the region, but at the same time, this system upheld economic inequality, creating a very stratified society (Borzutzky and Perry 2021, 213; Siavelis 2017, 165). Students acquired a lot of debt for taking out student loans, and mismanagement of pension funds meant that elderly people often did not receive a liveable pension, among other things (Collier and Sater 2023, 492). When the government increased the price of a metro fare with 30 pesos in late 2019, students started a mass evasion of fares in protest by jumping the turnstiles (McGowan 2019). The manifestation quickly escalated, with protesters destroying metro stations and blocking traffic. President Piñera declared the state of emergency, deploying anti-riot police to quell the protests (BBC.com 2019). Police repression led to public backlash, with the more and more people from other demographics joining the protests (Palacios-Valladares 2020). Apart from the evasions, protesters organized marches and strikes. The biggest manifestation was a march through Santiago on October 25, an event in which an estimates 1 million people participated (Borzutzky and Perry 2021, 224). Another important element of the revuelta social was the spontaneous organization of citizens in *asambleas territoriales* (neighbourhood meetings) which were meant to have conversations about the protests and the demands of the mobilization (Palacios-Valladares 2020, 222). Dides (2021) identifies a number of demands that the protesters advocated for, most of which call for an increased governance assistance in improving citizen's quality of life (162). Over time, it became clear that the most important demand was a new constitution to replace the constitution that was established by Pinochet (Collier and Sater 2023, 493). As Dides (2021) argues:

> "Despite the variety of the expressed demands, all of them were converging around a common denominator, that the people were discovering as they found each other in the streets: all these problems have their origin in the "straitjacket" of the 1980 Political Constitution and, in particular, the neoliberal model that it protects and that has caused many of the evils that the county's people suffer from" (153).

The government honoured the protestor's demands and started a two-year process to write a new constitution. Indigenous rights came to the forefront of the discussion, with 17 of the 155 seats of the Constitutional Convention being reserved for indigenous peoples, and the chairperson of the Convention being a Mapuche woman (*image 3*) (Bauer 2022). However, in September 2022 a majority of Chileans rejected the new proposed magna carta (*image 4*) (Barlett 2022). A second constitutional assembly was created to draft a new constitution in 2023, this time with a more conservative and right-wing political backing. However, their proposed new constitution was also rejected in in a plebiscite (Barlett 2023). While the demands for change from the 2019 protests can be seen as important for the future course of Chilean politics, it remains to be seen if, and when there

will be a new constitutional process advocating for indigenous rights (Buschschlüter 2023; Barlett 2023).

This chapter provided an overview of Mapuche history in the territory that is now Chile, starting at the Spanish conquest. It becomes clear that the Mapuche have a history of resistance and forced assimilation. After the annexation of the Araucanía, the Mapuche became second-class citizens in their own territory, and the issue of land ownership became central to their resistance against the state. In the years before the dictatorship, many Mapuche were active in leftist guerrilla movements in an attempt to take back their lands. The Pinochet dictatorship quickly ended the progress made on this front, a problem that still affects current-day Mapuche who want their ancestral territories back. This led to an increase in protests and collective action against the state and large landowners, beginning in the 1990's. While there is no official political party with an indigenous agenda, this chapter has shown that over the past century, some Mapuche have formed alliances with parties they believed would further their interests.

The last part of this chapter discussed the emergence of mass mobilizations after the transition to democracy, especially among students. It became clear that student mobilizations have had a large impact on Chilean politics and society. An even more visible and impactful event was the revuelta social of 2019, one of the larges mobilizations against the state that the country has seen in decades. However, the aftermath of the protests and the subsequent constitutional process shows that the revuelta's true impact remains to be seen. In the coming two chapters, I will analyse how young Mapuche in Santiago and Temuco construct their identity as indigenous and urban (chapter 3), and what role identity played in their participation in the revuelta social (chapter 4).

Image 3: a banner with an explanation on how the proposed new constitution of 2022 would benefit indigenous peoples.

Image 4: a banner that says: 'what did you reject?' in reference to the rejected proposal for a new constitution (seen in Valparaíso)

Urban Mapuche youth: a new generation redefining indigeneity

Chapter 3: analysis

In this chapter, I will talk about identity and identification processes for urban Mapuche youth. Interviews with Mapuche students in Santiago and Temuco reveal that these processes can be complex and multi-layered, and that perceptions of self are often influenced by outside views on Mapuche identity. This is why this chapter is divided into three sections. The first section gives an overview of the methods used for this research, with focus on the field research carried out between July and October 2021 in Santiago, and between November 2021 and January 2022 in Temuco. The second section discusses the differences and similarities between urban indigenous youth from Santiago and Temuco, and analyses these in light of the theories on indigeneity and urban youth. The last section of this chapter offers a more in-depth view on indigenous identification among urban Mapuche youth from the perspective of 'outsiders', that is, older Mapuche or non-Mapuche people.

3.1 Data gathering process

To answer the research questions of this thesis, I conducted a series of interviews to gather Mapuche students' views on identity, urbanity and the 2019 revuelta social. Seven of these interviews were with young people who were born or lived in Santiago de Chile, and four interviews with young people from Temuco. In addition, one interviewee had lived in both Temuco and Santiago, and another was born in Santiago, but currently lives in the northern city of Arica. All of the interviewees were in tertiary education or had recently finished their studies. Their ages ranged between 21 and 34 years old. The interviews were carried out between August 2022 and January 2023. I asked the students about their family's background, their own education, their identification as Mapuche, and their opinions about the 2019 revuelta social (for an example of interview questions, see annex 1). Of the thirteen interviewees, nine were men and four were women, seven were in tertiary education, being in university or vocational training, and six were recently graduated. Twelve of the respondents stated they identified as Mapuche. In addition to these interviews, I spoke with two non-student experts, namely Nancy Nicul Lincoleo, a Mapuche activist and local politician in Santiago, and Fabien le Bonniec, a French anthropologist and teacher of interculturality at the Catholic University of Temuco. These conversations helped me to place my research within the larger context of the Mapuche in Chile.

Most respondents were found through the snowball-method, using the contacts of already-interviewed respondents to choose new people to interview. The Mapuche organization *Folil* in Groningen, The Netherlands, proved instrumental in finding new respondents. In addition to this, a few chance encounters in the streets of Santiago with Mapuche people active in the urban indigenous community also resulted in meeting interviewees. Ethical considerations were taken into account by having most interviews take place in public places such as parks or university buildings, where extra attention was given to privacy to ensure the confidentiality of the interviews. Two of the interviews took place at the house of the respondent, another at my own place of residence, and one interview was held online. All interviews were carried out in Spanish, although some expressed their desire to speak (partially) in English to practice their conversation skills. Before the interview, I explained the purpose of the interview and the topic of my research, and asked whether the respondent agreed with recording the conversation for research purposes. In this thesis, the interviewees will be referred to by first name only to ensure their privacy, unless specified otherwise.

In addition to the interviews, I also used participant observation to construct a more comprehensive image of the lives of urban Mapuche. I was invited to two activities organized by indigenous communities in Santiago. The first was a workshop for making traditional indigenous

musical instruments in the neighbourhood of San Joaquin. Here, people from most indigenous groups in Chile, including Mapuche, Diaguita, Quechua and Aymara, as well as non-indigenous Chileans, learned to make the instruments that are traditionally used by indigenous peoples. As one music professor joked: 'we only need a Rapa Nui[8] to have the whole collection!' The other event I visited was more specifically catered towards the Mapuche living in Santiago, namely a traditional *ruka* (house) in the neighbourhood of San Miguel. Here, I attended a language class for Mapudungun, which also included a spiritual ceremony and a lesson on the use of medicinal herbs. These two experiences proved important for understanding the intersection between indigeneity and urban life.

In Temuco, I visited a number of movie screenings that specifically dealt with the topic of the Mapuche in Chile. In an event organized by the cinematography and anthropology departments of the Catholic University, I watched the movie '*CAM, liberar una nación*', which deals with the live within the Coordinadora Arauco-Malleco and the Mapuche conflict with the state. In this city, I was also invited to attend a *ngillatun*, a traditional Mapuche ceremony, which, apart from being a beautiful and spiritual personal experience, helped me to better understand the Mapuche cultural and religious practices.

3.2 Being young and Mapuche in the city

As discussed in chapter 2, the Chilean conquest of the southern territories meant that the Mapuche were effectively incorporated into the state. Many of them moved to nearby cities, as well as to Santiago in an attempt to find a living (Antileo Baeza 2007, 1). Here, they often found precarious low-paying jobs as manual labourers and domestic servants (Nahuelpan Moreno and Antimil Caniupan 2019, 229). In the 1930's and 40's, urbanization took off, with more people now living in the city than in the countryside (Collier and Sater 2023, 311). However, most rural areas remained largely under the control of the rightist, conservative parties.

When arriving to the cities, many Mapuche were met with ridicule or hostility when they used cultural expressions such as clothing and traditions, or when they spoke the Mapudungun language (Nahuelpan Moreno and Antimil Caniupan 2019, 229)[9]. As a result, many changed their surname to appear less Mapuche, or refrained from teaching their children Mapudungun for fear of them being subject to prejudice (Richards 2013a, 64; Nahuelpan Moreno and Antimil Caniupan 2019, 229). Poverty is another issue. According to data from 2015, almost 40 percent of Mapuche lives below the poverty line (Sepúlveda Sánchez 2019, 148). Most Mapuche that live in the city experience a higher level of precariousness and poverty than non-Mapuche citizens in cities (Collier and Sater 2023, 477; Richards 2013a, 153). In a country where education is highly expensive, this means that many Mapuche youth lack the funds to enter higher education (Sepúlveda Sánchez 2019, 148).

Conflict and recognition: regional differences between Temuco and Santiago

The responses of the young Mapuche in Santiago revealed that urban indigenous identity can be complex, and that it differs greatly for between individuals. One common aspect became was that for many of the interviewees, the process of migration from the south to the capital was instrumental in the formation of their indigenous identity, as the shared history of urban Mapuche helped them find common factors of identification. Their generation's reencounter with their indigenous roots shaped a collective identity as Mapuche *Santiaguino*, one that shared many characteristics with the Mapuche from the south, but was also distinct. When asked why they felt part of the Mapuche people, many of the interviewees in Santiago responded that their family history played an important role in their identification. Most students had a grandparent that moved from the south of the country to the Metropolitan Region. Often, they said that their grandparents or parents had not tried to maintain the Mapuche customs and traditions, and that they did not teach their children Mapudungun. A

[8] The indigenous people from Rapa Nui/Easter Island

[9] for more info on racism against Mapuche, see Richards (2013)

number of the interviewees expressed their desire to learn the language, or were in the process of learning it. According to some, there is a growing interest among young urban people of Mapuche descent to learn more about their ancestors' culture. In addition to the historical ties, another often-cited reason to identify as Mapuche had to do with the community. Those whose parents were more involved with Mapuche culture, said that feeling part of the community instilled them with a strong sense of belonging. Furthermore, there was a small number of interviewees that mentioned a spiritual sense of belonging to the Mapuche community. One respondent recounted how they repeatedly had a dream (*pewma*) that showed them in traditional Mapuche dress, which was one of the reasons they started to pay more attention to their indigenous heritage (interview with Francisco, 24).

Some of the interviewed students also acknowledged that being Mapuche in the city could be difficult, especially because they are so far away from the territories that are so important in Mapuche spirituality and culture. As Sebastián (25) said, 'the Mapuche who live in Santiago have this problem, which is, like, a lack of identity in a certain way.' At the same time, Sebastián was quick to call himself a 'Mapuche *urbano*,' saying that his involvement in political organizations made him feel part of the Mapuche community in Santiago. Jess (22) invoked a similar expression, mentioning the term *mapurbe* as a way to designate urban Mapuche, but not necessarily herself. Francisco even used the term in Mapudungun: *wariache*, or 'people from the city', as a way of describing himself. Although the concept of 'urban Mapuche' has been criticised by some organizations as an artificial tool of the government to justify the creation of a Mapuche without territory (Antileo Baeza 2007, 10), the young people that I interviewed had a more nuanced view on this criticism, using their 'urbanity' as a tool for identification and finding a community.

According to many of the respondents, the biggest problem or challenge that the Mapuche in Santiago face today is finding access to the urban Mapuche community, as well increasing visibility of urban Mapuche in Chilean society. This contrasts with the views of many of the Mapuche youth interviewed in Temuco, who are often more concerned with the issue of territory. Although not all *Santiaguino* interviewees were able to express if there were any differences between being Mapuche in the city and in the Araucanía, some stated that Mapuche in the south would have less difficulties accessing indigenous communities and cultural expressions. At the same time, they asserted that Mapuche in the south faced more hardships because of the conflict and police repression. In general, the students seemed to both reject and advocate for their identity as urban Mapuche. They felt the need to point out that they were not less Mapuche than those who grew up in the south. However, they acknowledged that living in Santiago as a young Mapuche person was a different reality from growing up in the Araucanía. One student argued that 'there is no "*Mapuchimetro*,[10]"' indicating that it is still possible to be Mapuche and live in the city (Interview with Francisco, 24). Another student contemplated how they felt like living in Santiago as a Mapuche was a 'contradiction', because there was a lack of spaces and nature to conduct ceremonies (interview with Jess, 22). At the same time, Jess explained,

> 'Like ultimately [..] it's part of the history. […] In the end, migration from the countryside to the city happened, but once they were in the city, the first Mapuche and Wiliche[11] to graduate university began to form part of the culture as more westernized, but with a more decolonial perspective.'

Jess' remark shows how, despite its contradictions, young urban Mapuche construct an identity around a shared history. In the same way that colonization has become a shared historical experience of the Mapuche people as a whole, the migration from the south to Santiago, the loss of cultural

[10] A Chilean joke, the *Mapuchimetro* ("Mapuche-measure") is an imaginary tool that would be used to measure someone's 'Mapuche-ness'.

[11] Huiliche or Wiliche is a name for the tribes related to the Mapuche that originally lived in the area around Chiloé Island.

practices and the youth's reencounter with their heritage turned into a common characteristic of young urban Mapuche in Santiago. An important factor to consider here is the role of tertiary education. For some of the students, especially in Santiago, their identification as Mapuche started when they entered tertiary education, as mentioned before. During the interviews, I asked them if being a university student was an important part of their identity. Many of them did not say that being (or having been) a student in tertiary education was something that was necessarily a strong part of their identity. In some cases, being in university, meeting other young Mapuche did help shape their identity as Mapuche, but not as a student. Many students, however, told that they became interested in their Mapuche heritage through indigenous student associations, such as Bayron (23), who said:

> 'In my case, in my generation, me, my brother, and also the people I surrounded myself with, there is this interest in recovering what our parents or our grandparents have lost. And it was also developed in the context of university, when I met brothers, met *Peñi* Mapuche[12] who encouraged me to recover the culture, to participate in organizations, to recover the language and all that. So, it is an identity constructed within this context.'

Bayron's comment shows how community is an important factor for young urban indigenous people. It highlights the importance of relational aspects for identity formation (Merlan 2009), and illustrates how 'creative interchanges of traditional, contemporary, and adopted cultural practices' are used to create a collective urban indigenous identity (Dorries 2022, 114). Although some interviewees lamented a lack of access to Mapuche culture and knowledge in the city, they found a space in which to practice their customs together with other young Mapuche in university. The formation of a collective identity together with other group members in turn led to a more personalized view of their own identity as an indigenous person[13]. Thus, the intersection between the identities of urban Mapuche and student (a collective that has recently played an important role in Chilean politics, see chapter 4) strengthens the formation of the urban Mapuche as a collective identity.

Image 5: graffiti that says: 'let's defend the earth'. Seen in Santiago

Sepúlveda (2019) notices this phenomenon as well. The author observes how university students, born in Santiago, who have Mapuche roots but little knowledge of the culture, begin to (re)discover their indigenous identity and seek new ways to revitalize their heritage. The author states that '[i]n the process, indigenous identities are redefined and the redefinition process calls both capitalism and coloniality into question.' (150). These young Mapuche accessing university and finding new ways to reencounter, question and internalize the Mapuche identity can be seen as wat Bengoa (2012) calls 'enlightened indigenous youth' (100). According to the author, these young people, having come into contact with both western, Eurocentric education, as well indigenous knowledges, begin to accept themselves as being part of a different people, *in addition to* being Chilean (Bengoa 2012, 101). The interviews showed that this combination of identities, rather than creating conflicts, is something the students generally accepted, sometimes even presenting themselves as 'Mapuche-Chileno' (interview with Sebastián, 25).

[12] A word in Mapudungun that is used to designate a 'brother,' not necessarily related to you.
[13] for a more comprehensive overview of collective identity and self, see Brewer and Gardner (1996), and Sökefeld (1999).

The interviews with university students and recent graduates in Temuco gave both a more in-depth view of indigenous identification among young people, and highlighted the differences between youth in the capital and the Araucanía region. This study has identified two main differences between Mapuche identification among young people in Temuco and Santiago. First, there is a difference in how students in Temuco identify with nature and with their historical territory. Where in Santiago, contact with the land was barely mentioned as a factor of identification, students in Temuco often affirmed the connection they felt with their family's territory as a strong reason for feeling part of the Mapuche people. A second difference is the identification as *urban* Mapuche, a feeling that is stronger for students in Santiago. This is mostly due to the fact that Mapuche students who live in Temuco often see this as temporary, for the duration of their studies. In addition, their proximity to their family's land makes it easier for them to travel between city and countryside.

Image 6: graffiti with the Wenufoye symbol, crossed out with swastikas, which are crossed out again with black paint (Temuco).

The differences in feelings of connection with land and territory by extension lead to difference in perceptions of the conflict between the state and the communities in the south. For the Temuco Mapuche youth, the conflict is much more present and visible, and it was often seen as the most pressing issue that the Mapuche face today (*image 6*). In contrast, the Santiaguino students appeared to see the conflict much more as a feature of a system of colonization and oppression, which they saw as the most important problem for the Mapuche. For the students in Temuco, land, and the Mapuche's connection with their territory, was seen as an integral part of the Mapuche identity (interview with Pilar, 34). By extension, the exploitation of lands by large (international) companies, and the state's support to these industries, was a display of a lack of respect for the Mapuche in the eyes of the students. In addition, the discrimination that Mapuche face legitimizes their indigenous identity and in turn informs their cultural involvement with the community. In the words of Pilar (34), identifying as Mapuche is 'a process of resilience.' This resistance against the exploitation of Mapuche lands, and the continuous struggle to get back Mapuche territories is a strong factor of identification for many interviewees from Temuco. This contrasts with the challenges that young urban Mapuche in Santiago face, which have mostly to do with recognition and accessing information and community.

Another difference between students from Temuco and Santiago is that the identification as *urban* Mapuche is less present. Many students from the Araucanía Region seemed to have a stronger sense of belonging to their *lof*, or the particular family they descended from. While Temuco is a city, they saw it more as a centre of the Araucanía, where they were still moderately in contact with their territories. In that sense, Temuco represented less of a place of separation for the students than the Metropolitan Region did for the interviewees in Santiago. This had mostly to do with the accessibility of nature and the proximity of their family's land. Some of the students told me that they still sometimes went back to their rural communities because they felt a connection with the land: 'There is this notion that we [my family and I] belong here at some point, like we had to come back. There is something that pulls us.' (Pilar, 34).

Despite these differences between the Mapuche in Santiago and in Temuco, there are also some similarities. For example, the mostly agreed on the idea that Mapuche in Santiago and Temuco both faced distinct realities. When asked about the differences in indigenous identification between Temuco and Santiago, some students in Temuco asserted that being Mapuche in Santiago was more complex due to a lack of connection to the communities and ancestral lands, an opinion that was shared by the Santiaguino Mapuche youth. Pilar, who is a student who grew up in Santiago but

always travelled back and forth to her family's community in the Araucanía, stated that in Santiago, Mapuche feel a strong 'disconnect, both on the level of news, [about] what is happening in the territories, and a bit on what this fight really implies.' Bastián (24) saw Mapuche *Santiaguino* at risk of a 'cultural loss.' Similarly, Catalina (27) observed that Mapuche in Santiago have a more pacific, institutional view on the conflict in the South:

> 'In Temuco, the reality is that the majority of the Mapuche students travel to the city, stay during the week, but there is still very direct contact with the community, with the place you came from, the countryside, etc. So, there is less of a violent uprooting [than in Santiago]. In this aspect, it is easier to, for example, maintain these cultural aspects [...], they are more accessible to us. […] here, people perhaps have a more radical view on things.'

Another similarity between the students in Santiago and Temuco was the perceived 'recuperation' of the Mapuche identity by their generation (interview with Catalina, 27). As mentioned before, many Mapuche were assimilated into Chilean society, either forcibly or voluntarily. This resulted in a loss of culture and identity for generations of urban Mapuche. For the students in both Temuco and Santiago, their generation's renewed involvement with the Mapuche culture went further than just having a Mapuche surname or family history, and many of them emphasised the importance of participating in social and ritual practices. At the same time, they also incorporated other topics into their identification as Mapuche, such as environmental issues and social justice questions (interview with Antulican (27)).

3.3 Identification and acceptance? A new generation redefining Mapuche identity

As mentioned before, there is a general view of indigenous peoples being rural or having a 'place-based existence' (Alfred and Corntassel 2005, 795). George Manuel, president of the now-defunct World Council of Indigenous Peoples, wrote in 1980: 'Like all Indigenous people, the Mapuche hold a covenant with the land. The land is their source of being and without it they would cease to be. Without the land the Mapuche would lose their cohesiveness, their strength and their sense of self.' (Manuel 1980, 3). In Chile, the high-profile nature of the conflict in the south promotes this idea. Even older Mapuche often hold the view that Santiago is no place to be Mapuche the 'correct' way. An elder man that I spoke to in the *ruka* of San Miguel lamented how a young acquaintance of him who had recently become a *machi*[14] would not be able to practice her rituals in Santiago, as 'she would become sick here in the city!' In casual conversations with older Mapuche in Santiago, in addition to living in the Araucanía, having a surname in Mapudungun was heavily implied to be very important for being accepted as Mapuche. However, in the interviews with the students, this was mentioned only in passing. For some, having a Mapuche surname was something that sparked their interest in their heritage, but most interviewees asserted that it was not necessary to have a surname in Mapudungun to be considered part of the people. In a similar vein, older people expressed their disappointment with Mapuche not speaking Mapudungun, whereas most interviewees did not consider this a requirement to be considered Mapuche, although they did find it an important part of Mapuche culture. As Martín, a young Mapuche scholar who coordinates a Mapuche association in the La Florida neighbourhood, said:

> 'I feel like we have already spent a lot of time talking about identity and belonging. […] I feel that the [Mapuche] community also has to be more open than they traditionally have been. Because there are a lot of Mapuche people who built identity on a very excusive discourse of

[14] A Mapuche spiritual leader or shaman who, in their spiritual practice, is very dependent on a close connection with nature.

ethnicity. This way, the possibility, let's say, of imagining the construction of identity and community towards the future does not always remain open." (Martín, 31)'

Interviews with other young Mapuche reflected Martín's views on openness and inclusivity. The conversations showed that young people generally expressed more openness in who would be able to identify as Mapuche than older people. The older people, in particular those who grew up in the south and moved to the capital later in life, had a more primordial view of Mapuche identity (Merlan 2009), where someone's surname and ability to speak Mapudungun were primary indicators of a Mapuche. The younger people who were born or grew up in Santiago did acknowledge these factors, but for them, the relational aspect of indigeneity carried more weight (Merlan 2009).

In Temuco, I had less opportunity to talk to older Mapuche people to see the difference in in approaches to indigeneity between the generations. The *ngillatun* that I visited had a much higher number of children and young people than the events that I attended in Santiago, which suggests that young Mapuche people are more engaged with their heritage in the Araucanía Region. During the event, I overheard an elderly Mapuche grumble: '*todos tienen cara de Kultrun, pero nadie habla Mapudungun!*'[15] This anecdote indicates that there are older Mapuche who put great importance on being able to speak the language. However, seeing that this ceremony was in a very rural place and mostly attended by people from surrounding *lofs*, it still does not tell us much about the generational differences in the city. An important factor to consider here is the fact that many Mapuche students in Temuco left the countryside to study at university, while the rest of their family stayed in their community. This means that these students did not have the same history of growing up in Santiago and experiencing the disconnect with their family's heritage and territory, as part of the displacement of indigenous peoples as mentioned in the beginning of this chapter.

The interviews with Mapuche students from Santiago show the tensions that a lot of indigenous youth in the city feel in the construction of their identity. Interestingly, land or territory is both important and unimportant, in the sense that it is precisely the lack of proximity to their homeland that sets the *Santiaguino* Mapuche apart from their counterparts in Temuco. The loss of connection with their territory means that urban Mapuche had to find other factors of identification. Often, this is family connection or history, which can range from simply having a Mapuche surname to actually carrying out cultural practices with family (interview with Payo, 27). Dorries (2022), who focusses on the way 'Indigenous peoples negotiate claims on, re-configure and contest urban processes while at the same time transforming Indigeneity' in the context of Canada, illustrates that urban indigenous youth use new forms of solidarity and artistic practices to subvert colonial views on indigenous identities (114). For the Mapuche students in Santiago, this is visible in the way they shape their identity as *urban* Mapuche. The students in Temuco experience this subversive identity formation to a lesser extent. Their proximity to their territory, and the fact that they often have family that lives in the countryside, means that they can more easily access the indigenous knowledges and culture, diminishing the need for other forms of identifying practices that Santiaguino students use.

The above brings into question whether the Mapuche identity is indeed as strongly tied to their territory as George Manuel argued. While this might be true for some indigenous groups, the status of the Mapuche in Chilean cities, particularly Santiago, shows that indigeneity can also be defined by other factors. Mapuche identity might be linked to a 'place-based existence', but the focus on rural places that is present in some of the literature lacks nuance (Dorries 2022). For some young urban Mapuche, the city itself serves as a place of identification. Self-actualization seems to play an important role here, with urban Mapuche youth choosing how they shape their indigenous identity. The openness on indigenous identity among younger Mapuche does not only apply to their own identification, but also for how they perceive others who are part of the Mapuche community. Their own identity formation as Mapuche was largely dependent on relational aspects (Merlan 2009) such as feeling part of the community and feeling a spiritual connection to the Mapuche customs, culture

[15] "They all have faces like a *Kultrun*, but no one speaks Mapudungun!" the *Kultrun* is a ceremonial round drum that supposedly resembles the physical characteristics of the face of a Mapuche person.

and cosmovision on the one hand, and a feeling of 'otherness' that distinguished them from non-Mapuche youth. Although family history was often mentioned as one of the reasons to identify as Mapuche, many students considered it only part of a larger collection of identifying factors as mentioned above. This was also visible in how they perceived others who would call themselves Mapuche. There was some criticism of those who 'romanticized' being indigenous (interview with Sebastián, 25), but in general the students said they respected different personal understandings of what it meant to be Mapuche. This shift in understanding group identity mimics current understanding of how young people construct their identity (Delgado 2015, 21).

While illustrative of a more open view on indigeneity among younger Mapuche, Martín's statement, mentioned in the beginning of this section, could be read as a form of criticism against the wider Mapuche community's views on identification, especially in urban places. By appealing to the future of the Mapuche people, Martín scrutinizes the community's pressure on young urban indigenous people to 'prove' their indigeneity and the lack of nuance regarding city-dwelling Mapuche. This highlights not only the diversity of opinions within the Mapuche people, but also the importance of community for the formation of an indigenous identity.

In this chapter, I have tried to analyse the way in which Mapuche youth in Santiago and Temuco discover, shape, and negotiate their indigenous identity. There are several aspects that stand out. Mainly, it becomes clear that the intersection between identification as a student and as a Mapuche plays a major role in the thinking about indigenous identity in Chilean urban dwellings. While for most interviewees, being a student was not a factor of identification, education often gave them tools to understand and express their identity as Mapuche. In addition, indigenous student associations created a community around a collective identity that not only informed urban indigenous youth about their cultural practices and expressions, but also in turn shaped new ways of thinking about what it means to be young, indigenous, and living in the city.

As a result, the *urban* aspect became a factor of identification, especially for Mapuche students in Santiago. As seen in this chapter, living in the city as an indigenous person can often be contradicting, as there is a lack of access to traditions, territory and community to identify with. However, it is precisely this challenge that informs the formation of an indigenous identity for many of the students that I interviewed. The city itself becomes a means of identification, giving young urban Mapuche the tools to create new collective identities and categories of identification. In addition, the new generation of young Mapuche increasingly has access to higher education, with its Eurocentric ideas, and to indigenous knowledge, which generates new ideas on belonging and identity. Students were aware that indigenous identity can be misrepresented or romanticised. However, in both Temuco and Santiago, young people expressed that there are multiple ways in which someone can identify as Mapuche, leaving behind the more deterministic views that I sometimes observed among the older generation. The above shows that different identities often overlap or contradict each other. At the same time, it can lead to impactful collective action, as will be elaborated upon in chapter 4.

Urban indigenous youth and collective action: young Mapuche in the revuelta social

Chapter 4: analysis

This chapter analyses the 2019 revuelta social from the viewpoint of the Mapuche students I interviewed. As will become clear, for many young Mapuche, collective action goes well beyond the 2019 protests. In this chapter, I will analyse how and why the respondents in both Santiago and Temuco did (or did not) participate in the revuelta Social. Aside from that the interviewees themselves had to say about their participation in the protests, I will also take a closer look at other indicators of Mapuche presence during the protests, such as the use of Mapuche cultural expressions like flags and graffiti. In this chapter, I will offer some interpretations of these expressions, both by academics and the students that I interviewed, to get a more in-depth impression of the role of indigeneity in the 2019 revuelta social in Chile, and the opinions of urban indigenous youth on this matter. This chapter shows that there are some clear differences between the students in Temuco and Santiago when it comes to their participation in the revuelta social. Most importantly, the heightened militarized state of the Araucanía Region prior to 2019 means that the students from Temuco saw the revuelta in a different light than in Santiago. The centralisation of the country also plays a role, with many interviewees in Temuco agreeing that the protests in Santiago attracted an interest that other places did not. Despite these differences, there are also similarities to be seen between the students that I interviewed in both Temuco and Santiago. Both groups acknowledge that the collective actions that were seen during the revuelta are integrated into the wider debate on counterhegemonic discourse and a criticism of the neoliberal system that is part of both Mapuche and student identities in Chile.

Urban Mapuche in the revuelta social

Analysing the events of the revuelta social in 2019, most academics agree that the protests were largely motivated by a resentment of the population against the state. The promised advantages of the neoliberal system did not come true for a large part of the population. The student protests and the resistance of the Mapuche, but also the feminist mobilizations in 2018, were illustrative of this underlying resentment (Borzutzky and Perry 2021). However, in 2019, this resentment apparently reached a new height with the increase of the metro fares.

When asked about the 2019 revuelta social, most *Santiaguino* students responded that it was an important moment in Chilean history. Many expressed their surprise and happiness about the fact that so many Chileans took to the street to protest the state. Most interviewees said they attended various acts of protest in 2019/2020, mostly marches and neighbourhood councils. Some attended protests specifically geared towards the Mapuche cause, such as a silent march for Alex Lemun, a young Mapuche activist who died at the hands of a police officer in 2002 (interview with Jess, 22) (INDH 2018). However, the majority of the students did not attend specifically because they were Mapuche. On the contrary, many expressed how happy they were to see people from all backgrounds come together to protest the state. They also asserted that the demands of the revuelta social were not specifically Mapuche, but that they were more generally carried by broader groups in society. As Francisco (24) said: 'the revuelta social was not about *winka* against Mapuche […]. The fight, *lamngen*[16], was by the popular class against the aristocracy of this damned country, against the elite.'

In contrast to their counterparts in Santiago, Mapuche students from Temuco strongly placed the revuelta social in their city in the context of the demonstrations that have taken place since the 90's, although they acknowledge that the revuelta was not necessarily about Mapuche issues. In

[16] A word to designate a "sister," not necessarily related to you.

Temuco, the revuelta social started a few days after the initial protests in the capital and also came to an end sooner than in Santiago. According to Manuel (26), the people in Santiago mobilised for the things that the Mapuche in Temuco had already been fighting for since a long time:

> 'In Santiago they never mobilize for anything, only when [their favourite soccer team] wins, but I never saw such mobilizations until the outbreak. Here, we are in constant repression. Here we always went to take over the university, there were strikes all year, always *tomas* […]. Here in Temuco, there was always that agitation. There were always people in prison, there's repression in the countryside, there are people resisting. […] The other contexts, the other cities do not live what we are living in the Araucanía. […] In 2018 [in Temuco] there was a lot of accumulated resentment, and in 2019, *puta*, the people of Santiago got tired of the beatings and said "aaaah, they raised our metro fare!" But here, they have always raised our fare, *cachai*?'

Like the students who commenced the protests, most of the young *Santiaguino* Mapuche that were interviewed participated less from the standpoint of being Mapuche or a student, and more from the perspective of 'the youth' or 'as part of the people' (Palacios-Valladares and Ondetti 2019, 223). This was different for the students that I interviewed in Temuco. The already militarized state of the Araucanía meant a stronger police response to the protests, according to Catalina, who was an observer of Human Rights during the protests in Temuco. However, this time, it was not only the Mapuche who experienced police brutality, but also other *Temuqueños* who participated in the revuelta social:

> '[...] I think that being in this territory, where we're talking about militarization, is twice as violent. Because here, we are also sort of accustomed to a certain level of violence, but in those weeks [of the revuelta] it was unleashed without distinction, and it was no longer just the Mapuche […] it was not like only us Mapuche said "the cops don't have a filter, etcetera, etcetera," but also other people suffered it firsthand who perhaps had not experienced it before. So, it was rawer for them than for us, who are a little more used to it.' (interview with Catalina, 27)

As in Santiago, most of the interviewees participated in the marches that took place in Temuco. Some also participated or attended cultural activities or *convocatorias*, the neighbourhood assemblies. For many of the *Temuqueño* students, their participation in the revuelta was closely linked with justice. In the words of Antu (27): 'one has to defend that which is just.' In contrast to Santiago, where informal conversations with friends revealed that they did not participate in the protests, or only participated in the first few days before the police brutality became excessive, all the interviewees from Temuco were in one way or the other involved in the revuelta social in their city. This is not necessarily representative of a wider phenomenon, as I interviewed less people in Temuco than in Santiago, but it is illustrative of a certain culture of protest that is more present in Temuco than in the capital. Some of the students that I spoke to in Temuco, not only during the interviews, but also in more informal settings, were involved in activism in the region, even before the revuelta social in 2019. This was not observed among the Santiaguino students that I interviewed or had conversations with.

Graffiti, flags and slogans: the visibility of the Mapuche during the revuelta social

One of the ways the Mapuche were visible during the revuelta Social was through the use of Mapuche cultural expressions, especially the *wenufoy*e flag, but also graffiti and slogans. This is something that was noticed by academics and journalists (Gordon-Zolov 2023, 43; Márquez 2020, 667; Thygesen 2021, 225). Fabien le Bonniec, an anthropologist at the Catholic University in Temuco, identified 6 possible reasons for the considerable amount of Mapuche cultural expressions that were used during the revuelta social. According to Le Bonniec, the Mapuche have been conceptualised in Chilean history as a 'warrior race', who resisted the Spanish colony. The use of the Mapuche flag

during the protests could be seen as a warrior flag that symbolizes bravery and strength. Second, the use of Mapuche symbols could be seen as a sign of *winka* and Mapuche collaboration against the state. In a similar vein, Mapuche cultural expressions during the revuelta social signify a counter symbol. The recent history of the Mapuche is one of opposition to the Chilean government. As the revuelta social was mostly a protest against the government, it is plausible that protesters used Mapuche symbols to express their opposition to the state. Marquez (2020) places the use of this flag in the wider context of protest colonialism, stating:

> 'The beheading of the monument to Pedro de Valdivia (with his head hanging on Caupolicán's hands[17]), […] the proliferation of *wipala* and *wenufoye* flags as symbolic expressions of Andean and Mapuche people [...] inaugurate a period of transgression and demonumentalization [*sic*] of the iconic figures of Spanish, republican, and patriarchal colonialism […].' (670)

Another explanation, according to Le Bonniec, could be the idea that the causes for these protests were rooted deeper in history than just the dictatorship, especially for the Mapuche. This can especially be seen in the slogan 'it wasn't 30 years, it was 500 years', that was sometimes used during the protests by Mapuche activists[18] (Thygesen 2021, 226). Le Bonniec acknowledges there could be a simpler explanation for the use of these symbols, such as it being a fashion phenomenon, where it is simply 'cool' or popular to use the Mapuche flag and the *wenufoye*. Lastly, the use of the Mapuche flag and cultural expressions could have been used as a symbol of diversity in the same way that the protesters used rainbow flags (Gordon-Zolov 2023, 43). Although a full analysis of the use of Mapuche cultural expressions goes beyond the scope of this thesis, it is interesting to gauge the students' reactions to these expressions, as it illustrates their opinions on the revuelta from a Mapuche perspective.

During the interviews, the students were asked to comment on the use of these symbols. Their opinions of the use of Mapuche cultural expressions in the protests were very diverse. Some applauded the use of the Mapuche flag or graffiti in Mapudungun, arguing that it helped to make visible the Mapuche cause. Some interviewees used Mapuche cultural expressions themselves, such as Francisco, who wore a traditional *trarilonko*[19] during the protest (interview with Francisco, 24). Some saw it as a sign of support from Chilean society to the Mapuche, such as Payo:

> 'For me, it felt like support in a way. Support from the Chilean people. [During the protests] for example in Santiago, many times before going to a demonstration, the Mapuche people got together to do *llellipun*[20], which is like asking that things go well for us, that we are taken care of, that nothing bad happens to us, that we can return to our house. And there were many people during the protests, Chilean people, who joined in with all respect, in all seriousness. And it was super nice, because it is part of being Mapuche, […]. I at least wouldn't talk about cultural appropriation [in the protests], because I didn't see it, and I didn't feel it either.' (interview with Payo, 27).

Others took a more realist approach, saying that the symbols represent resistance to the state, which is why many Chileans chose to use them (interview with Diego, 21). A few saw the use of Mapuche

[17] Which in itself is a highly symbolic act. Pedro de Valdivia was Chile's main conquistador, who was later murdered at the hands of the Mapuche in a battle led by Caupolicán, among others.

[18] 'it's not 30 pesos, it's 30 years' was a slogan used during the protests to express their discontent, not with the 30 pesos increase of the metro fare, but with the 30 years of neoliberal policies of the governments since the dictatorship.

[19] A woollen headband, traditionally worn by Mapuche men.

[20] A ceremony that is generally carried out before an important event to request protection and favourable results.

symbology during the protest in a more negative light, saying it was an empty symbolism that is rooted in the romantisation of the Mapuche, but that it did not actually help to further the interests of the Mapuche themselves (interview with Sebastián, 25).

These different interpretations are is illustrative of how the revuelta social influenced views on indigeneity, and at the same time was influenced by pre-existing interpretations of Mapuche identity. Whether interpreting the use of Mapuche symbology during the protests as an expression of solidarity, or an expression of opposition against the state, the resignification of indigeneity during collective action can be seen as a form of framing, where the revuelta social influenced the meaning of Mapuche identity and history (Benford and Snow 2000). Social movements often set the stage for the (re-)creation of meaning, and during the revuelta social, Mapuche and non-Mapuche actors alike were involved in assigning meaning to expressions of indigeneity. An important aspect of the production of collective identity frames is a shared perception of the enemy, or the 'other'. This helps strengthen the sense of unity that the social movement shares (Gamson 2011). During the revuelta, the Mapuche were able to share in this unity, because they were seen as 'against the state', just like the other protesters. Francisco's statement above, about how the revuelta social was in the basis a protest against Chile's elites, reflects this. In this sense, the use of Mapuche cultural expressions can be seen as an assimilation of the Mapuche criticism of the state into the wider, more mainstream collective action of the revuelta social. In the next section, I will explore how this was influenced by regional differences, and how students from both Temuco and Santiago experienced the protests.

'Santiago is not Chile': regional differences and similarities

In Santiago, there was more national and international attention for the protests, according to some of the students I interviewed in Temuco (interview with Bastián, 24). This can be explained by the fact that a large part of the population lives in the capital, but also by the centralised nature of the Chilean political system. Although the country has moved towards decentralisation policies, Chile is still one of the most centralised states in the region, a remnant of Pinochet's mostly centralised politics (Mardones Z. 2007). This not only affects the investment in and development of the peripheral areas of the country, but it is also embedded in the culture (Espinoza et al. 2019). '*Santiago no es Chile*' (Santiago is not Chile) is an expression that I often heard from people who live outside of the capital, but also from young *Santiaguinos* that I spoke to. As elaborated upon in chapter 3, this is also reflected in the feelings of urbanity that Mapuche youth in Santiago experience, while students in Temuco identified more with the region instead of the city.

From the interviews that I held with young Mapuche in both Santiago and Temuco we can gather that there were different motivations for their participation in the events of the revuelta social. There is a clear distinction between the protests in the capital and Temuco, which has mostly to do with the context of the conflict between Mapuche communities and the state that has been happening in the Araucanía Region. This is reflected in the activism of *Temuqueño* students, who were perhaps already more used to mobilizations, and 'desensitized' to police repression during protests (*image 7*). Interestingly, the Santiaguino students talked more about certain Mapuche rituals or commemorations they participated in during the revuelta, something which was not seen as strongly among the interviewees from Temuco. Here, again, we see the importance of overlapping identities, as talked about in chapter 3, and the way it informs the students' participation in social movements. As seen in chapter 3, Mapuche students in Santiago

Image 7: graffiti that says: 'the police are murderers' and 'total liberation'. (Temuco)

more actively constructed their identity as *urban* indigenous, as opposed to the students in Temuco. Despite this, it is hard to adequately determine whether the participation of young Mapuche in Santiago was more 'indigenised' than that of Mapuche youth in Temuco, because the protests in cities other than Santiago received less coverage in the media, possibly due to the centralised nature of the country's political and media landscape (Mellado and Lagos 2011, 145; Mardones Z. 2007).

The easier access to Mapuche culture and community that the students from Temuco have, as discussed in chapter 3, probably translates to a lesser focus on the 'Mapuche cause' during the revuelta, whereas the Santiaguino students might have highlighted their indigenous identity as a means through which they identified with a certain group. This might simply be a lack of media coverage, but another explanation for the apparent lack of Mapuche-focused actions during the revuelta in Temuco could be the participation of non-Mapuche people in the protests, which shifted the focus to other topics, such as access to healthcare and education. In that sense, the creation of a 'shared "we"', mentioned by Gamson (2011) as an integral part of collective identity frames in social movements (464), in Temuco was not determined by ethnicity or indigeneity (Hechler et al. 2024). In contrast, in Santiago, where young urban Mapuche have experienced a stronger struggle for visibility, the revuelta provided an opportunity for urban Mapuche to generate a greater acknowledgement of the Mapuche community that exists in Santiago. And although most students have experience with police brutality through the student protests, the absence of a visible conflict between Mapuche communities and the state, like the one in the Araucanía, might have meant that *Santiaguino* students felt safer to express their Mapuche identity. Here, we see the influence of overlapping identities, and how the intersection of urban and indigenous impacts social movement participation (Terriquez 2015).

Despite these regional differences, a similarity between the students from Temuco and Santiago was their motivations to participate in the revuelta. All of the interviewees knew wat it is like to experience inequality because of a lack of support from the state. Pilar (34) recounted to me the story of her youth in Santiago and Temuco. When I asked her why she participated in the events of the revuelta, she answered:

> 'Because like so many others, I am part of those who have experienced the inequality of the system. The marginalization that comes with it. The violence and lack of support from the system. So, how could I not participate [in the revuelta]? When I go out to buy something, when you go to the doctor's office, and you have to wait super long. Like my dad or my mom, how long they had to wait for an operation, my friends too…. And the educational system, what it gives you, in how well-prepared the teachers are, how the system prepares you to reach other areas of education. Society in general, in the visions it has…. And the theme of housing… [….]. So how could I not participate? How could one not feel part of this collective and individual rage? Because it was not only collective, it was individual! You know what, *toda la mierda*! They tell me I have to do this, they tell me I have to shut up, I have to accept it, because that's how this political system works... *A la mierda*! *A la mierda*! Because... all that time I had to shut up. Years and years I kept silent, not saying anything because this is "democracy". This "representative" democracy, that is only representative of its own interests. So… that's it. How could I not participate?'

As can be seen in Pilar's statement, the topic of education was important during the revuelta. This sentiment is echoed by other interviewees, who often described a large number of problems and challenges that many Chilean students, Mapuche or no-Mapuche, face in the educational system. The most-cited problem was the lack of affordable education of acceptable quality. Although access to tertiary education has improved in recent years due to gratuity policies (Espinoza et al. 2022, 1357), the transition from secondary to tertiary education, and the differences between educational institutions often pose problems for students, according to some. Another problem that was mentioned was the lack of acknowledgement for indigenous traditions and the strong euro-centrism in education (interview with Jess, 22). Here, many interviewees expressed their discontent with the

fact that university prepped them for participation in the (neoliberal) labour market (Furlong, Woodman, and Wyn 2011; Woodman and Bennett 2015, see also chapter 1), without respect for different outlooks on life.

A large number of interviewees implicitly or explicitly said that fundamentally, the demands of the revuelta could best be summarized as a criticism of the strong neoliberal economic system that Chile has adapted in since the dictatorship (interview with Sebastián, 25). It is interesting to note here, that many students expressed how, for the first time, they felt supported in the Mapuche critique of the state. In the students' view, the Mapuche people has been fighting since colonial times against the western capitalist system, because it could not be reconciled with the Mapuche way of life and its customs (Petrone, González Ybarra, and Rink 2021). As Payo (27) said,

> 'When the Estallido [revuelta social] began, the people began to realize what we as Mapuche had been asking for. It was something very legitimate, that is, something reasonable, and at that moment also, like, there was an expression of support, an alliance, between the Mapuche and the Chilean people.'

As mentioned before, during the revuelta social, the students that I interviewed did not necessarily out of a shared sense of identity with the Mapuche. Many students expressed the idea that as young people in Chilean society, they are all in the same boat when it comes to the struggles they face. Most of the students asserted that there were no clear specific demands from the Mapuche community during the uprising, and that there were myriads of topics that were protested, such as access to education, the healthcare system and pensions. These were topics that concerned almost all Chilean citizens. According to Hechler et al (2024), the many aims of the different groups came together during the protests in a shared anger at the political system and a confidence in their collective efficiency to bring about change. This 'sense of "we-ness"', according to the authors, is what led to the massification of the protests and the creation of a collective identity among different societal groups (6).

This is in no way to say that for the students I interviewed, their indigenous identity did not play a role in their participation in the protests. While these factors were a motivation for their participation in the revuelta, for the Mapuche that I interviewed, the slogan 'it's not 30 pesos, it's 30 years' did not ring true. Manuel's statement that 'here [in Temuco], they have always raised our fare', goes back to the intensification of the conflict with the state in the 1990's, but the conflict itself started with the colonial state. As Thygesen (2021) explains, the rewriting of the slogan to 'it's not 30 years, it's 500 years' by some Mapuche activists reflects this sentiment (226). In that sense, the young Mapuche I interviewed had a different perspective on the neoliberal state that the protests were against. In our conversations, they often highlighted that the protests were by all Chileans, for all Chileans, and that opposition to the neoliberal system was the underlying theme. At the same time, the sentiment expressed by Jess (22) that 'the Chilean people finally became aware of what has happened to the Mapuche people for many years', seemed to be shared by some of the other interviewees. Their indigenous background gives the students a unique perspective on the country's current neoliberal politics, and its historic roots. The revuelta showed that the Chilean people was (finally) similarly fed up with the injustices and exploitation of the system. The solidarity between Mapuche and no-Mapuche youth in their struggle against the neoliberal system might have tentatively opened a pathway towards a better understanding of the struggle for recognition both groups experience.

Conclusion

This thesis explored the way in which young Mapuche students in Santiago and Temuco construct their identity as young, indigenous and urban people, in the context of the revuelta social in 2019. In order to do so, it asked three sub-questions: how do young Mapuche construct their identity as both urban and Mapuche? How do the mobilizations in the context of the revuelta social interact with their identities as student, indigenous, and urban? Which differences in collective indigenous identity formation can be observed between students from Temuco and Santiago, and how did they play a role during the revuelta social?

The theoretical framework for this thesis was set up in chapter 1, focussing on three concepts: indigeneity, collective identity in social movements, and (urban) youth studies. An exploration of the concept of indigeneity as it is understood by academics has shown that being indigenous is often associated with a certain historical locality. In the case of the Mapuche, this would be the Araucanía Region, where their people have historically lived. In this thesis, however, I offer a more nuanced view of indigenous identity, as elaborated upon in chapter 3. In the first chapter, it also became clear that collective action can potentially generate collective identities, creating a group with common interests and shared adversaries. An important element in this discussion was the overlapping and intersecting that play a role in this. As seen in chapter 4, not only being Mapuche, but also being young and living in the city played a role for the students who mobilized during the revuelta social. Lastly, an exploration of youth studies revealed that the study of youth has often been intertwined with economics, and the way young people could transition to being a 'productive' member of society. Critical Youth Studies calls into question how power structures affect youth, and how young people are affected by the neoliberal system. As seen in chapter 4, this was also a common criticism of young urban Mapuche in the context of the revuelta social.

Chapter 2 provided a contextualisation of the problem, showing how the Mapuche have historically lived in resistance to the state. However, there were also alliances with political parties, on both sides of the spectrum, to further their interests. Chapter 2 also showed that student protests have impacted Chilean politics over the past decades, culminating in the revuelta social in 2019, one of the biggest manifestations since the dictatorship.

The third chapter of this thesis aimed to answer the sub-question: how do young Mapuche construct their identity as both urban and Mapuche? By asking young urban Mapuche how they viewed themselves and others in the context of indigeneity and urbanity, it became clear that different identities can overlap and interact with each other, and that differentiated identities co-exist within Chile, in relation to very specific contexts. Chapter 3 made clear that, where the older generations of Mapuche have a more 'exclusive and excluding' of what it means to be Mapuche, the younger generation of Mapuche put more value on inclusivity. The interviews show that these Mapuche youth are increasingly reencountering their culture, creating distinct cultural expressions and means of self-identification. In addition, their identification as part of a larger group generates a new collective identity that is different from that of the generations of urban Mapuche before them. This shows that identity can be 'regarded as a kind of nexus at which different constructions of self coincide, and sometimes also collide' (van Meijl 2010, 71).

Increased access to higher education that has allowed more Mapuche youth to enter university has also allowed them to obtain the academic tools to put their identity in perspective. These 'enlightened indigenous youth' (Bengoa 2012, 100) see how their indigenous and other identities are shaped in relation with others, and how these identities overlap. At the same time, their participation in higher education has developed the common perception that the neoliberal system that the government has upheld has created a highly unequal system that affects people beyond the Mapuche-Chilean binary. The conversations with the students show that they are conscious of the way they are expected to behave within the context of the neoliberal system, and how this framework has historically been the cause of struggle for the Mapuche people. In addition,

they recognize the incompatibility of their indigenous identity and way of life with the dominant neoliberal system. This calls back to Critical Youth Studies and its criticism of the effects of neoliberalism on young people. The criticism of the system these young Mapuche are being prepared to transition into, has gone hand in hand with a stronger identification as Mapuche. However, as students in an expensive and highly unequal education system, they are aware they share this struggle with non-Mapuche students. So, not only the academic teachings, but also the lived experiences of being in tertiary education create a sense of solidarity with other students. The highly visible student protests that have taken place in Chile since the 2000's might have also generated a stronger sense of solidarity among university students.

The third chapter also partially focussed on answering the third sub-question: *Which differences in collective indigenous identity formation can be observed between students from Temuco and Santiago*, and how did they play a role during the revuelta social? The research for this thesis shows that for young Mapuche in Santiago, the city can be a place of separation. In the capital, the lack of access to spaces to practice their culture, and to indigenous knowledge, is a struggle that their counterparts in the Araucanía do not have. However, living in Santiago at the same time strengthens their identification as *urban* Mapuche, generating a new collective identity, as the diaspora to the capital becomes something that is part of the history of the Mapuche people. In this sense, for young urban Mapuche in Santiago, the city serves as both an alienating space as well as a space of identity-making. This contrasts with Temuco, where the city is much less a driver of collective identity and more a place within the Araucanía region. The young Mapuche I interviewed in Temuco often have family or acquaintances who live in rural communities, and thus have easier access to Mapuche culture and community. In addition, the city's proximity to nature allows them to practice their spirituality more easily. For Mapuche students in Temuco, the city does not form as much of an identity-making factor as it does for Santiaguino Mapuche youth. Here, the struggle is directly tied to the conflict with the state and the highly militarized condition of the region. That being said, both groups seemed to have an inclusive understanding of who is Mapuche and who is not. This is different from the opinions I observed among older Mapuche, who gave the impression of having a more essentialist view of what makes someone Mapuche.

Chapter 4 focussed on the second sub-question: How do the mobilizations in the context of the revuelta social interact with their identities as student, indigenous, and urban? It became clear in that these young people identify not *only* as Mapuche, they also feel a stronger sense of 'sameness' with other (especially young) people that are not Mapuche than the older generation, as became evident from the interviews with the students and the informal conversations with the latter group. This was particularly visible when talking about the 2019 revuelta social, where the students expressed that the demands put forward by the people were universal, because these issues affecting almost all Chileans, Mapuche or not. Based on the interviews with the young Mapuche students, I argue that the revuelta social did probably not strongly increase the students' feelings of belonging to the Mapuche people, as it was a movement carried by a large part of the Chilean population and it did not necessarily focus on the Mapuche issues. However, the interviews show that the revuelta did generate feelings of solidarity with no-Mapuche urban youth, because a large part of this group also struggles with the negative impacts of the neoliberal system.

The last chapter also partially focussed on the answer to the third sub-question: Which differences in collective indigenous identity formation can be observed between students from Temuco and Santiago, *and how did they play a role during the revuelta social*? In this thesis, I argue that, during the revuelta social, the Mapuche students in Santiago emphasised their identity as urban Mapuche, as can partially be seen by the use of indigenous expressions such as flags and slogans. As seen in chapter 3, *Santiaguino* students sometimes struggled for recognition as urban indigenous people, which led to a stronger expression of identity in the revuelta social. For the students in Temuco, other factors played a role. During the interviews, it became clear that the militarisation of the region was an important element of the revuelta in Temuco, and that it impacted the way in which the students experienced the protests. In general, I argue that the protests did not necessarily influence the identity formation of the students as Mapuche, but that their participation in the

revuelta social was indeed influenced by their indigenous identity. This is especially true for the students in Temuco, as they have already more experience with mobilizations, because of the conflict in the region. While the revuelta social was a national phenomenon, regional history played a strong role in how young people experienced the event. An important observation of this thesis is that for the young Mapuche I interviewed, the revuelta social also stimulated a stronger identification with young no-Mapuche Chileans, as it showed that both groups share a struggle against the county's strong neoliberal system. In addition, this thesis shows that for the interviewees, their status as students formed another strong motivator for their participation in the events of the revuelta. This is not surprising, seeing that Chile has a strong history of student mobilizations. In general, this thesis shows that (collective) identity is often complex, with multiple overlaps and intersections. Social movements and mobilizations are impacted by identities, but also often influence processes of identification, as can be seen in the events of the revuelta social.

The results of this thesis are based on interviews carried out withing a six-month window. This comes with some limitations to the conclusions one can draw. For starters, halfway through these six months, the Chilean people rejected the first version of a new constitution, a process that was started as a direct result of the revuelta. This might have coloured the perspective on the revuelta of the students I interviewed after this date. Another limitation of this research is the fact that I was not able to interview more students in Temuco, which might give a skewed image of the similarities and differences between the Mapuche students who live in these two cities. Further explorations of this topic could be focussed on the later process of writing a new constitution for Chile, and which role the Mapuche play in this process. Alternatively, a more in-depth analysis of the political opinions of Mapuche youth, both rural and urban, could serve to explain how indigeneity and age influence social movements and, in turn, impact political outcomes. As Chile moves into the post-revuelta era, new social movements might emerge that will challenge the current status quo. As for the Mapuche, they will likely keep challenging the status quo that started 500 years ago.

Chaltumay, Gracias, Bedankt, Thank you!

As a young, urban student, interviewing people who were often very much like me hit quite close to home sometimes. Every once in a while, it was a struggle to reconcile my position as a white, Western woman with the experiences of the students I interviewed. At the same time, we were able to bond over our shared anger at the state of the world, funny memes, and my horrible Chilean Spanish accent. Below is an incomplete list of all those who deserve a shout-out:

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Example of interview questions

Annex 1

- *Ask general profile: name, age, occupation, place of origin*

1. a. Which factors contributed to your identity as Mapuche? When did you know you were Mapuche? Which elements make someone Mapuche?
   b. What does it mean to you to be Mapuche in Santiago/Temuco? How do you think this is different from being Mapuche in Temuco/Santiago?
2. a. What are the biggest problems or challenges for the Mapuche people in general?
   b. And for the Mapuche in Santiago/Temuco specifically?
3. What does it mean to you to be a student in university in Chile? Is it important to you? Why or why not?
4. What are the biggest problems or challenges for university students in Chile?
5. a. How was the revuelta social in Santiago/Temuco? What do you think were the differences with Temuco/Santiago?
   b. Did you participate in the events of the revuelta? What did you do? Why did you participate, or why not?
6. a. According to you, what were the demands of the people during the revuelta?
   b. Were there specific demands of the Mapuche? If yes, were they important to you?
   c. Were there specific demands of the students? If yes, were they important to you?
7. a. What do you think of the use of Mapuche cultural expressions during the revuelta in Santiago? Who were the people using them, according to you? Did you think they were representative for the Mapuche cause?
   b. (*if in Temuco*) was it also like that here in Temuco, in your observation?
8. (*If in Temuco*) what do you think of the conflict with the state here in the south? How do you experience it?
9. Do you have anything to add that we haven't talked about?

- *Ask if they know other Mapuche students who might be willing to do an interview.*

Glossary

Annex 2

Araucanos – (*sp*.) old colonial term to describe the Mapuche.
Asambleas territoriales – (*sp*.) neighbourhood assemblies, roundtable sessions during the revuelta social where people came together to discuss their demands.
Cachai – (*Chilean sp*.) slang, 'you understand?' or 'you know?'
Cautinazo – (*sp*.) series of protests and land takeovers in the province of Cautín in the years before the dictatorship.
Commando Jungla – (*sp*.) 'jungle commando'.
Concertación – (*sp*.) a coalition of mostly centre/centre-left political parties that was in power for two decades after the military dictatorship.
Convocatoria – see 'asambleas territoriales'.
Coordinadora de Comunidades en Conflicto Arauco-Malleco (CAM) – (*sp*.) 'Coordinator of Communities in Conflict Arauco-Malleco', a province.
Fundo – (*Chilean sp*.) a large estate, often owned by rich people. See also *Hacienda*
Generación sin miedo – (*sp*.) 'generation without fear'.
Hacienda – (*sp*.) large agricultural estate, a legacy of colonial land allotments to settlers.
Huasos – (*chilean sp*.) Chilean cowboys, often worked for the owner of a *fundo*.
Kimelfe – (*map*.) teacher of Mapuche customs.
Kultrun – (*map*.) round drum that is used in spiritual practices. Has an important meaning in Mapuche cosmovision.
Lamngen – (*map*.) lett. sister/brother. Women greet all people using '*lamngen*'. Men only greet women using '*lamngen*'. See also *Peñi*.
Llellipun – (*map*.) ceremony to ask for a blessing.
Lof – (*map*.) community, family where one is from.
Machi – (*map*.) spiritual leader who is very important in Mapuche cosmovision.
Mapuchimetro – (*Chilean sp*.) 'Mapuche-Measure', a joke. Composite of Mapuche and *metro*, (meter).
Mapudungun – (*map*.) the Mapuche language, lett. 'the language (*dungun*) of the land (*mapu*)'.
Mapurbe – (*sp*.) a composite of Mapuche and 'urbe', city.
Ngillatun – (*map*.) a ceremony to celebrate the earth. For a *lof*, this is the most important celebration on the Mapuche calendar, which takes place every four years.
Peñi – (*map*.) lett. 'brother'. Men only say *peñi* to other men. Men to women, or women to women use '*lamngen*'.
Pewma – (*map*.) a dream of spiritual importance.
Pingüino – (*sp*.) lett. penguin.
Puta – (*sp*.) expletive, lett. whore.
Reduccion – (*sp*.) 'reduction', or the reduction of Mapuche territory to designated lands.
Revuelta social – (*sp*.) social revolt.
Ruka – (*map*.) traditional Mapuche house.
Santiaguino – (*sp*.) from Santiago.
Temuqueño – (*sp*.) from Temuco.
Toda la mierda/ a la mierda- (*sp*.) expletive, 'eat shit, fuck off'.
Toma – (*sp*.) 'taking, occupation'.
Trarilonko – (*map*.) headband that is part of the traditional Mapuche clothes worn by men.
Wallmapu – (*map*.) The official name for the Mapuche ancestral land (including the land that is currently under *winka* ownership) in Mapudungun.
Wariache – (*map*.) neologism, a composite of 'waria' (city) and 'che' (people).
Wenufoye – (map.) the Mapuche flag.
Winka – (*map*.) outsider, no-Mapuche, often used in a derogatory manner.

Wipala – (*Quechua*) the flag of Andean indigenous peoples.

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