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**THE CHILEAN NATIONAL IDENTITY
AND THE INDIGENOUS PEOPLES OF CHILE**

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PREFACE

This research which started as an exploration into the complex terrain of the Chilean identity finally turned into a painful soul-searching process, because having been born in the country it proved impossible to distance myself and become a kind of outside witness. On the contrary, I developed an awareness of the dark corners of the Chilean identity, and realised that as a Chilean I have a blame to bear for the invisibility into which the 'pueblos originarios' have been relegated, and also a task ahead, of which this thesis is a step.

I am very grateful for the assistance received, in Britain from my supervisors, Dr. J. Collie and Professor S. Bassnett, and in Chile from my dear friends B. Kase from the Catholic University and R. Yañez, from Universidad Andrés Bello, whose support all through the process proved to be invaluable. This thesis is therefore, to them.

ABSTRACT

This research was prompted by the questions ‘What is being Chilean?, Who are the Chileans? Do all those born in the country feel the same about their nationality and about their fellow nationals? A large number of Chileans will describe their country as culturally and ethnically homogenous, probably because they do not include the native peoples in their description; least of all would they acknowledge that mestizo blood runs in their veins. Therefore, my objective has been to deconstruct the myth homogeneity in the Chilean identity. Moreover, this research, which started as an exploration into the complex terrain of the Chilean identity, finally turned into a rather painful soul-searching process. It is obvious that having been born in Chile, it was impossible for me not to become involved, not to feel touched more than once, not to feel guilty more than once.

The identities of the indigenous peoples and the descendants of Spanish colonisers have been profoundly transformed during 500 years of social, cultural and political change. The rise of the nation states and the construction of national identities after the wars of Independence were key moments for Latin America, but although no longer under colonial rule, the social and cultural differences between ‘Indians’ and Spaniards continued into the republic, based on the imagined superiority of the Spanish culture, language and religion. Currently Chile, where in recent times – and in the past as well – the military played a crucial role, is in a process of globalisation and reconstruction of the national identity.

The research was framed by the understanding that the imagined community of the nation is formed by ‘us’ and ‘them’, and a distinction which does not indicate a binary opposition but a complex articulation which both supports and fractures the nation. In the imagined community of the Chilean nation identities are multiple and cultures are multiple too. They are constituted in relation to dimensions such as history, place and culture. Geography, in Chile, is also a defining marker of national identity that does not imply inert geography, but an essential dimension in the cultural and social dynamics of the nation.

I challenge the view, long sustained by many Chileans that their country is culturally and ethnically homogeneous. In order to achieve this end I explore the 'skeleton in the cupboard' of the Chilean identity, that is to say, their mestizo origin. With that objective in mind, this research was conceived as a contribution to make Chileans come to terms with the fact that they have some amount of 'Indian' blood in their veins. Only when they are able to take that step, will they be able to appreciate and take pride in the ancient cultures they descend from because in that way they will shed light into that dark corner of their identity. National communities are not only in people's heads or in the imagination of a nation of citizens, but are projected and articulated through channels like the media and educational practice; they are also embodied and practised. From the moment that identity is conceived, not as a fixed ethos formed in a remote past, but as a future project, Chileans great challenge now is to define what they want to be. There may be different projects, alternative proposals and different versions of national identity that will lead on to different roads, but they must include a notion of collective identity that is open to alterity, invention and transgression and also a diversity that Chileans have so far refused to accept.

INTRODUCTION

The thesis seeks to illuminate some aspects of identity building in Chile and in order to do that it proposes to explore layers of complexity embedded in this process. This work deals with present day Chilean national identity in the larger context of Latin American identities and other post colonial situations, as well as in the light of the culture, history and geography of the country. It is an exploration into the complex terrain of perceptions as it seeks to show aspects of Chilean identity perceived in the light of the Chileans' own representations as well as through outsiders' eyes and its main objective is to deconstruct the myth of homogeneity in the Chilean identity.

Identity is a topic of our times, one that is currently being discussed. Belonging seems to be a more powerful and lasting force. This millenary force whose vitality is an enigmatic issue, is difficult to explain, except perhaps that it is the community's space what gives sense to life. In times of crisis, questions about identity are asked more often and louder. My country seems to have lived through a continuous state of crisis or a succession of crises in the last decades of the last century, to which the new millennium has not brought clear answers.

'The question of cultural identity does not usually arise in situations of relative isolation, prosperity and stability. For identity to become an issue, a period of instability and crises, a threat to the old-established ways, seems to be required, especially if this happens in the presence of, or in relation to, other cultural formations.'¹

In the determination of identities, there is a kind of magic that links identity to origin. The secret of this magic is that identity is what "gives sense to temporality". It is necessary then a referent located, in a way, outside time, in a moment when it is free from instability and the fugacity of events. One possibility is to try to find meaning in the moment of death because the end gives a sense of totality to existence. But this is not a good option when we deal with the collective memory that can only re-signify through the only other moment

that it is immovable and gives us a safe referent, the moment of the origin. Its function is to re-signify, to re-order the past. So, to look back at the origins - and at the remote past, in this case, at the Hispanic and the Pre-Colombian pasts - is in this case, a strategy that could prove useful and illuminating to deal with identity and difference.

Roberto Fernández Retamar, writing about Latin America, mentions what he calls 'our irremediable colonial condition'.² Gabriela Mistral - Chilean Nobel Prize for Literature - agreed with him when she said that for her 'the Colonial period had not finished'.³ I think she was right because her native country had not been born a republic, as some seem to want to believe. Neither did the republic obliterate a colonial past it wanted to forget. This lack of integration with the past, this loss of the long-term collective memory may be a strategy to forget that it is there where the real roots of the country's identity are. On the other hand, the survival of the colonial period, warned Gabriela Mistral, is above all an expression of the wish that the past finally becomes past. It is a haunted past that can not be shunned, but that what it was needs to be re-invented, re-processed. After all if there is something that characterises the ex-centric identity that makes the Chilean 'alterity' with respect to the European paradigms, is the archaic residue, that hidden, denied background of the remote past.

In order to understand Chilean identity we must interrogate the past, and from its answers, Chileans may eventually recognise not only the existence of their indigenous communities, but also their cultural and political collective rights, as a way of strengthening the democratic life of the country. During the two or three last decades there has started to be an increased recognition of the positive aspects of cultural diversity. Now, an understanding that every culture is revitalised through its relations with other cultures, and that cultural alterity is the best tool to consolidate one's culture, is also urgent.

¹ Jorge Larraín, *Ideology and Cultural Identity*, (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1994), p. 143.

² Roberto Fernández Retamar, *Caliban and other essays*, trans. by Edward Baker (Mineapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987), p. 3.

³ Roque Esteban Scarpa, 'Carta a Aguirre Cerda', (1 de febrero de 1920), *La Desterrada en su Patria* (Santiago: Editorial Nascimento, 1977), t. III, p. 339.

Many dominant societies have believed that ethnic minorities aspire to live the same life as the rest and that for this they need assistance. In other words, minorities were not entirely 'others' and were on their way to becoming 'us' - which in my country's case, is almost Chileans. Undoubtedly many are totally integrated into modern society. However, this adaptation that may have implied a neglect of their own culture is not an automatic process, but the result of either a personal decision or the imposition of some else's decision. Nevertheless, today, many Indigenous Chilean people prefer to live in their own communities. The late 19th century governments' decision to build a 'unified' national society, comprised only by Chilean citizens - ethnic minorities have never been mentioned in the national constitutions - is being confronted by indigenous demands. Contrary to what was expected, already in the first years of the third millennium, the mono-ethnic composition of the society cannot be sustained any longer and the current discourse of homogeneity has become a strait-jacket.

No doubt Chile will, sooner or later, grant its 'pueblos originarios' some kind of legal recognition. But that will not be enough. What is needed is a change in the Chileans' perception of their ethnic minorities which should eventually lead to a change in appreciation and attitude towards them and a recognition of being they themselves mestizos. My point then is that unless Chileans recognise that theirs is a multicultural, multi-ethnic and hybrid society, they will never get to know their own reality: diverse, and plural, and especially the existence of indigenous communities with differentiated identities and their own forms of social organisation.

The reasons for ignoring Otherness point to a social distortion, a cultural difficulty of sharing the same place and space with difference. The 'other' that is ignored soon becomes invisible. Or worse, the omission of the Other often results in its disappearance.⁴ But the

⁴ Cletus Gregor Barié, 'Panorama', *América Indígena, Pueblos Indígenas y Derechos Constitucionales en América Latina: Proceedings of the Instituto indigenista Interamericano, of the ASA*, 58, 3-4 (2000), 21-41, p. 22.

perception of the new Indigenous social movements is different: 'the Indian does not want to die'.⁵

Lately, the Chilean indigenous communities, that also constitute some of the poorest groups in the country, have reached some degree of visibility that traditionally had been denied to them. After five relatively silent centuries the invisible indigenous peoples are starting, in a slow but persistent way, to recreate old and new ways of organisation, to defend their identity, their rights and their lands. That is why I suggest that the field of the indigenous communities needs serious reflection and research and hope that this thesis may be a step in this direction and a contribution that may help to construct a new Chilean identity.

The work begins with a theoretical overview that provides a framework for subsequent chapters. It incorporates key sites, such as the imaginary and the ways in which imagining nations provide the context within which national identities are called forth. Imaginary and embodied nations are lived through the discursive practices of everyday life elaborated in the living nation. These axes are not a series of hierarchical levels but a set of articulations which both generate a fragile consensus – a centred nation – and equally fracture the nation, thus contributing to the de-centring of the national. In the second chapter I take Chile as a case study of the development of an official nationalism, the impact of its history and the importance of geography. This chapter also discusses how racism fractures and reorganises the national project. The third chapter elaborates on and then deconstructs the Spanish legacy that still shapes the Latin American nations. In order to deconstruct the image of a fictive ethnicity the fifth examines the living, but invisible nation, that of the native peoples. Finally, in concluding I suggest that only in the complexity of a multi-ethnic and multi-cultural society will Chileans be able to find their true identity.

⁵ Leopoldo Zea, 'Negritud e Indigenismo', *Cuadernos de Cultura Latino Americana*, 89, (1979), 23-36, p. 29.

I. GENERAL BACKGROUND

I.1. NATIONS AND IDENTITY

Belonging to a nation is taken for granted by most individuals for most of the time. Nation is neither a modern notion nor is it easy to define. Radcliffe argues that the current form of the nation is deeply embedded in notions of modernity, a fact that attests to its 'importance to official national imaginings'.⁶ In fact, the nation state, that particular and historical spatial constellation of social relations, was the result of the shift of sovereignty in the form of the person of the monarch to the state and its citizens in the nineteenth century.⁷

Anthony Smith defines nation as 'a named human population sharing an historic territory, common myths and historical memories, a mass public culture, a common economy and common legal rights and duties for all members'.⁸ For Madan Sarup a nation is a political arrangement of boundaries; it is a territorial space with a political centre, which aims at unification and fosters a sense of belonging, a rootedness, a sense of sovereignty.⁹ Benedict Anderson, on the other hand, defines the nation as an imagined political community, imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign so, nations are not based on territories, but are mental constructs. Cullen introduces the concept of nation as a self awareness of a people: a people unfolds itself to become a nation and nation appears, as the political expression of its cultural identity.

'El concepto de patria emergió como el resultado de la experiencia que constituye al pueblo, en el desarrollo del nosotros a la comunidad, de la tierra a la tradición. El pueblo se hace nación, y la nación aparece como autoconciencia del pueblo. Esta experiencia de los pueblos, la de su organización como nación (autoconciencia política), ocupa un lugar central en nuestra fenomenología... Lo que en todo caso es

⁶ Sarah Radcliffe and Sallie Westwood, *Remaking the Nation, Place, Identity and Politics in Latin America* (London and New York, 1996), p. 167.

⁷ John Agnew, 'The New Geopolitics of Power' in *Human Geography Today*, ed. by Doreen Massey, John Allen, Philip Sarre (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1999), pp. 173-191.

⁸ Anthony D. Smith, *National Identity* (London: Penguin Books, 1991), p. 14.

⁹ Madan Sarup, *Identity and Culture in the Modern World* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1966), p.130.

importante es señalar que la nación es el resultado de una experiencia de los pueblos. Es el pueblo el que hace la nación, y no tiene sentido hablar de nación sino como la puesta en juego de todo lo implicado en la simple experiencia del nosotros. Pero, también, la nación significa la *decisión* de ser de los pueblos, que en realidad es exponer su mero estar, no más, a la historia: *es estar siendo*.¹⁰

Summarising, Cullen proposes that a nation is a community that simply 'wants to be' (quiere ser).¹¹ Jansen says that the nation must also be imagined as limited because if nationalism as a discourse creates structures and maintains national identity, it can only do so by simultaneously conceiving the existence of other national identity.¹² In the same line as Anderson, Nicolas Shumway, says that nations are not natural entities, but rhetorical inventions that have to be renewed permanently.¹³ These different definitions reveal the complex and abstract nature of national identity.

The traditional analysis of the nation is often focused on the state.¹⁴ Modern statehood was not achieved independently of processes of nation building, even though state and nation can be distinguished analytically. So, before proceeding further, it is essential to distinguish the notion of nation from that of state, as they are often confused. A dictionary definition of state, as a legal notion, states it is a 'political body with cohesive authority supreme over an individual group'. State, here refers to a set of institutions ruling over a discrete territory, while nation signifies a group of people who share a sense of common destiny and occupy a common space.¹⁵ The state, therefore, is an 'imagined community' of laws and legal institutions whose members are bound by a common code and have uniform rights and obligations. The laws emanate from a single source and reflect the sovereignty of the nation-state, which is, in this way, a producer of national cultures.

¹⁰ Carlos, Cullen, *Fenomenología de la Crisis Moral: Sabiduría de la experiencia de los pueblos* (Buenos Aires: Ediciones Castañeda, 1978), pp. 21-22.

¹¹ Ibid., p. 39.

¹² Stef Jansen, 'Homeless at Home: Narration of Post Yugoslav Identities' in *Migrants of Identity* ed. by Nigel Rapport and Andrew Dawson (Oxford and New York: Berg, 1980), p. 101.

¹³ Tomás Eloy Martínez, 'Nicolás Shumway y la Invención de Argentina: Cómo se escribe un país', en *Primer Plano*, (1993), 1-17, (p. 12).

¹⁴ Radcliffe, p. 14.

¹⁵ Agnew, p. 188.

Madan Sarup argues that pre-modern 'ethnie' (ethnic communities, pl. of ethnos), share a considerable continuity of aims while nations, modern and ancient, have common features.¹⁶ In the first place, nations are not static, but are the products of processes, albeit long-term ones. These processes of mobilisation, inclusion, exclusion, territorialisation and politicisation are never finally concluded and are always subject to redefinition. John Agnew agrees with Sarup when he analyses the current reworking of the significance of the nation state from the political field. Secondly, besides not being static, nations do not exist in a timeless present but are long-term historical processes, continually re-enacted and reconstructed with definite limits. Hence, their historical roots and accretions are continually qualifying the 'modernity' of any nation.¹⁷ This means that nations require ethnic cores, which if they lack, they must 're-invent'. It also means that nations need homelands, not just terrain on which to nurture their identities, unities and autonomies, but historic territories in which 'our ancestors have lived'. That is why the monuments and sacred sites, which embody 'our' ancestral title deeds and memories, are so crucial for engendering a sense of common nationality. Finally, he says that nations need heroes and golden ages.¹⁸ In short, in any nation there is always a great complexity.¹⁹ Furthermore, in Benedict Anderson's definition, both the nation and the state are 'imagined communities, at once sovereign and limited with which otherwise anonymous individuals can identify. People who do not know each other can appear to inhabit the same homogeneous and identifiable space, by belonging to an imagined community and posterity. These 'imagined communities come to serve vital psychological needs.'²⁰ In fact our 'belongingness' constitutes what Benedict Anderson calls an imagined community.²¹

Although Sarup argues that nationality is only a judicial category, the term nationality is also one of utmost complexity.²² A national state is always based on nationality, but a

¹⁶ Ethnie: a named human population with myths of common ancestry, shared historical memories and one or more common elements of culture, including an association with a homeland, and some degree of solidarity, at least among the élites. Smith, *Myths and Memories of the Nation*, p. 15.

¹⁷ Sarup, p. 212.

¹⁸ Sarup, 206.

¹⁹ Jorge Larraín, *Identidad Chilena* (Santiago de Chile: LOM Ediciones, 2001), p. 141.

²⁰ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities* (London: Verso), 1983.

²¹ Hall, 'Cultural Identity and Diaspora' in *Contemporary Postcolonial Theory* ed. by Padmini Mongia (London and New York: Arnold, 1997), (pp. 110-121), p. 117..

²² Sarup, p. 131.

national identity may exist without a national state, as for example, in partitions of Europe and the Mapuche in Chile. Nationality is often used in a concrete sense but it may also be used in an abstract or ideal sense. When used concretely it refers to a group of persons bound together by certain common attributes, or may designate a non-independent national group that has not attained national sovereignty; in the abstract sense it means the idea of the grouping of persons in nations.

Although the factors of a common country, traditions and language, have been used in order to define it, nationality does not depend exclusively on them. For example, language, which may be an important element in the existence of a nationality, is not a *sine qua non*. The view that people speaking the same language or almost the same linguistic form have the same nationality conflicts with the legal and social concept of nation.

The term nationalism has been overtly present in political thought since the French Revolution. Smith defines nationalism as an 'ideological movement for attaining and maintaining autonomy, unity and identity on behalf of a population deemed by some of its members to constitute an actual or potential nation'.²³ Madan Sarup analyses the link between the nation and nationalism, which would be that nationalism is not the awakening of nations to self-consciousness but 'it invents nations where they do not exist'.²⁴ This means that difference is important in relation to nationalism, as a feeling of collective identity.

Anthony Smith argues that the debate of nationalism is divided between those scholars who see the nation as a modern and constantly changing construction, and those who see it as an immemorial, unchanging communal essence.²⁵ For Castells, it is culturally and politically constructed.²⁶ Jansen, in turn, stresses the dependence of nationalist discourse on the process of re-interpretation of the past.²⁷ For the Chilean Claudio Véliz nationalism is about origins and nationalistic feelings are often if not always, accompanied by curiosity about

²³ Anthony D. Smith, *National Identity* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1991), p. 71.

²⁴ Sarup, p. 181.

²⁵ Anthony D. Smith, *Myths and Memories of the Nation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), p. 163.

²⁶ Manuel Castells, *The Power of Identity*, Vol. 2 (Oxford & Mass.: Blackwell Publications, 1997), p. 32.

one's own historical traditions.²⁸ However, which factors play which role in the formation of each nationalism and of each nation, depends on historical contexts, on the materials available to collective memory, and on the interaction between conflicting power strategies. One of the crucial dimensions of identity is national identity. Madan Sarup describes it as an expression of a way of life that has a powerful appeal because it is a mode of self-fulfilment.²⁹ National identity is an ambiguous concept that can be viewed in different ways. There are essentialist visions that see the cultural identity of a country – national identity – as a set of more or less fixed properties or essence, linked to a territory, blood and origin, and valid forever.³⁰ In other words, cultural identity can be thought of as a set of common experiences and shared values that took shape in the past as an essence. So, this identity that is fixed in an originating moment, has a set of 'true', authentic, unchanging characteristics. In an extreme fundamentalist view, any alteration of this identity could be perceived negatively, because anything that may attempt to interrupt the continuity and preservation of its characteristics or mean a loss of roots, or rupture becomes a threat.

On the other hand, a non-essentialist perspective might question whether it is possible to speak of a 'true' identity, that is one fixed for all times and in all places.³¹ Today, Cultural Studies (and its configuration of collaborating disciplines: sociology, history, geography, linguistics and anthropology), tend towards a appraisal of differences and recognition of the plurality of identities to which persons can lay claim.³² In fact, a national identity is fundamentally multi-dimensional.

Politically there was no nation in ancient Greece, although culturally there existed a community. Today there is no Mapuche nation, although culturally they constitute a community. There is no doubt that the creation of a national identity is part of the political

²⁷ Jansen, p. 104.

²⁸ Claudio Véliz, *The Centralist Tradition of Latin America* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1980), p. 163.

²⁹ Jansen, 131.

³⁰ Elaine Baldwin, and others, *Introducing Cultural Studies* (London: Prentice Hall Europe, 1999), 15.

³¹ Judy Giles and Tim Middleton, *Studying Culture* (Oxford: Blackwells, 1999), p. 36.

³² Carlin Dick, 'British Cultural Studies as a Multi-dimensional Subject', in *British Studies Now*, The British Council, 1-5, (1995), pp. 17-20.

process of establishing the nation.³³ This suggests that national identity involves some sense of political community, however tenuous. A political community in turn implies at least some common institutions, a single code of rights and duties for all members of the community. It also suggests a definite social space, a fairly well demarcated territory with which the members identify and where they feel they belong.³⁴

‘Nations claim a deep affinity with a national territory made meaningful to them through a sense of community and history connected to particular symbolic places and landscapes within that territory. What is important is the representations of these places, the symbolic landscapes of national identity. The representations of the nations are produced from particular position – they have politics as well as poetics’.³⁵

However, Radcliffe argues that in ‘placing the nation’, there may be a potential overlap of territory, culture and population of the nation, that is, there can be a disjuncture between the national place and the national identity. So, populations that have no ‘place’ in which to express and consolidate that identity can imagine the ‘space of the nation’.³⁶

Nation and national identity are complex constructs composed of a number of interrelated components – ethnic, cultural, territorial, economic and legal/political – that signify bonds among members of communities united by shared memories, myths and traditions. In fact, ethnicity, religion, language and territory, per se, do not suffice to build a nation and induce nationalism, whereas shared experiences and shared projects do as in the case of the United States, an ethnically heterogeneous country which has shared experiences and projects together with a strong national identity.

In considering the various components of national identity, it is interesting to examine one particular feature, its relation to the past. One of the paradoxes of contemporary society is its appetite for innovation coupled with a deep nostalgia.³⁷ The ‘past’ that is handed down

³³ Sarup, 140.

³⁴ Pavlina Proteou, ‘National Identity, Minorities and the Greek State, the Ntopioi/Slavophones of Greek Macedonia’ (unpublished master’s thesis, University of Warwick, 1995), pp. 6-10.

³⁵ Baldwin, p. 162.

³⁶ Radcliffe, p. 20.

³⁷ Anthony D. Smith, *The Ethnic Origins of Nations* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1986), p. 174.

is multi-layered and susceptible to different interpretations and also it often contains quite different strands of tradition. Modern ethnic and nations have sought to 'rediscover' or 'reconstruct' their communal pasts, with one main concern: to breathe life into the past, to create a truly living past. There are two ways in which a community can locate itself and its 'true state' revealed through poetic spaces and golden ages. The first involves the uses of landscape, the second the uses of history.

In the first case, communities can be located through poetic spaces and the uses of landscape. This means that identities are very often connected to place, both locally and more widely.³⁸ Communities are inseparable from particular habitats and in their myths their origins may reach back into a mysterious and primordial time. The same happens with the fusion of community and terrain through the identification of natural with historical sites. In Chile, the landscape, especially the mountains have become part of history and the people in a nationalist imagery. Smith argues that this union of community with nature may also be achieved by a conscious pursuit.³⁹ In fact, all kinds of sacred sites, buildings and natural features can delimit and locate a community in a landscape.

Secondly, the 'true state' of communities can be located through their myths of the 'golden ages', involving uses of history. In general two golden periods stand out for subsequent generations: that of the founding fathers who presided over the origins of the community, and the 'golden age' of communal splendour, with its sagas, saints and heroes that can be understood in the context of a whole mythology of heroic origins. These figures or events are invested with particular significance, 'thereby representing or standing in for a whole nexus of determining factors.'⁴⁰ For the Argentinean philosopher Carlos Cullen, the immediate form of a people's condition is represented in myths: 'El sustrato profundo del pensamiento popular, es la lógica propia que es típica del mito.'⁴¹ García de la Huerta states that one of the functions of myths is the negation of reality, to re-create it in a fiction,

³⁸ Baldwin, p. 19.

³⁹ Smith, *The Ethnic Origins of Nations*, pp. 174-208.

⁴⁰ Giles, p. 97.

⁴¹ Cullen, p. 124.

dream or desire; thus, myth is also negation.⁴² In this case, myths can be understood as a signifying practice whose function is to produce meaning by assembling a set of signs that can be symbolically interpreted.⁴³ Typically, as Smith argues, motifs or elements in any nation's mythology include:

1. A myth of origins in time; i.e. when the community was 'born';
2. A myth of origins in space; i.e. where the community was 'born';
3. A myth of ancestry, i.e. who bore us;
4. A myth of migration; i.e. whither we wandered;
5. A myth of liberation; i.e. how we were freed;
6. A myth of the golden age; i.e. how we became great and heroic.⁴⁴

In the case of nation building, it is of course possible to abstract the 'virtues' required for the tasks nationalists set themselves. They are probably remarkably similar everywhere: martial courage, generosity, self-sacrifice, endurance, loyalty and above all, 'patriotism'.

It is also easy to appreciate the uses of history and nature in the task of nation building. A mythology of the past and the poetry of nature can turn a mass of people into an institutionalised nation, giving them a sense of belonging and identity, unifying and integrating them. It gives people a sense of stability, a sense of their dignity and a sense of solidarity and unity through its myth of common descent. Attachments to specific places have a mythical and subjective quality that matters for ethnic identification. It is where we belong. It is also often a sacred land, the land of our forefathers, poets and priests, which makes our homeland. However, a danger of mythologising would be that myths, which unite people, can also obscure what 'really' happened. For example, many Chileans perceive their country as a racially homogeneous one, and do not recognise its hybridity, in part because they close their eyes to the 'real' past and go instead for a fictionalised myth.

⁴² Marcos García de la Huerta, *Reflexiones Americanas: Ensayos de Intra-Historia* (Santiago de Chile: Ediciones LOM, 1999), p. 149.

⁴³ Giles, p. 97.

⁴⁴ Smith, *Myths and Memories of the Nation*, Ch. 2.

The issue of identity is one of the most current topics that emerge in political, historical, economic and psychological to cultural contexts.⁴⁵ A current concept of identity is not an essentialist, but a strategic and positional one. It accepts that identities are ‘never unified and, in late modern times, increasingly fragmented and fractured; never singular but multiply constructed across different, often intersecting and antagonistic, discourses, practices and positions. They are subject to a radical historicisation, and are constantly in the process of change and transformation’.⁴⁶ Furthermore, identity must be ‘treated as a search, either physical or cognitive, and conceived of in terms of fluidities – of time and space, time or space’. Rapport and Dawson also say that traditional anthropological classifications of identity fail to convey this movement: that identity is to be treated as inextricably tied to fluidity of movements across time and space. This is movement that has to be understood in terms of actual physical motion and as imagination: an awareness of movement as potentiality.⁴⁷

Stuart Hall offers two models for the production of identities, making a historical and strategic distinction. He says that this model assumes there is some intrinsic and essential content to any identity, which is defined by either a common origin or a common structure of experience or both. This model also emphasises the impossibility of such fully constituted, separate identities. Identities are always relational and incomplete, in process. ‘Identity is a structured representation which only achieves its positive through the narrow eye of the negative’.⁴⁸ Thus the emphasis here is on the multiplicity of identities and differences rather than on a singular identity and on the connections or articulations between the fragments or difference.

⁴⁵ Gertrude Szamose, ‘National Identity in Contemporary Britain’, in *British Studies Now: The British Council*, 97-102, (p. 103).

⁴⁶ Stuart Hall, ‘Who Needs Identity?’ in *Questions of Cultural Identity* ed. by Stuart Hall & Paul du Gay (London: Sage Publications, 1996), pp. 1-17, (p. 3).

⁴⁷ Nigel Rapport and Andrew Dawson, *Migrants of Identity: Perceptions of Home in a World of Movement* (Oxford and New York: Berg, 1998), p. 4.

⁴⁸ Stuart Hall, ‘The local and the global: Globalisation and ethnicity’ in *Culture, Globalisation and the World-System*, ed. by A. King (London: Macmillan, (19-39), p. 21.

In the second model there are a number of different, overlapping, intersecting and sometimes even competing figures which, taken together, define the space within which cultural studies has theorised the problem of identity.

From the moment identity is viewed not an inborn essence but a process of social construction, critics such as Grossberg, Pratt and Baldwin have considered it necessary to establish the constitutive elements from which identity is constructed:

a) Identities are multiple, either for a given individual or for a collective actor. One meaning of identity refers to a common quality or set of qualities with which a person or a group of persons are connected. In this sense, identity has to do with the way in which individuals and groups define themselves when they relate to or identify with certain categories as shared social categories. In their personal identity individuals share certain group loyalties or characteristics such as religion, gender, class, race, profession or nationality that are culturally determined and contribute to identify the subject and its identity. All these personal identities are rooted in culturally determined cultural contexts. Each of these shared categories comprise a cultural identity.

b) Identities are connected in a fundamentally geographical way.⁴⁹ Geographies of identity become embodied and at personal level are material elements that include the body, which in this case acts as a 'symbol of society', representing its anxieties and preoccupations, and other possessions that give the individual elements for self-awareness.⁵⁰ In this case objects can influence the human personality: it is through this material aspect that identity can relate to cultural industries as access to certain material goods can also be the access to some imaginary group represented by these goods. Material things make people belong, or give them a sense of belonging in an imagined community. In this way, they contribute to mould individual personalities from the moment they symbolise a collective or cultural identity that the individual wishes to access.

⁴⁹ Baldwin, p. 167.

⁵⁰ Giles, p. 242.

c) Identity is always constituted out of difference presupposing the existence of 'others', who have other ways of living, values, customs and ideas, together with a comparison with the 'other', using mechanisms of differentiation.⁵¹ Identity presupposes the existence of 'others', who have other ways of living, values, customs and ideas, together with a comparison with the 'other', using mechanisms of differentiation. Thus, the vision of 'us', different to 'them' and 'others', emerges. Yet, this making is also often a problematic process of exclusion: 'it is about defining 'us' by defining 'them', and in turn disallowing 'them', real or symbolic access to the nation's geographies'.⁵²

'The establishment of identity necessarily involves exclusion: non-essential identities are nevertheless boundary projects; identities are constructed through identifying who one is not.'⁵³

Therefore, identity presupposes the existence of a human group. This process of identification in opposition to an 'other' has always existed in history. In the construction of an identity the comparison and differentiation with the other plays a fundamental role. Although differentiation is a necessary process in identity construction, hostility to the 'other' may become a threat in any identity process. It may also be possible to find historical examples, as could be the Holocaust, in which the opposition is such that encourages exclusion, or aggression.

For a given individual or for a collective actor there may be a plurality of identities. In fact, identity may perhaps be seen as a multiple dimensional space in which a variety of writings blend and crash.⁵⁴ But identities, that are sources of meaning, must be distinguished from what sociologists have called roles, or role-sets; identities organise the meaning – the symbolic identification by a social actor of the purposed of his/her action - while roles organise the functions.

⁵¹ Lawrence Grossberg, 'Identity and Cultural Studies: Is that all there is?' in *Questions of Cultural Identity*, ed. by Stuart Hall and Paul du Gay (London: Sage Publications), pp. 87-105, (p. 93).

⁵² Baldwin, p. 168.

⁵³ Geraldine Pratt, 'Geographies of Identity and Difference: Marking Boundaries in *Human Geography Today*, ed. by Doreen Massey (Cambridge: Polity Press), 1999, pp. 151-165, (p. 153).

⁵⁴ Sarup. P. 25.

Richard Jenkins distinguishes between internal and external definitions in collective social identity, which he describes as constituted in a dialectic interconnection of their processes. For a collective identity to emerge individuals must be able to differentiate themselves from others using similar criteria and a communal shared sense of belonging. This process of internal identification is also recognised by others. Jenkins also makes an analytical distinction between groups and categories, that is, a community that identifies itself (self-identification by one group), and a community that is identified and defined by others (a category in itself). He suggests that the internal/external dialectic can be projected over the interaction of the processes of group identification and social categorisation.⁵⁵

Collective identities, or cultural identities, as Stuart Hall called them, refer to some culturally defined characteristics shared by many individuals who are continually recreating their collective identities as they express themselves as actors of a national identity, but at the same time collective identities make these actions possible.⁵⁶ To express this same idea Cullen plays with the two meanings of the verb to be in Spanish: 'Saberse comunidad es para el pueblo saberse un *nosotros infinitos horizontalmente*, es decir que va siendo desde un pasado y se abre a un futuro. Es lo que expresemos como *estar-siendo*.'⁵⁷

In spite of this close relationship there are differences between these forms of identity. For example the psychological elements of personal identities must not be transposed to cultural identities, because even if it might be possible to talk about a personal identity in terms of character, it is not possible to talk about a collective identity in terms of ethnic character. Nineteenth century writers thought they could do this but nowadays in post-Freudian times, many prefer not to, since there has been a development in thinking in both cases (personal and collective). Part of the reason why it is not possible to talk psychologically about collective identity is that they are not necessarily unitary. In addition, personal identities are formed by culturally defined collective identities that cannot exist separated from the individuals. Moreover, personal and collective identities are interrelated

⁵⁵ Richard Jenkins, *Social Identities* (London: Routledge, 1996), p. 23.

⁵⁶ Part of the theory of structuration of Anthony Giddens, *The Constitution of Society* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1984), Chap. 1.

⁵⁷ Cullen, p. 19.

and need each other, as they cannot exist without each other.

Besides, cultural identities are not static; they develop and can decline or disappear. They can co-exist and are not mutually exclusive. In the construction of personal identities there may be several identities and in different degrees of intensity, such as gender or being a football fan. Furthermore, cultural identities produce different meaning and histories with which the individuals can identify. Though the nation is a special case in that it has demanded and got an unparalleled degree of compromise.

Collective identity is in itself a cultural artefact, a type of 'imagined community'. A way of understanding this is through Benedict Anderson's notion of nations as 'imagined communities', as Anderson describes it.⁵⁸ They are 'imagined because the members may never know their fellow members, yet in their minds lives the image of the communion. But a lot has to be forgotten about internal divisions; in short they are imagined as communities. The imagining of a community is a collective cultural process, as it defines nations, national identities and territories.⁵⁹ This should be applicable to other cultural identities as gender, race, class, etc. All these cultural identities have their own history and resonance.

Post-structuralism sees identities as non-static or unitary, but shifting, contingent and lacking in fixity. Stef Jansen speaks of the 'hybrid sphere of identity', where there is a constant dialogue between movement and fixity, between dynamism and stasis. And of course, inequality and power relations permeate every dialogue, so that every identity remains not only internally contested, but also subject to questioning or undermining by other narratives.⁶⁰ This malleability is related to conceptions of time and space, and the relationships between histories, cultures and biographies. If national identity is conceived as a historical process in permanent construction and re-construction of the 'imagined community' that is the nation, then changes or alterations in its constitutive elements do not necessarily mean that the national identity is lost, but rather that it is being reconstructed.

⁵⁸ Anderson, *Imagined Communities*.

⁵⁹ Baldwin, p. 160.

⁶⁰ Jansen, p. 107.

Time and history are cultural formations. Pre-modern time has often been characterised as static, but this is a modern assumption, imposed on the pre-modern in order to emphasise the dynamism of modernity. In fact, cultural studies show a diversity of conceptions of time in different cultures. While history as a linear, progressive narrative is a product of modernity, different social groups have constructed different historical narratives to explain their modern identities. These narratives complicate a simple causal relationship between past and present. Relating the past to the present thus becomes a task that involves a whole constellation of different positions. The role of time is important, not because modernity may refer to a special period but because it brings with it a new concept of time and turns into the future. Habermas argues that the modern world is in opposition to the old one because it opens into the future.⁶¹

Therefore, it is in the very nature of an imagined community, constitutive and constituting, that the understanding that different groups and institutions (whether cross-class, elite or popular) express their collective subjectivities and also their projects. In this way identity is both a legacy and a project. An adequate conception of national identity not only looks back into the past as a privileged reservoir where important elements of the identity were born, but it also looks into the future and conceives identity as a project. Here we can refer to Habermas who argues that identity is not only given, but also and simultaneously, it is our own project.⁶² On the other hand, Sarah Radcliffe issues a word of warning about national projects of identity when she says that ‘the multiplicity of mirrors, of subject positions and identities are the basis for de-essentialising, de-centring the social. Some national projects of identity might attempt at centring, however, it is obvious that any project articulated by a specific discourse cannot have the monopoly of identity without considering popular forms, meanings and traditions, that is, what could be called tradition or popular legacy.

⁶¹ Jurgen Habermas, *La Constelación posnacional* (Barcelona: Paidós, 2000), p. 171.

⁶² Habermas, ‘The limits of Neo-Historicism: interview with J.M. Ferry’, in *Autonomy and solidarity*, ed. by Jurgen Habermas (London: Verso, 1992), p. 23.

Every society constructs a self-identity in part in relation to the construction and representations of others. Running through such identity formations there are specific culture traditions, histories and geographies.⁶³ Identity is a construction, a consequence of interaction between people, institutions and practices in a given place.⁶⁴ Furthermore, it has been suggested that the idea of nation is inseparable from its narration and that narration attempts interminably, to constitute identity against difference.⁶⁵ So, the formation of the cultural presupposes the existence of an 'Other, with its values, characteristics and ways of life.'⁶⁶ In other words, 'the "inside" of a national identity has to be approached through its boundaries with an "outside"⁶⁷. But in the encounter between cultures, power is always involved, especially if one culture possesses a more developed economic and military basis. Whenever there is a conflictive and asymmetric encounter between different cultures, by invasion, colonisation or other means, the issue of cultural identity arises particularly strongly.

Chilean identity has been constructed in interaction with some 'others', that are also countries. These significant and 'otherised' countries have changed over time. The first was Spain, 'the mother country', that for three centuries became the country's most meaningful other, and whose political, cultural and religious expectations became Chile's. In spite of the trend to essentialise this presence as a fixed legacy, we cannot underestimate its influence in the construction of the national identity. It had a deep impact that is still present now, albeit modified and re-contextualised. In this case historical focus is very important in order to analyse the current situation. Nonetheless, the study will not follow a detailed chronological order, but will confine itself to two particular historical periods: the Conquest-Colonial period and the nineteenth century (beginnings of nationhood), because they impact significantly on issues of national identity. It is in these two particular periods that the national identity was formed and it is in that past where the main interpretative

⁶³ Michael John Watts, 'Collective Wish Images: Geographical Imaginaries and the Crisis of National Development', in *Human Geography Today*, ed. by Doreen Massey, John Allen & Philip Sarre (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1999), pp. 85-103, (p. 102).

⁶⁴ Sarup, p. 11.

⁶⁵ Geoffrey Bennington, 'Postal Politics and the Institutions of the Nation', in *Nation and Narration* ed. by Homi K. Bhabha (London: Routledge), 1990, pp. 121-137 (p. 132).

⁶⁶ Larraín, *Ideology and Cultural Identity*, p. 142.

⁶⁷ Jansen, p. 100.

elements of the present Chilean national identity lie. The main factors to be looked at in the two periods concerned are language, religion, gender and ethnicity, which despite the passage of time continue to be crucial elements in Chilean identity. Undoubtedly, both the process of globalisation and the political developments of twentieth century which caught the interest of the foreign media and gave new insights of Chile abroad, altered and have continued to alter the Chilean identity. It will be argued, though, that the Chilean identity in relation to its Indigenous inhabitants largely crystallised in the two periods under consideration.

Stuart Hall offers two related ways of thinking about identity. In the first, cultural identity is defined 'in terms of one shared culture, a sort of collective "one true self"', hiding inside the many other, more superficial or artificially imposed selves, which people with a shared history and ancestry hold in common. Is it only a matter of unearthing that which the colonial experience buried and overlaid, bringing to light the hidden continuities it suppressed? Or is a quite different practice entailed, not the rediscovery but the *production* of identity, or an identity grounded-archaeology but in the *re-telling* of the past? 'Hidden histories' have played a critical role in the emergence of many of the most important social movements of our time. Hall's second position on identity stresses that identities are not fixed but 'subject to the continuous "play" of history, culture and power'. From this perspective, identities are not 'grounded in a mere "recovery" of the past'. Instead, Hall suggests that 'identities are the names we give to the different ways we are positioned by, and position ourselves within, the narratives of the past'. In this sense cultural identity is a matter of 'becoming' as well as of 'being'. It belongs to the future as much as to the past. Cultural identities come from somewhere, have histories. But, like anything, which is historical, they undergo constant transformation. Far from being eternally fixed in some essentialised past, they are subject to the continuous 'play' of history, culture, and power.⁶⁸

With the independence of its colonies, Spain lost its privileged position and France and England replaced it as the main influential cultural forces of the nineteenth century. At the beginning of the century, the modern ideas had interrupted the special political and cultural

⁶⁸ Stuart Hall, 'Cultural Identity and Diaspora' in *Contemporary Postcolonial Theory*, pp. 111-112.

formations that during three centuries had characterised Spanish America. Having broken off links with Spain, the young nations were forced to adjust their identity to a new landscape, adopting values foreign to their Hispanic cultural legacy. The local elites chose to imitate the French and English models and this meant that they disowned the cultural synthesis they had achieved. The consequence was an increasing gap between the enlightened white oligarchies and the mass of the population that kept to the ancient ways of generating and transmitting culture. The British settled in Valparaíso, a city that soon became almost a copy of an English city and among other achievements the newcomers modelled the Chilean navy on the British one.⁶⁹ British influence is also apparent in political and economic areas, where entrepreneurs who sought to trade and open markets, while the French influence was mainly felt in the arts and culture, the country adopted a liberal ideology. In the last years of the 19th century Germany became another significant European 'other'. Many Germans settled in the area of Valparaíso, and their influence was also felt in the Chilean army and in teacher education. Germans educated generations of intellectuals at the Instituto Pedagógico.⁷⁰ All these European Others were readily accepted and imitated as ideal identity referents.

After the Second World War, the United States consolidated and still does, an 'oppositional identity': their position as the powerful 'significant other'. Their cultural, economic and social attraction has been enormous: Miami, Orlando or New York became the normal destination for Chilean travellers. The economic model adopted by the country since 1970's found its inspiration in the United States where a great number of those who conduct and have conducted the country go for their postgraduate studies.⁷¹ English is the language of business and of social prestige in a country where the American way of life, politics and institutions are imitated.

But Chile has also had other 'Others', in opposition to whom the country has constructed its identity. The main one, undoubtedly the Mapuche people, a relationship marked by mutual hostility in spite of their 'Pacification' towards the end of the 19th century. Centuries

⁶⁹ For a bibliography on Valparaíso, please see Bibliography.

⁷⁰ The fascination many felt for Hitler in later years may find an explanation here.

⁷¹ A number of ministers are and have been to Chicago, Harvard, etc., President Lagos included.

of war against the Mapuche have left deep anti-Mapuche scars in the Chilean mentality and in the Mapuche's identity also. Although in the 20th century officially there has been no war – only conflicts, confrontations or rebellions – the Mapuche stereotypes: lazy, drunkards, incapable of progressing, have not changed much in generations of Chileans's imaginary. Besides, all along the country's geography there are other, often ignored, Indigenous 'Others'.

Homi Bhabha sees in multiculturalism a 'portmanteau' for anything from minority discourse to post-colonial critique, and adds that the multicultural has become a 'floating signifier'. On the other hand, authors like Audrey Kobayashi recognised that in 'upper case' multiculturalism refers to the need to maintain the cultural heritage and the right to equality of all the members of minority groups, whereas in lower case it refers to policy. The term 'multicultural' is a descriptive term which refers to demographic diversity.⁷²

It can be argued that Chile is a country where multiculturalism has been aborted, or mutilated, a country in which, due to a constellation of interconnections and historical reasons, the different regional and cultural sectors have not become cultural actors. It is not a matter of 'hiding or veiling of the Chilean identity; it is not a mere discursive operation'.⁷³ The problem of 'lack of ethnic cultural depth' that characterises the country represents a challenge in terms of national identity.⁷⁴ Of course, there are enclaves or pockets of cultural hybridity, but these are not significant in the national landscape. Is it that cultural phenomena are shaped and sedimented only in 'long time', as happens with ethnic cultural depth? Inter-culturalism and multiculturalism imply a permeation of cultures, and t opportunity in Chile today to open the channels of an inter-culturalism that has been in some way interrupted but which could enrich the country's cultural heritage.

⁷² Homi Bhabha, 'Culture's In-Between', in *Questions of Cultural Identity*, ed. by Stuart Hall & Paul du Gay, (London: Sage Publications, 1996), pp. 53-60, (p. 55).

Audrey Kobayashi, 'Multiculturalisms: Representing a Canadian Institution', in *Place/Culture/Representation*, ed. by James Duncan & David Ley (London and New York: Routledge, 1995), pp. 205-225, (p. 225).

⁷³ Sonia Montecino, 'Cóndores y Condoritos', *El Mercurio*, 21 October 1998, p. E-8.

⁷⁴ Bernardo Subercaseaux, 'Camino Interferidos: de lo político a lo cultural: Reflexiones sobre la identidad nacional', *Estudios Públicos*, 73, (1999), 149-164.

1.2. PERCEPTIONS OF LATIN AMERICA AND ITS IDENTITY

Chile, the object of this study, forms part of a huge continent, Latin America, therefore it is necessary to consider it in this context. An initial difficulty is to define *Latin America*. This is a term both emblematic and problematic that was created to mark the difference with the 'other' America. It is a word that encompasses the world from the Antilles to the South Pole, different countries, and many different aboriginal cultures.

'Latin America is a complex reality. It has been named in different ways some more suitable than others, such as Latin America, the most common one, South America, Ibero-America (in Spain), or Indo-America. This leads us to Latin America's complex reality and history, the encounter of two totally different worlds, where large Indian communities, still refuse to be assimilated and continue to live their own lives according to their ancestral traditions.'⁷⁵

1.2.1. THE LATIN AMERICAN WORLD

What is the nature of the Latin American society? Is it a peripheral form of Western civilisation, a reflection, or at best an extension of European culture? Or perhaps, an expression of the Iberian heritage? Does it exist only in a geographical sense or does it possess a mind of its own? In answer to these questions Alberto Luis Sánchez concludes that Latin Americans hold in their hands the responsibility for rebuilding the culture of the world, to give shape to the New World. They have a debt to pay, not to Yesterday, but to Tomorrow.⁷⁶ But, why do Latin Americans have to rebuild the world? From the beginning America was a project defined according to its conquerors' needs. In this sense it was an invention. However, from the moment that the conquerors' unfulfilled wishes and hopes, that had been born in the Old World, were transplanted into the new one, it kept a link and continuity with the Spanish Old World and its imaginary. On the other hand Sánchez is right in that Latin Americans, and Chileans in particular, must give shape to their world.

⁷⁵ Stephen Clissold, *Chilean Scrapbook* (London: Cresset Press, 1952), p. 9.

⁷⁶ Luis Alberto Sánchez, *Existe América Latina?* (México: Fondo de Cultura Económica), 1945.

This means that Chileans must come to terms with of the hidden part of their identity, that is, they must rescue and value alterity, including the ancient pre-Colombian tradition forgotten and repressed by both the colonial and republican powers.

At the time of the independence of the Latin American continent, Hegel considered that the French Revolution produced a significant development of freedom that was apparent in politics, the law and religion. For him the declaration that all citizens were equal before the Law, was a sort of Christian achievement in the civil order, parallel to the essential equality of all human beings before God. So, he greeted the Revolution as a new Revelation, as a 'magnificent dawn'.⁷⁷ Although the French Revolution was for Hegel the model modern Revolution, he never considered America as the mother country of freedom. Why did he omit a place that managed to create solid and stable institutions? The difficulty to include 'the land of the future' in a vision of the history of philosophy lies in the fact that its object is the past. That is why the New World as a whole has no place in it. 'As a country of the future America does not interest us ... We have to deal with what has been and with what is', because the philosopher is not a prophet.⁷⁸ This thought synthesises his philosophy of American history: America does not exist; it is 'too geographical'⁷⁹ – he does not even mention Latin America. Here Hegel underlines the lack of political maturity of the New World that he attributes to its enormous open, empty spaces. In this sense America is too geographical and very little 'historical'.

That his America was too geographical meant that it was immersed in nature. In fact Hegel relegates his consideration of the New World to an introductory section of the book devoted to the geographical background of the Universal History, where he deals with the 'connection' (of history) with nature. In other words the American continent does not belong to history proper, but to a natural before-history or pre-history. This is another reason, symmetrical to the one mentioned before, for its exclusion: America represents a before-history, humanity's early childhood. The solution to this exclusion is to put this pre-

⁷⁷ Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, (1770-1831), *Lecciones de Filosofía de la Historia*, ed. by José María Quintana Cabañas, Part IV, Chap. III, 3ª (Barcelona: Ediciones Zeus, 1971), p.214.

⁷⁸ Hegel, Chap. II, p. 182.

⁷⁹ Hegel, Chap. II, p.181.

history, before history, that is, pre-supposing a history for this pre or before-history. Perhaps based on the fact that since remote times the spirit of civilisation has come from East to West, one day it will come to this far West, to the American continent: 'Therefore, America (USA) is the country of the future'.⁸⁰

Another philosopher, Friedrich Schelling, had said before that the idea of pre-history does not belong to history: 'The simple concept of a rigorous pre-historic time excludes the before and after'... because if something could happen it would not be exactly pre-historic, but it would already belong to a historical time. Pre-history is, in its essence, invisible, identical."⁸¹ So the American continent was seen at the same time as pre-history and the "land of the future". This was the paradox of an early vision of the continent. There must be, therefore, another history that will eventually come, in a way symmetric to pre-history, in the sense that it does not belong to History either. It would be a history that would at the same time exclude History.

Hegel gets rid of the political problem with the same ease as he relegates the New World outside History. North and South America are still in a stage of formation; they are not advanced enough to feel a need for royalty. This belief that there is a road that every nation has to go along, and that the republic would only be possible where there has been feudalism and a monarchy. He thought that a republic is a post-monarchical state. There cannot be two dawns and Hegel chose the French Revolution. Hegel, in spite of having greeted the French Revolution as a 'magnificent dawn' and having seen Napoleon as an incarnation of 'the Spirit' in the world, saw politics as a sort of living past, an object of contemplation: History. Hegel did not appear to be disturbed by either the existence of that fourth part of the world or of a fifth one if we take Australia into account. Probably because that would be a threat to the concept of a closed historical time, as well as to the three-dimensional system of geographical and cosmological relations, formed by Europe, Asia

⁸⁰ Hegel, p. 180.

⁸¹ Friedrich Schelling, *Introduction à la Philosophie de la Mythologie*, trans. by S. Yankélivitch (Paris: Aubert), 1945-6.

and Africa, the centre being naturally, Germany. The parts of the world were not divided by chance. On the contrary, this division was one about essential differences.⁸²

Hegel also applies the same label of immaturity to American nature, flora and fauna. No doubt Darwin would have criticised him at least in two fundamental aspects: the notion of the species and the concept of evolution that he rejects. But the point is that in Hegel's consideration of America one misses the concepts that America represents: those of diversity, difference. The new of the New World has no room in Hegel's Philosophy of History. The difficulty to discover, to recognise diversity is reiterated in this philosophy of nature. When in the American puma, Hegel saw a rickety African lion, he was reproducing the same mistake as the conquerors, which in their drawings saw the Andean 'llamas' as imperfect giraffes or camels. He did not realise that America constitutes a discovery as long as the diversity of the continents and the variety in nature, and also in history and politics, provide new referents. The new of this world is based precisely on that it is the Other of the known world, and represents diversity. It is what had not been imagined, that all of a sudden shakes a geographical and cosmographical concept of the world. Therefore, the New World presence – America, 'Terra Incognita' – is itself the 'beginning of diaspora, of diversity, of hybridity and difference'.⁸³

Not long ago, Francis Fukuyama took the Hegelian topic of the end of history and displaced the event that culminates history, to a new centre, America.⁸⁴ In this way he inverted Hegel's Eurocentrism, converting it into an American centrism, a fact that undoubtedly contributed to the warm reception it was given in the United States which has now become the most powerful country in the world and, why not?, a self confident country aware of its power.

However, in the southern hemisphere, the questions "Who am I?" and "What am I?" are questions that are often asked in Latin American countries. There is not an easy or satisfactory answer for the questions that worry us. Perhaps because, as each culture has a

⁸² Hegel, Chap. II, pp. 175 and 181.

⁸³ Stuart Hall, *Identity: Community, culture, difference* (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1990), p. 119.

⁸⁴ Francis Fukuyama, *The End of History and the Last Man* (Harmondsworth: Penguin), 1992.

multiplicity of codes these questions can be answered in various ways. It may be advisable then to reformulate the questions and try to be more precise about what it means for the inhabitants of a given country, to have or to think you have a certain identity.

This same question, "What are we?" was also asked by Simón Bolívar, to which he himself answers that Americans are not Europeans or not Indians, but a middle group between the indigenous and the Spanish, Americans birth and Europeans by right.⁸⁵ This question still has a resonance in the voices of those who study the convergence of the Indigenous and Hispanic cultures and those who wonder what the national identity of the Latin-American world as a whole is, and how different each of the Latin American countries is. Probably this is one of the continents where this question is asked insistently. The reason for this may be due to the fact that the history of the region has been built as a result of such abrupt and successive cultural superposition, such as the conquest, that have obscured previous stages, in this case pre-Colombian cultures, making its traces illegible.

The issue of national identity has acquired great importance in the last decades in Latin America, where as part of a generalised political crisis questions about identity have become more insistent, but the region had been asking these questions long before, at least since the moment of independence. One of the constants of Latin American thought has been a permanent search for answers to the question of identity, especially to the question of its mestizo origins. 'We have entered an anxious age of identity, in which the attempt to memorialise lost time, and to reclaim lost territories, creates a culture of disparate interest groups or social movements'.⁸⁶

Is South America 'the continent of the future', as many, with perhaps great ingenuity believe? On hearing this one may wonder whether it exists at all, in the present. In his foreword to the book *Caliban, Notes towards a discussion of Culture in Latin America*, written by the Cuban scholar Roberto Fernández Retamar, Frederic Jameson compares this

⁸⁵ Simón Bolívar, 'Carta a Jamaica', in *Ideas en Torno a Latino América*, Vol. I, (México: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, Coordinación de Humanidades, 1986), pp. 19-36 (p. 21).

⁸⁶ Bhabha, p. 59.

book to Edward Said's *Orientalism* - only that it preceded it by seventeen years.⁸⁷ Fernández Retamar begins the book with the question: 'Does the Latin American Culture exist?'⁸⁸ In fact, to question a culture, is to question its identity and its very existence. Octavio Paz, when writing about his native country, shares this point of view and says that the Europeans consider Mexico to be a country on the margins of universal history.⁸⁹

The Latin American continent can be divided in many ways, according to political geographical or other criteria. Another point of view is that of the indigenous cultures that have inhabited it, such as the Andean cultures or the Patagonian ones. Each of these communities has its own history, its own internal movements and has suffered external pressures that may or may not have altered their identity.

A Latin American identity has historically rested upon understandings of shared languages, colonial experiences and religion.⁹⁰ Since 1492 Latin America has gone through a number of changes, but at the same time some important aspects have continue to be part of the continental identity. Latin American countries share an identity in the sense that they have a shared history of 300 years of Spanish colonisation, wars of independence that some countries fought together, the Spanish language, the Catholic religion and some cultural, social and economic factors. This means that in spite of the continent's heterogeneity, there is some homogeneity, because the continent can be defined as predominantly mestizo, not only racially but also culturally, and also the only continent where the majority of the population is Catholic. Moreover, in the last 500 years Latin Americans have shared a common and homogenous history, that can be divided into four stages, of which the first one, lasting roughly a hundred years, from 1492 until the end of the sixteenth century, was the Conquest. It was followed by a two hundred years colony, during the 17th and 18th centuries, which came to an end with Independence, during the first decades of the 19th

⁸⁷ Fernández Retamar, p. VII.

⁸⁸ Fernández Retamar, p. 3.

⁸⁹ Octavio Paz, *The Labyrinth of Solitude, Life and Thought in Mexico*, trans. by Lysender Kemp (London: Allen Lane, The Penguin Press, 1967), p. 58.

⁹⁰ Radcliffe, p. 162.

century. Since then, nearly 200 years as republics, politically independent, but culturally and economically, dependent, that is, post colonial, have gone by.⁹¹

The first stage was one of a dramatic 'hispanisation' whose results were not only a racial but also a cultural and religious mestizaje. Catholicism then predominated for centuries in its 16th century Spanish version, brought by the conquerors. Therefore, the continent can be considered mestizo, racially, culturally and also religiously. In the second stage the continent also behaved in a homogenous way. Independence, the third stage was the child of the Enlightened European influence which produced in the 19th century a dramatic loss of Spanish influence, replaced by English, up to a point French. This was followed in the 20th century by a North American economic dominance. In this point the continent also behaved in a homogenous way; it was no longer a colony and became neo-colonial, a new colony of foreign powers, mainly North American and Russian in the Cuban case. This historical pattern links the continent together, and also homogenises Latin America in comparison with other regions of the world.

Jorge Larraín argues that lately there seems to be a greater awareness of a common Latin American identity.⁹² There are some signs that support this, such as the number of Latin American authors who write about their own national identity and also consider the continent. In this category are Pablo Neruda, whose *Canto General* sings to a pre-Colombian America and bleeds with it in the Conquest, and also Gabriel García Márquez's *Hundred Years of Solitude*, which describes a small apparently static provincial community, that could be found not only in Colombia, but in any of the Andean countries.⁹³ In Latin American music and football, for example, it is also possible to appreciate a continental identity. Even though in the continent there may not be common artistic creations, identical cultural patterns or historical or ethnic uniformity, there exists an 'imagined community', as there is a relatively common way of life historically based. Then it is possible to speak about a historically changing Latin American cultural identity where

⁹¹ Jorge Gissi Bustos, 'Aspectos culturales y sicosociales de la identidad latinoamericana', *Boletín de Filosofía*, 11, (2001), 80-98, (pp.81-85).

⁹² Larraín, *Identidad Chilena*, Chapter 1.

⁹³ Pablo Neruda, *Canto General*, trans. By Jack Smith (Berkeley: University of California Press), 1991.

the adjective hybrid is used to designate the fragmentation and renovation of the culture. This, in the Latin American context means that all the Latin American cultures are the product of a diversity of intercultural mixtures.⁹⁴

‘La constitución de la modernidad en América Latina posee la peculiaridad de expresarse desde un fenómeno que a decir de García Canclini es el de la hibridación, entendiéndose por hibridación un estado de cosas en el cual simultáneamente convivimos con valores y prácticas propias de la modernidad y con otras que pertenecen a lo más profundo de las formas culturales tradicionales Latinoamericanas, agudizándose esto por un proceso de sincretización en el cual ni lo tradicional ni lo moderno se presentan químicamente puros, generando esto un tipo de comprensión por parte de los actores sociales radicalmente original en su dimensión socio-cultural y epistémica.’⁹⁵

Latin American cultures have been constructed in processes of sedimentation, juxtaposition and interweaving of Indian traditions, Hispanic Catholicism and political and educational policies. García-Canclini tends to see in the Latin Americans several identities that appear in different times and spaces, in apparently contradictory spheres, apparently antagonistic cultures and sub-cultures and images, in a plural and hybrid way.⁹⁶

However, regional identity has often been constructed from outside, especially from Europe (‘the European other’), that has often viewed Latin America as an undifferentiated whole. In Latin American countries there is a tension, that is part of its essence, derived from its singular relationship with Europe. While the Argentinean writer Jorge Luis Borges believed that the Latin American tradition derives from Europe, the Cuban Roberto Fernández Retamar contests this Eurocentric presupposition and criticises the way Latin American culture is taken as an ‘apprenticeship, a rough draft or a copy of European

Gabriel García Márquez, *One Hundred Years of Solitude* (London: Cape), 1970.

⁹⁴ Néstor, García-Canclini, *Las Culturas Híbridas* (México: Grijalbo, 1990), p. 15.

⁹⁵ Miguel Alvarado Borgoño, ‘Legitimación estética y comprensión científico social Latinoamericana: Notas sobre las fuentes culturales de nuestras opciones paradigmáticas’, *Boletín de Filosofía*, 8 (1995-1996), 9-28, p. 16. (Modernity in Latin America expressed itself from ‘hybridity’, that is, the way in which Latin Americans live simultaneously with values and practices that belong to Modernity, together with others that come from the deepest traditional cultural forms of the native inhabitants of the continent. In this way, a process of syncretisation is accelerated, in which neither the traditional nor the modern are in their original form. This generates a kind of ‘understanding’ in the social actors that is truly original in its social, cultural and epistemic dimensions).

⁹⁶ García Canclini, ‘La cuestión de Identidad’, *Tablero*, 57, (1997), p. 45.

bourgeois culture'.⁹⁷ This opinion is shared by other Latin American scholars: the Chilean José Joaquín Brunner thinks that 'Latin America 'has been conceived in falsehood, without authenticity', and the Argentinean Martínez Estrada states that 'the way in which Argentina exists is a mask, a fiction that imitates. As if it was Europe (but it is not), as if it belonged to history (but it belongs to the terrain of ethnography)'.⁹⁸ In Chile the relationship with the European model continues to be mimetic, ambiguous and problematic. This is the case with Chilean identity, which in spite of its specificity is not an entirely isolated phenomenon, but it is articulated with and shares many of the elements of Latin American identity.

From a Eurocentric point of view the 'official' history of Latin America began suddenly with the arrival of the Spanish conquerors, a view that does not take into account a long indigenous past. Even the Chilean historian and diplomat Mario Barros starts his *History of Chilean Diplomacy* remembering the fact that on 12th October 1492 three Spanish ships took possession of a new continent, in the name of King Fernando of Aragón and Queen Isabel of Castilla ('Los Reyes Católicos'). This was, he says, 'el inicio de una nueva era. América nacía. Y nacía Española'. ('The beginning of a new era. America had been born and it had been born Spanish').⁹⁹ He does not think of the native inhabitants of the continent. Indigenist analysts today consider that for the natives the Spanish conquest somehow represented a totality of space, of exploitation and disaster that, in the way in which has been internalised by those conquered, has been incorporated into a system of truths.¹⁰⁰ From this moment on the previous past disappears in a vacuum.

However, there was a previous past. Pablo Neruda, in the first poem of *Canto General*, makes a reference to this historical past, when next to the title he writes '1400', a clear indication to the time before the 'discovery'. To the colonial he refers, in the opening line, in a pejorative way:

“Antes de la peluca y la casaca
fueron los ríos, ríos arteriales:

⁹⁷ Fernández Retamar, *Caliban and Other Essays*.

⁹⁸ José Joaquín Brunner, *Cartografías de la Modernidad* (Santiago: Dolmen, 1995), p. 162.

⁹⁹ Mario Barros, *Historia Diplomática de Chile: (1541-19389)* (Barcelona: Ediciones Ariel, 1970), p.1.

¹⁰⁰ García de la Huerta, p. 21.

fueron las cordilleras, en cuya onda raída
el cóndor o la nieve parecían inmóviles.”¹⁰¹

The ‘arterial rivers describe the earth as a living organism, but also there is a suggestion of timelessness, of living in an eternity, in the stillness of the American condor or the eternal snows. Then he adds another line: ‘Without name, without America’, which marks a return to time before time, to earth before man, before the Conquest. Before the name America, which involves the idea of European domination. This feeling is shared by other authors like the Peruvian Néstor García Canclini who concludes that ‘our origin, our history, our crisis, speak to us of an identity in conflict, non-realised, mutilated or false. Our crisis represents a tension between nature and culture, condensed in Macchu Picchu: a Latin America that needs to be named to become distinguishable in the chaos of confusion and time’.¹⁰²

Columbus's voyage opened a round geography of the world. The ‘Discovery’, initiated an experience of a new land that was obviously the result of power because it developed under the shadow of arms. Exploration turned into armed expeditions prepared to fight, to bend, to annex, to use and to subdue. Columbus established very early the fateful relationship between conquest, war and expansion of the faith. He wrote in a letter addressed to the crown: "This present year of 1492, after Your Highnesses had brought to an end the war against the Moors, ... resolved to send me to the said regions of India in order to convert the people there to our own faith".¹⁰³

Christopher Columbus did not expect to discover new lands, but a new route to India. He thought he was heading where in fact he was not, and then he did not know where he had arrived. He was trapped in the system of representation he had inherited, so India, not the

¹⁰¹ Pablo Neruda, *Selected Poems*, ed. by Nathaniel Tarn, trans. by Anthony Kerrigan, W.S. Merwin, Alistair Reid and Nathaniel Tarn (London: Jonathan Cape, 1970), pp. 164-165.

‘Before wig and frogcoat
Were the rivers, the arterial rivers,
The cordilleras, on whose scraped escarpments
The condor or the snow seemed immobile.’

¹⁰² Néstor García Canclini, *Cultura Transnacional y Cultura Popular* (Lima: IPA, 1988), p.197.

¹⁰³ Christopher Columbus, *The Journal of the First Voyage, (1492-1493: Prologue to the Monarchs*, ed., trans. and with Intro. and notes by B.W. Ife (Warminster, England: Aris and Phillips, Ltd., 1990).

Indies was his non-discovery. For him the ocean was still the *Mare tenebris e ignotus* of the ancient peoples, an element as unknown as a distant galaxy, compared to the land where he had gone on shore. Columbus's voyage brought two worlds face to face. Still, centuries afterwards, the difficult task of exhuming that recondite past means to search deep into the mythical, the symbolic, which is precisely the space of the encounter or 'missed encounter' (or lack of a real encounter) of the Indian world with the white man.

"To discover," means to unveil, to take away a cover that prevents one from seeing something, to display what can not be seen because of its status of covered. Once uncovered, what was hidden or covered, should show its truth, for which the eyes should also be freed. Otherwise, what has been unveiled would not be different: the New World would only be the copy or reproduction of the Old World or perhaps a creation of the European imaginary. For E. O' Gorman, the Discovery was just an 'invention'.¹⁰⁴ Long before others had used this metaphor, like Hernán Pérez de Oliva in his *Historia de la Invención de las Indias*, (History of the Invention of the Indies), written in 1528.¹⁰⁵ Claudio Véliz points to the 'delightful' ambiguity of the word invention. It derives from the Latin 'invenire', to find, to come upon, to discover, as in 'the ships, inventors of regions'.¹⁰⁶ Julián Marías, a Spanish historian also uses this word, though perhaps less ambiguously, when he entitles chapter XII of one of his books 'The Invention of the Spanish Nation'.¹⁰⁷

Discovery means to bring to light something that was hidden, not visible. In the act of inventing, what was unnamed, now acquires a name and becomes assimilated into a new code within which it is re-signified. This is what happened to America: it was incorporated into a new system of signs. The name New World has its origin, we know, in Vespucci's letter *Mundus Novus*, and it was quickly adopted because it corresponded to the renovated spirit of the modernity of the Renaissance.¹⁰⁸ The notion of 'new' settled spatially in the

¹⁰⁴ Edmundo O'Gorman, *La Invención de América* (México: Fondo de Cultura, 1977).

¹⁰⁵ Hernán Pérez de Oliva, *Historia de la Invención de las Indias* (Bogotá: Instituto Caro y Cuervo), 1965.

¹⁰⁶ Claudio Véliz, *The New World of the Gothic Fox: Culture and Economy in English and Spanish America* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), p. 27.

¹⁰⁷ Julián Marías, *España Inteligible: Razón Histórica de las España* (Madrid: Alianza Universidad), 1985.

¹⁰⁸ *The Letters of Americo Vespucci and other Documents Illustrative of his career, Letter on his third voyage to Lorenzo Pietro Francesco de Medici, March (or April) 1503*, trans. by Clemens and Markham, C.B., F.R.S. (New York: Burt Frankline, Publisher, 1973), p. 42.

geography and eclipsed the novelty of the American World, that is the geographies that belonged to the new lands. It means that the 'novelty' of the New World was only a replica of what was till then the known world, a projection of the European World, the utopia constructed in the imaginary.

A dissenting voice, Eugenio Imaz in *Topía y Utopía*, does not see it in this way and tries to explain why the 16th century utopia failed in America, arguing that conquest and colonisation were actions not only in time but also extensions of space (European). Utopia, he says, is a phenomenon that takes place in time and therefore, has no room in the conquest spatial epic.¹⁰⁹ For him, therefore, to re-found Spain in America was, in fact, an impossible undertaking, no matter how utopian or deceitful that wish may have seemed.

However, Gill Valentine, when writing about 'imagined geographies' says that in the 1990's geographers became increasingly preoccupied with how knowledge is constructed through a geographical lens. She draws on the work of Edward Said and points out that geographers have begun to reflect on how we are responsible for 'inventing places'.¹¹⁰ Said said in *Orientalism* that we make our own geographies, and he showed that the orient was what the Europeans had made of the eastern world. It was what they had imagined, what they had 'invented'.¹¹¹ Thus, as in Said's words, as the orient has been contained and represented in the dominant framework of the 'mystic orient', America would have also been represented as an imagined self.

1.2.2. THE SPANISH PRESENCE IN THE SOUTH AMERICAN 'NEW WORLD'

Chile and the rest of the Latin American countries have been through great changes in the last 500 years. In these 500 years there have been cultural, social and political changes that have affected both the Indigenous and the European identities. In 1992 Spain and its former

¹⁰⁹ Eugenio Imaz, 'Topía y Utopía', in *Utopías del Renacimiento*, ed. by E. Imaz (México: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1973), pp. 7-35.

¹¹⁰ Gill Valentine, 'Imagined Geographies: Geographical Knowledges of Self and Other in Everyday Life' in *Human Geography Today*, ed. by Doreen Massey (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1999), pp. 47-61 (p. 47).

colonies officially celebrated the quincentenary of the European arrival in America. When the Chilean theologian Sergio Silva was asked what the Church celebrated, the 500th anniversary of the discovery or the evangelisation that accompanied it, he reflected on the complexity of the issue. This was, he said, both the discovery that the Eurocentric vision wants, and was followed by an ethnocide, as some Indigenists think. To the question why the process of bringing the faith to America was so mixed up with the conquest, he answered that it is on evangelisation that the discovery projects its glory.¹¹²

However, Indigenists challenged the interpretation that the conquest was worthy of celebration and drew attention to the suppression and disappearance of indigenous cultures. The arguments that rejected this celebration are 'historic': an invasion, destruction, genocide, violent land usurpation, disintegration of the social, political and cultural organisation of the indigenous peoples, together with their ideological and religious subjugation, to the detriment of the internal logic of their religious beliefs. This was the view of the Second Ecumenical Consultation of the Indigenous Pastoral of Latin America, representing thirty indigenous peoples of fifteen countries. They stated that the Church was an instrument of subjugation in this process.¹¹³ In any case if Latin America of today exists it is because five centuries ago the Spanish State and the Catholic Church created this space. For more than 300 years the history of Latin America was dependent on Hispanic influence. If the history of the continent had started with the 'Discovery' 500 years ago, more than half of the continent's history would be of 'Hispanisation'. But if we take into account the previous thousands of years of different religions, languages and cultures, of which we do not know much, we can say that for only 300 years of a long history Latin America was a Peninsular colony.

In countries shaped by the experience of colonialism in which various ethnic groups co-exist, the question of simultaneous, though different, versions of national identity is of great significance. In fact, the '500 years of resistance' campaign aimed at reversing the official

¹¹¹ Edward Said, *Orientalism* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul), 1978.

¹¹² Sergio Silva, SS.CC, 'Quinientos Años', *Pastoral Popular*, 4--4.7, (1986), pp. 113-118.

¹¹³ *Segunda Consulta Ecueménica de Pastoral Indígena de Latino América, Manifiesto Indígena contra las celebraciones del Quinto Centenario y la Primera Evangelización de América*, (Quito: Julio, 1986).

history and changing the European vision of America. The American anthropologist J. Fabian, adds that this campaign reversed the notion of 'European time', for them 'our time', against an 'other time' that belonged spatially outside Europe, or in the pre-modern era, while in the Eurocentric view of the conquest both come together.¹¹⁴

Ella Shohat in "*Columbus, Palestines and Arab Jews*" argues that "triumphant over the Muslim, Spain invested in the project of Columbus, whose voyages were partly financed by wealth taken from the defeated Muslims and confiscated from Jews through the Inquisition". (However, school texts have traditionally taught that Queen Isabel had to sell her jewels to finance the project). We see here several discursive and historical linkings between these events whose the quincennial commemoration took place in 1992: the expulsion of the Sephardic Jews from Spain, the defeat of the Muslims and the conquest of what came to be called the New World. In the conquest the partnership between the cross and the sword meant that in the long run Spain found in America what it lost in Europe as a consequence of the Reformation. The first battle of King Fernando and Queen Isabel's sacred war was against the Moors in Andalucía. For more than eight centuries in the 'Peninsula', they had established a peaceful cohabitation with the Christians, and formed a multiethnic society of great refinement. But the official history has constructed the myth of the Spanish Reconquest, together with the myth of the Christian Resistance. Both myths pre-suppose the incredible hypothesis that during eight centuries there was no mixture and syncretism, and that for eight hundred years Christians waged war against the "invader".¹¹⁵ Spain had, in many ways, been a 'melting pot' where a diversity of Christians, Jews and Muslims had become accustomed to each other's presence.

The Spanish King and Queen broke the long tradition of permeation between two cultures, the Muslim and the Christian. It might also be possible that they themselves had not been able to escape from this permeation. They had tried to make Spain a bastion of Christianity, starting a merciless surgery at home. Once the peninsular crusade was over they started a campaign outside their frontiers. Again it was Columbus himself who established the

¹¹⁴ J. Fabian, *Time and the Other: How Anthropology Makes its Object* (New York: Columbia University Press), 1983.

¹¹⁵ García de la Huerta, p. 37.

oneness of these two acts in the Journal of his first voyage: "In this year of 1492, after your Highnesses have ended the war against the Moors, ...then, Your Highnesses thought of sending me to the Indies. ...So after having expelled the Jew from your realms, in the same month your Highnesses sent me, with a similar army".¹¹⁶ The perception that the process of bringing the faith to America was mixed up with the conquest was shared by Pope Leo XII, whom in his Encyclical Letter of 16th June 1892 wrote, "Columbus is one of us", because his main objective had been the Catholic faith.¹¹⁷ The methodology used in both enterprises is also similar. They pre-supposed an intervention and almost invariably they brought destruction and ruin. These were not peaceful beginnings.

It is legitimate to speculate that for both monarchs, but especially for Isabel the world that Columbus had placed at their feet precisely when the unification of Christian Spain had been completed must have appeared as a providential *tabula rasa*, a gift from heaven, where they could put their experience to good use, designing a just and well ordered policy that would shine forever as an example of Christian perfection. In fact, Latin American identity has historically rested upon understandings of a shared colonial experience that is expressed in a common language and religion and a third element, a shared experience, that binds Hispanic countries together.

Claudio Véliz addresses the importance of language in society. He uses Vico's argument that there is a pervasive pattern that characterises all the activities in a given society: a common style reflected in the thought, the arts, the social institutions, the language, the ways of life and action of the entire society.¹¹⁸ Vico's crucial argument rests in the primordial character of language, a definite element in culture and one that portrays the modalities and transformation of the social ambit, a reason why it can be related to society in a modern metaphor. Cullen also stresses this point when he says: 'El habla de una nación es al pueblo lo que el cuerpo es al individuo. El habla es la figura que expresa la totalidad viviente que es una nación. La lengua es la forma inmediata del retorno al estar desde el

¹¹⁶ Columbus, *The Journal of the First Voyage (1492-1493): Prologue to the Monarchs*.

¹¹⁷ Pope Leo XIII, 'Encyclical Letter of June 1892' *Pastoral Popular* 37, 4--4.7, (1986), 113-118 (p.114).

¹¹⁸ Véliz, *The New World of the Gothic Fox*, p. 15.

ser, que nace de la experiencia de los pueblos un *estar-siendo-así*'.¹¹⁹ Véliz also quotes Wittgenstein who affirmed that the 'meaning of a word is its use in the language'.¹²⁰

Spain ruled for about 300 years over one of the greatest empires the world had seen and the Spanish language is still in use in almost every region where they were. What the Spanish-speaking world is now is a vast imagined community of more than 300 million people who share Spanish as their native language. It can be considered a real world with a repertoire of customs and ways of life, whose inhabitants share a common past and a literature in their native language that is a millennium old. They may cross borders and still feel at home because their language is spoken there. Writers have a public that goes beyond their native country, where they are understood. The idea of community is promoted everyday by 'Antena 3', the Spanish international cable TV that broadcasts 'in Spanish, the language we all understand and in which we understand each other'.

A reason why this is possible is the fact that the Spanish language is centrally controlled, wisely no doubt, but centrally controlled, nonetheless. The Royal Academy of the Language was founded in 1714 and its principal responsibility is to watch over 'the purity and propriety of the Castilian language'. There is only one officially correct orthography, and only one correct Spanish usage. The *Gramática Castellana*, probably one of the first comprehensive grammar compiled for any modern European language, was presented to Queen Isabel in August 'of the Annus Mirabilis of 1492', eight months after the surrender of Granada and 15 days after Columbus had departed on his first voyage of discovery. The humanist, lexicographer and grammarian Antonio de Nebrija had compiled it.¹²¹ If we are prepared to agree with Wittgenstein that 'to imagine a language is to imagine a form of life, then we must accord Nebrija at least part of the credit for the grammatical discipline and the orthographic predictability of the Spanish language'.¹²²¹²³ Besides, Nebrija was not

¹¹⁹ Cullen, p. 36. (The speech of a nation is to the people what his body is to the individual. Its speech is the expression of the living totally of a nation. Language back takes the self to a way being that is born from the experience of the peoples). (My own translation).

¹²⁰ Véliz, *The New World of the Gothic Fox*, p. 17.

¹²¹ Antonio de Nebrija, *Gramática Castellana*, ed. by Pascual Galindo Romeo and Luis Ortiz Muñoz (Madrid), 1946.

¹²² Véliz, *The New World of the Gothic Fox*.

innocent of the significance of his seminal work. In the opening lines of the Prologue, in a quasi-prophetic tenor, he notes 'My certain conclusion is that language is the companion of the empire'.¹²⁴ In this respect, he quotes the Queen's confessor, Hernando de Talavera's words: 'Your Majesty will bring under her yoke many barbarian peoples and nations with strange languages, who, having been defeated, will have to receive the laws that the victor imposes on the vanquished, and with them our language'. (It is uncertain whether Nebrija, the Queen or Talavera, had then in mind a policy of African conquests). It is perhaps a coincidence that the Spanish Grammar had been published the same year of the "Discovery". The final result was an empire with more linguistic homogeneity than the Spain of that moment, and of today, where a variety of languages such as Catalan and Basque are spoken in certain areas. People relate with the world through language, so the frontiers of language are the frontiers of the world. In the simplest sense of the word it is a political relationship that constitutes a *common sense*. Language, literally, is a symbolic capital common to all: a currency of unlimited duration, and basically accessible to all.

Many different languages are spoken in Latin America, and although the main official languages spoken by the majority are Spanish and Portuguese, millions continue to speak other languages. In Chile also, a variety of other languages are spoken, although only Spanish has the status of official language. However, today the language issue has a very specific resonance within the context of the Andean cultures resulting from the complexities of the colonial encounter because language plays a role in the construction of identities, of which an example could be the pejorative use of the term 'indio'.

The culture that Spain took to its colonies in the 16th and 17th centuries is the culture of the Counter Reformation that in the long run was going to be damaging to Spain itself. By expelling the Jewish and Arab populations, Spain destroyed its incipient middle class. What is more, Spain did not see the need to develop its own industry, because for some time the country was able to compensate this loss with the lands and mines that were plentiful in the Empire. Trade, a merchant fleet, and above all, an army and an administrative organisation, which in spite of their limitations had no equal in the 16th century, were more than enough

¹²⁴ De Nebrija (5, 10-11).

to keep the country going. This was the Spain, the natives of the continent those of Chile included, eventually met and mixed with. Spain saw itself as the Defender of the Faith and its soldiers as the soldiers of Christ. Besides, it must not be forgotten that 'Spain was in many ways a medieval nation and that, the institutions it brought to American were also medieval institutions, while at the same time the discovery and conquest can be considered renaissance undertakings'.¹²⁵

In the Spanish Empire the civil power very special characteristics. Monarchy in these distant lands was a kind of spectral reflex, an engagement by proxy, distant, and permeated by power mechanisms that altered its articulation with Law and Sovereignty. At the same time there was in fact, another power, invisible and more efficient and lasting, a monarchy without a king that activated other mechanisms and methods of exercising authority. Power often operated eluding the control of the central power. In reference to the directness with which the central monarchical authority was exercised over the empire, it is interesting to analyse the well-known dictum whose approximate meaning is 'One acknowledges but does not enforce'. In fact, the kings were in Spain and the real power was in their representatives in the Indies.¹²⁶ However, for Véliz, this is a common misunderstanding that plagues much of the historical writing of the overseas Spanish Empire and he says that even when distances and slow communications permitted, the colonial authorities often tried to attenuate the full rigour of the crown directives.¹²⁷

The first thing that Columbus did when he set foot on America was a sort of baptism, which was both a kind of ceremony and an act of geographical naming in which he officially established the belonging of the new territories to the space of the Crown. When the conquerors crossed the Atlantic, they had not only gone from an old to a new continent but had gone into a new temporal dimension. However, they carried their own world in their retina, in their minds, in their dreams and America was the land where they could project those wishes or dreams. They carried their world with them and tried to reproduce the old order in the New World. This reproductive eagerness can be observed of course in

¹²⁵ Octavio Paz, *El Laberinto de la Soledad* (México: Fondo de Cultura, 1950), p. 89.

¹²⁶ Julio Alemparte, *El Cabildo en Chile Colonial* (Santiago: [n. pub.], 1966), pp. 84-85.

¹²⁷ Véliz, *The Centralist Tradition of Latin America*, p. 24.

the names of the cities and in the geography. Whenever new cities or towns were founded, they were given names that were familiar to the conquistadors. An example of this is the capital of Chile, which Pedro de Valdivia, called Santiago, for the Apostle venerated in the medieval centre of pilgrimage Santiago de Compostela, and he added the phrase "Del Nuevo Extremo", in memory of his native Extremadura. The American poet Wallace Stevens has explained this magic operation of reduction of the alterity of the landscape through its replica in the language, and which is at the same time an operation of self re-knowing:

‘the hard hidalgo
lives in the mountainous mirror character of his speech;
and in that mountainous mirror Spain acquires
the knowledge of Spain and of the hidalgo's hat -
a seeming of the Spaniard, a style of life,
the invention of a nation in a phrase,¹²⁸

Proper names ‘sign’ a landscape, giving a portion of the geographical space a familiar name. When it is about men, the story is a similar one. It is not a question of recognising difference but reducing difference, to re-found an imaginary Spain as if trying to make the difference identical. To name the same name is an operation symmetrical to that of the conversion of the souls: a christening ceremony of a geographical space. The reproduction of proper names means to recognise in order to recognise oneself in the reproduction. The conquistador expresses reminiscence in the Spain he tries to reproduce, because it has become his dreamed home country. The Chilean historian Mario Góngora pointed to a utopia, a constant in the American history. The foundation of cities and the conquest itself have in fact something utopic, in the sense that they impose an ideal order in a space that they pretended, was empty. The city, especially, is a mental creation, and up to a point, an ex-nihilo creation because it is an answer to the needs of the conquest.¹²⁹ It is, in a way Plato's Republic translated into a spatial, geographical order. The conquistadors sowed the land, from north to south, with towns. These foundations were in their own right, acts of

¹²⁸ Wallace Stevens, ‘Description Without Place, VII, from Transport to summer in *The Collected Poems of Wallace Stevens* (London: Faber and Faber, 1955), p. 345.

¹²⁹ Mario Góngora, ‘El Nuevo Mundo en algunas Escatologías y Utopías de los siglos XVI a XVII, in *Estudios de Historia de las Ideas y de Historia Social* (Valparaíso: Editorial Universitaria, 1980).

power and domination that represented both a strategic territorial occupation and a military spatial occupation.

‘In colonised societies the imagining of the nation took place in the colonisers’ representation of the national community.’¹³⁰

The city was the location where this cultural configuration took place. It was not any city but the baroque city. But although the values and cultures of this immense new continent were overlooked and the principle of ‘tabula rasa’ was applied, they survived and infiltrated the imposed culture. But, in spite of the new names – New Spain, New Galicia, New Granada - their dream of transposing a dream, the conquerors could not reproduce exactly the cities they came from.

The ideal cities the conquerors founded in the American immensity had to be ruled by a superior order that had to be represented by a geometrically organised social hierarchical order. It is not the society that is transposed but its organisation. The key word in this system is order, a word appropriated by a colonial administration that was directly dependent on the metropolis. The transposition of a social order to a physical reality had to follow a pre-designed urban plan, which also had to take care of a future that did not exist yet, that was a dream of the mind. The chessboard design of the baroque cities is a design that has survived for centuries: a modern example is the city of Brasilia, a construct of intelligence and a sign of colonisation. Its rigorous geometry translates in a way, the social hierarchies. Thus to civilise is to design and build cities.¹³¹

But more important than the chessboard design is the ruling principle behind it that made a hierarchical system work - from top to bottom, from Spain to America - through the social structure it imposed. In this way the urban order will take care of the social order. Order must then be established even before the city is founded, in order to prevent any future disorder. Before a city became a reality it had to exist in a symbolic representation, the city plan, that was at the same time the written word. The importance of the written word in the

¹³⁰ P. Chatterjee, *The nation and its Fragments: Colonial and Post-Colonial Histories* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1993, p. 5.

17th century is best expressed in the foundation of cities built from a graphic map, before the construction of the society: even before it existed architecturally, the city existed in a drawing. The sign in this case represents a dream of an order that would preserve that the social, economic and cultural structure it represents. From their very beginning the American cities had a double life, one corresponding to their physical order and one that corresponded to the order of the signs that operated at the symbolic level. Before the cities had streets, squares and houses, the city had emerged as a complete intellectual creation with regularity dictated by norms and rules. The Hispanic American city is a dream of an order, come true in new lands. The conquerors, who had left Spanish medieval cities behind, entered a new space that represented a new way of living. The men had to fit in an urban landscape, perhaps dreamt, but also planned according to rigid administrative, military, commercial and religious demands and regulations.

Although the new cities were meant for settling in, in Chile, especially, they had to be at the same time, defensive fortresses. There were isolated in a spatial and cultural immensity that was foreign and hostile, they had the mission of dominating and 'civilising' their surroundings, summarised in the term evangelise, or in other words transculturising the European order. The definition of order indicates a hierarchical discipline and from the start the American cities were subordinated to the Metropolis. The cultural structure reproduced the physical and administrative ones in a subtle way. Angel Rama in *La Ciudad Letrada* says that in every centre there existed another city, equally walled and aggressive that ruled it from a protective ring of power, which was formed by public servants, priests, lawyers and all those who were part of the royal bureaucracy. This vast colonial administration conscientiously performed the task of evangelise or transculturise an indigenous population, which they managed to frame in the acceptance of European values, even though they did not believe in them or understand them.¹³²

The conquistadors could not but be defeated by the immensity and the power of these new spaces. Towns from where to rule territories were built, only that these towns were the

¹³¹ García de la Huerta, p. 147.

¹³² Angel Rama, *La Ciudad Letrada* (Hanover, USA: Ediciones del Norte, 1984), pp. 2-18.

places from where the new rulers imagined they had a land of teluric virginity under control. The teluric forces of nature in Latin America generate an omnipresent identity that runs across the whole social spectrum. This is the space here where all differences are excluded because the teluric identity is a shared space in the continent that is beyond any distinction of ethnicity, class, age or sex.¹³³ It is here where there is an essence. From this total encounter all the discourses of identity point to an alterity in relation to the modern world. It is here, in this space, where the Andean peoples become the Other of the West, which for those who inhabit this part of the world, is in the East.

¹³³ Ezequiel Martínez Estrada, *Diferencias y Semejanzas entre los países de América Latina* (México: Escuela Nacional de Ciencias Políticas y Sociales), 1962.

II. PERCEPTIONS OF CHILEAN IDENTITY

The complexities of Chilean identity highlight the articulations between three key fields of power: history, territory and population. These are the three dimensions around which the discursive construction of national identity takes place.¹³⁴

The topic of identity has been one of concern in Chile and for nearly a century has been dealt with. Already in the 1920's scholars like Nicolas Palacios, Tancredo Pinochet, Francisco Antonio Encina, Roberto Hernández, and Alberto Cabero, whose publications aimed at a social totality, gave their vision of the historical Chilean identity.¹³⁵ Modern studies do not necessarily have the scope or purpose of the old ones. In the 1950's, new disciplines brought new perspectives: an important one was a more abstract, structured notion of culture that could only conceive identity as a series of common features, such as the national mentality. Another new phenomenon was that studies became more quantitative and more restricted in scope, so they tended to be less general.

The identity of the native inhabitants might have been moulded by war. The territory had been invaded by the Inca Empire towards the end of the 15th century, and soon afterwards by the Spanish Empire. In both cases they were not subjected easily and as a consequence, Chile became a battlefield. Moreover, the Mapuche fight for independence lasted (or has lasted?) for centuries. The Chilean governments thought it had come to an end, with the 'Pacification' in 1881-1882, but the latest events prove that it has not. This long war has had negative effect on the Chilean collective identity because it has meant the exclusion of the native peoples.

¹³⁴ Radcliffe and Westwood, p. 51.

¹³⁵ Alberto Cabero, *Chile y los Chilenos, Conferencias dictadas en Extensión Cultural de Antofagasta* (Santiago: Editorial Lyceum), 1949.

Francisco Antonio Encina, *Nuestra Inferioridad Económica: sus causas y consecuencias* (Santiago de Chile: Editorial Universitaria), 1955

Roberto, Hernández Cornejo, *El Roto Chileno; Bosquejo Histórico de Actualidad* (Valparaíso: Imprenta San Rafael), 1929.

Nicolás, Palacios, *Raza Chilena: libro escrito por un chileno i para los chilenos* (Valparaíso: Imprenta y Litografía Alemana de Gustavo Shäefer), 1904.

Tancredo Pinochet, *La Conquista de Chile en el siglo XX* (Santiago: La Ilustración), 1909.

The topic of Chilean modernity is full of paradoxes. In the country, like in the rest of the continent, European modernity was held off by the colonial power, which until late in the 18th century kept a strict censorship of who, what and what ideas came into the country.¹³⁶ Modernity started later, at the beginning of the 19th century, with the process of independence and then this process had a profound impact on identity, in which the rejection of things Spanish and the search for new points of reference especially in the Anglo-Saxon world were key elements. The 'founding fathers' had to build a nation, so their discourse was geared to interpellating individuals and constituting them as 'national subjects'. Also the new feeling of identity received an additional impulse with a renewed myth of the origins, idealisation of the Araucanian heroes and their resistance to the conquerors. The analogy between the situation of the Araucanians in the 16th century and that of the patriots in the 19th century was a common one. Nevertheless, Collier points out the Indians were not very enthusiastic and often joined the royal armies.¹³⁷ Perhaps this lack of enthusiasm was due, and not without reason, to premonitory feelings that their situation in the future republic would not be better than under the Spaniards.

But Chilean identity does not exist as one whole, no matter how comprehensive or attractive it may be, but it can be found in the dynamic relationship of the various discourses of identity. Different versions of national identity have been more or less successful in different periods of the nation's history. These versions can be said to coincide up to a point with Latin American versions of identity, even though they may introduce other variables, from which specific features of the Chilean identity emerge.

In any case, identity acts as a dynamic interrelation between the public and private spheres,

¹³⁶ Bravo Acevedo, Guillermo, ed, *Expediente Formado sobre Averiguar los Extranjeros que Reciden en el Reyno: 1808*, (Santiago de Chile: Instituto O'Higginiano, Serie Fuentes de la Emancipación, 1990), p. 21. The country's isolation can be appreciated in this document whose main objective is stated by don Francisco Antonio García Carrasco, Gobernador General del Reyno de Chile: 'Por la ley, título 26, libro 9 de estos dominios, está prohibido y dispuesto que ningún Extranjero pase a Indias sin Real Licencia y que los que contravinieren sean echados con pérdida de bienes para la Real Cámara'. (Foreigners are forbidden to travel to the Indies, unless they hold a Royal Licence, and those who disobey will be expelled from the country and will lose their possessions). (My own translation).

¹³⁷ Simón Collier, *Ideas y Políticas de la Independencia Chilena, 1808-1833* (Santiago: Editorial Andrés Bello, 1977), pp. 203-204.

in a process of reciprocal interaction. These are not unconnected worlds, but two moments in a process of reciprocal identity construction which are not unconnected either.¹³⁸ Versions of national identity are built on the bases of certain individual features and circulated by means of the press, TV, textbooks, etc., that interpellate their audience to mirror themselves, and thus recognise themselves, thus reinforcing certain aspects of the national identity.

II.1. GEOGRAPHY AND CHILEAN IDENTITY

Chile is a country where a number of unusual features are combined. What is and has been the effect of the combination of these features in the identity, or perhaps identities of its inhabitants? We find different peoples who have in common a variety of latitudes and, often perceive their country in different ways, but who are joined together by their geography.

With respect to the constitutive elements from which a country's identity is constructed one is the national possessions that express or project the self, of which the best examples are seen at a personal level. Nevertheless, it is also possible to find in the collective national identity a constituent materiality, that is a territory, a climate, a geography, landscape, smells, through which the nation's inhabitants identify their nation and recognise themselves. 'Geography is Chile's body', that is the nation's first and most intimate possession, where the collective is both projected and manifests itself.¹³⁹ From experience we know that man is not independent from the nature he inhabits, we see him 'under the tree, near the mountains and shaped by the climate he is subjected to'.¹⁴⁰ Just as the human being is historical, that is, lives in a temporal dimension, he is at the same time territorial and lives in a spatial dimension. In the same way as he 'makes history', he builds and projects his self into his territory, in other words, he territorialises a space, making it

¹³⁸ Larraín, *Identidad Chilena* (Santiago de Chile: LOM, 2001), chapter 1.

¹³⁹ Benjamín Subercaseaux, *Chile o una loca geografía* (Santiago: Editorial Ercilla, 1940), p. 44.

meaningful.¹⁴¹ The Argentinean philosopher Cullen tried to find out in what way the conscience of a people arrives at universal knowledge. His conclusion was that the most immediate experience a human group has is that of self awareness, a 'we-are-here', that is an awareness of being a subject vitally situated in a geographical landscape of which its own existence is part.

'El arraigo a la tierra o el estar aquí : Pueblo es, pues, la experiencia del nosotros estamos. Saberse arraigado a la tierra es la primera forma de la sabiduría de un pueblo... Un pueblo comienza por saberse como *estando-aquí*, como la facticidad de una instalación, como la presencia de un paisaje... La sabiduría popular, a diferencia de la 'ciencia', comienza por el arraigo, y no por el desprendimiento el extrañamiento... De aquí que sea profundamente popular definir al hombre como 'tierra que anda' porque la tierra es vida y es tierra.'¹⁴²

The influence of the land, the landscape and nature on the culture has a strong presence in the discourses of identity. One of Martínez Estrada's central ideas is that the immense power of the land comes from the symbolic act of taking possession, performed by the Spanish conquistadors in the 15th century. He explores the symbolic act of taking possession and sees this action as an endlessly repeated one that from the time of the invaders until the present day the inhabitants of this land claim as their own. The conquerors fabricated the idea that everything they set their eyes on was theirs, just because they had planted a flag, and soon laws and acts and decrees were invented to legalise this possession.¹⁴³ But can you really 'posses' a land, or will it somehow 'posses' you?

The historian Cristián Gazmuri emphasises that the influence of geography is so strong in the country, that the first identity feature that has been a constant in the Chilean identity is the awareness of inhabiting a distant place. A place that is far from the cultural poles of the planet –Europe, basically. This is what he calls the 'syndrome of remoteness'.¹⁴⁴ In the 16th

¹⁴⁰ José Victorino Lastarria, 'El Manuscrito del Diablo', in *La 'Cuestión Social' en Chile, ideas y debates precursores, 1804-1900*, ed. by Sergio Grez (Santiago: dirección de Bibliotecas, Archivos y Museos, 1995), p. 97.

¹⁴¹ García de la Huerta, p. 259.

¹⁴² Cullen, p. 14.

¹⁴³ Ezequiel Martínez Estrada, *Diferencias y semejanzas entre los países de América Latina* (México: Escuela Nacional de Ciencias Políticas y Sociales), 1962.

¹⁴⁴ Cristián Gazmuri, 'Perspectiva Pretérita: Nuestra historia y geografía', *El Mercurio*, 15 September, 2002, p. E6.

century maps referred to Chile as 'Finis Terrae', and already at that time the poet Alonso de Ercilla y Zúñiga pointed to this feeling when he wrote 'aquí llegó, donde nadie ha llegado, don Alonso de Ercilla y Zúñiga'.¹⁴⁵ Gazmuri notes also that four hundred years later the Chilean historian Jaime Eyzaguirre coined the expression 'the antipodes of the world'.¹⁴⁶

Gazmuri's second identity feature is isolation. 'Where the land ends'; this is how the Aymaras, the people that live on the high plateaux in the northern Andes, at an altitude of more than four thousand metres, used to describe their geography. They were right; unless it is where it begins. The country, its back to the continent, like a survivor of a shipwreck, far from all trade routes, overlooks an ocean that apparently has no end. No end, because it would be necessary to go round half of the Globe to reach an inhabitable land beyond; because the country sits isolated from the rest of the world like a 'lonely sentinel of the Pacific'.¹⁴⁷

Until about a hundred years ago, Chile was almost an island, especially in winter. Hemmed between the Pacific and with a coast without good natural ports, and the insurmountable barriers of the desert and the mountains (during many months) and then Cape Horn with one of the roughest seas in the world, the country's isolation was almost total. A century ago the voyage between Europe and Valparaiso was still a long and dangerous one.

Gazmuri also points to the country's poverty. It did not produce precious metals or tropical products that had high demand in Europe (tea, coffee, sugar or tobacco). In fact the Spanish Crown was interested in Chile because it was the southern door to the rich Peru, that had to be defended from pirates and the ambition of foreign powers. The travellers that visited the country write about the country's geography and the precarious conditions in which people lived. There were two exceptions to the rule in the 19th century: the elites that built houses imitating European palaces and spent long periods in Paris, and the foreign upper industrial class of Valparaiso. Gazmuri thinks that these syndromes of remoteness, isolation and

¹⁴⁵ Alonso de Ercilla y Zúñiga, Alonso, (1533-1594), *La Araucana* (1560), Part 3, Canto 36th, lines 1-2, 29th stanza (Barcelona: Editorial Sopena S.A., 1967), p..535. (Here, where nobody has been, Alonso de Ercilla y Zúñiga has).

¹⁴⁶ Gazmuri, p.E6.

poverty have and continue to influence the Chileans, until the present day when modern communications have brought us closer to the world.¹⁴⁸

For the historian Mario Barros the beginning of Chile's geographical and historical identity began with Magellan's voyage.¹⁴⁹ The Portuguese navigator embarked on the task of searching for the Strait in 1519. It was a most difficult enterprise considering that the maps available were far from accurate or reliable. His mission was to find a southern way to reach the other part of the world that did not mean having to go round Cape of Good Hope. This southern way had to be in the new continent navigating along the coast of the Indies, following the map more or less drawn by Americo Vesputio. He was the first European, not to visit but to sight the coasts of the country. However, from that day Chile had a geographical location, even though it was not legally born until some years afterwards. Magellan, having survived the crossing of the strait that bears his name, continued his voyage after giving the name of Pacific to the immense ocean he saw. Perhaps the waters seemed calm and quiet after the wrathful storms of the Strait!

Father Diego de Rosales, a Jesuit who came to Chile in 1629 and who was one of the first to chronicle the country, gives us its location:

‘Para que mejor se sepa donde yaze Chile, se deben aduerter los dos polos del cielo, el uno Polo Artico, que es una estrella fixa, que se ve en España, y es el exe del cielo; y el otro exe deste nuevo mundo. El qual no tiene estrella fixa; sino un cruzero, que esta a treinta grados de quatro hermosissimas estrellas en forma de cruz, por donde se riguen los marineros, como en Europa, por el Polo Artico. Pues debajo deste cruzero cae el Reyno de Chile.’¹⁵⁰

The Chilean country does not seem to have east or west. Father Rosales, said: "The Kingdom of Chile is the southernmost end of the Empire on the Coast of the South Sea. It

¹⁴⁷ Agustín Edwards, *My Native Land* (London: Ernest Benn Limited, 1928), p. 264.

¹⁴⁸ Gazmuri, p. E7.

¹⁴⁹ Barros, p. 1.

¹⁵⁰ Diego de Rosales, (1603-1677), *Historia General del Reyno de Chile; Flandes Indiano*, 2, Introd. by Benjamín Vicuña Mackenna, revised by Mario Góngora (Santiago: Editorial Andrés Bello, 1989), p. 174. (So that one may know better where the Kingdom of Chile lies, it is necessary to mark the two poles of the heavens, one the Arctic pole-star, that is a fixed star that is seen in Spain, and the Antarctic pole-

is measured from north to south towards the Antarctic Pole.¹⁵¹ He could say with authority that the country was always measured from north to south because seventy six years before the Spanish soldier-poet don Alonso de Erica y Zúñiga who chronicled the deeds of the conquistadors and their Indian foes, stated in *La Araucana*, his epic poem:

‘Es Chile Norte Sur de gran longura’,¹⁵²
 ‘Digo que Norte Sur corre la tierra,’¹⁵³

Alonso de Ercilla, a courtier of noble birth accompanied Prince Philip, the future Philip II of Spain, to England when his marriage to Queen Mary Tudor was arranged. While there they learnt that the Araucanians, against whom the Spanish were then waging war, had killed the conqueror and founder of Santiago, Pedro de Valdivia. Ercilla volunteered to travel with reinforcements, and in Chile his poetic talent found inspiration. Every night he recorded the events of the day, expressing equal admiration for the exploits of his countrymen and those of their Araucanian foes. He witnessed the events and saw the places he described in *La Araucana*, which he dedicated to his master and King Philip II. The poem enjoys the double merit of being both a historic and a literary monument. Cervantes himself assured *La Araucana*'s literary value in *Don Quixote*. There is an episode where Don Quixote's library is censored and all the tales that had turned him mad are thrown into the fire. On that occasion, *La Araucana* is spared on the grounds that it is one of the best heroic poems that has been written in the Spanish tongue, worthy to be compared with the most famous of Italy and be kept as the richest treasure of Spanish poetry.¹⁵⁴

There are theories about the origin of the name Chile, but all that is known is that it is an ancient name: ‘The origin of this name is lost in the unfathomable depths of native life’.¹⁵⁵

Father Rosales states that one of the conquistadors, Don Diego de Almagro, met some

star that is the axis of the new world. This has no fixed star but at thirty degrees a cross of four very beautiful stars that guides sailors, as does in Europe the Arctic pole-star.)

¹⁵¹ Rosales, p. 173.

¹⁵² Ercilla y Zúñiga, *La Araucana*, (1560), Canto the First, Line 1, 7th stanza, p. 10. (‘It's Chile North-South of great length’).

¹⁵³ Ercilla y Zúñiga, *La Araucana*, Canto the First, Line 1, 10th Stanza, p. 11. (‘I say that the land spreads from North to South’).

¹⁵⁴ Miguel de Cervantes y Saavedra, (1533-1616), *El Ingenioso Hidalgo don Quijote de la Mancha* (1605), Part 1, Chap. V (Madrid: Editorial Castilla, [n.d.]), p. 56.

people serving the Incas who said they came from 'Tili. Was this the native word for the name of the country or was it the name of the 'cacique' or Lord they were serving? Some speculate that the name may derive from the Quechua word, 'chiri' (Peru), that means cold, or perhaps from 'chilli' a word that in the Aymara language means, 'where the earth finishes'. Stephen Clissold, British Council Representative in Chile in the 1950's, in his *Scrapbook* considers the latter a more apt name.¹⁵⁶ Although Agustín Edwards, a Chilean of British descent also makes a reference to Father Rosales who translates 'Chiri' or chilli as 'the earth's best'.¹⁵⁷ Anyway what we do know is that the word Chile persisted in spite of Pedro de Valdivia's later attempt to call it 'Nueva Extremadura'.

As strange as the shape of the country is the fact that for quite a long period of the country's history, its inhabitants lived in a kingdom, while much larger countries such as Peru or La Plata (Argentina), never were more than Viceroyalties. It is difficult to know in what way this fact contributed to make the identity of the Chilean people different from other Latin American peoples.¹⁵⁸ One cannot but speculate whether this fact may have encouraged the imagined superiority of the Chileans with respect to their neighbours.

Father Diego de Rosales entitled his book *Historia General del Reyno de Chile* – 'General History of the Kingdom of Chile'.¹⁵⁹ He was not the only one to refer to the country as the 'Kingdom of Chile'. In fact it was always referred to as a kingdom in colonial times

¹⁵⁵ Edwards, p. 3.

¹⁵⁶ Clissold, *Chilean Scrapbook*, p. XXIII.

¹⁵⁷ Edwards, p. 3.

¹⁵⁸ It seems that Chile owes this honour to England. Chile, only a poor and distant Spanish colony at the time, apparently acquired the status of kingdom when the future Philip II of Spain was about to marry Mary Tudor: his father made him King of Chile, so that his rank was not inferior to hers. None has held the title of King of Chile since Philip. Father Diego de Rosales refers to this fact in his *Historia General del Reyno de Chile*: 'En aquellas Cortes, y con asistencia, que el Emperador hizo en Flandes, trato de casar a su hijo Phlipo Segundo Principe de las Españas con la Serenissima Doña Maria, unica y singular heredera de los Reynos de Inglaterra, y como los grandes de aquel Reyno reconociendo que doña Maria era legitima Reyna, respondiesen, que avia de ser Rey tambien, quien se casasse con ella, se trato de que el Principe se coronasse por Rey de Chile y como ya esta Prouincias que antes no tenian otro titulo estuviesen por el Emperador, y pertenciesen a la Corona de Castilla dixo. Pues hagamos Reyno a Chile, y desde entonces quedo con ese renombre.' 1, p. 468.

John Carr, in an unpublished *Survey of the British in Chile* mentions an old painting at the Arts Museum in Santiago, over which an inscription reads 'Maria Tudor: Regina Chilae'. It is perhaps the only one in existence of Mary Tudor in her robes as Queen of Chile. This survey can be read at the library of the Museo de Santiago, Plaza de Armas, Santiago, Chile.

¹⁵⁹ Rosales, p. 176.

although there were never any Chilean kings. Besides, not only Spanish and Chilean subjects used the term kingdom. Exactly 160 years after Father Rosales arrived in the country, the American navigator Amasa Délano also refers to it in this way.¹⁶⁰ Also in the same period, a French tradesman M. Jullien Mellet, who spent fifteen years in the South American continent, and who was in Chile when the Spanish General Mariano Ossorio had been sent by the Spanish Viceroy in Lima to re-conquer Chile, (1815-1818). On his arrival in the country he says he has finally left the mountains behind to enter the 'Kingdom of Chile, which is five hundred leagues long by about twenty-eight or thirty wide'.¹⁶¹

In 1940, Benjamin Subercaseaux, a Chilean of French origin wrote a book that he entitled *Chile o una Loca Geografia* - because he was probably thinking of its unusual geographical configuration, which has important effects on its inhabitants' identity.¹⁶² The country's shape suggested different images to visitors in the 18th and 19th centuries,, like the British naturalist Elliot, who in his description compares it to 'a ribbon of a country'.¹⁶³ The American writer Erna Ferguson seems to be less romantic; for her the country seems to hang precariously from the edge of the continent, as if in danger of falling into the sea.¹⁶⁴

Different authors resort to different images when they try to describe the length of the country: Lord Bryce is reminded of the Nile in Egypt, and Edward A. Ross wrote: 'If Italy is a boot, and France a teapot, surely Chile is an eel.'¹⁶⁵

This long and narrow country spreads from parallel 17°30' as far as the South Pole, compressed between the Andean range and the Pacific Ocean. Its average width is 175 kilometres. Furthermore, not only is Chile separated from the rest of the world by the Cordillera on the east, and by a desert where no creatures live in the north, but also on the west there is an inexorable ocean, that is even more threatening for a people who can hardly be called natural seafarers. This is the external isolation the country lives, but there is also

¹⁶⁰ Amasa Délano, *Narrative of Voyages and Travels* (Boston: [n.pub.], [n.d.], p. 277.

¹⁶¹ Jullien Mellet, *Voyage en Amérique Méridionale depuis 1808 jusque' en 1819*, (Paris: A. Agen: De L'imprimerie de Prosper Noubel, 1824), p. 66.

¹⁶² Benjamín Subercaseaux, *Chile o una loca geografia*.

¹⁶³ L.E. Elliott, *Chile, Today and Tomorrow*, (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1922), p. 1.

¹⁶⁴ Erna Ferguson, *Chile* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1943), p. 10.

an internal one that constitutes an important feature of the country's identity and that is a result of the first. In 1915 the traveller and writer W.H. Koebel, in his preface to Mill's book, said:

'Far less has been written in Europe on Chile than on either Argentina or Brazil. This is certainly not because the former republic is lacking in interest, ... One of the main reasons, as a matter of fact, which almost certainly accounts for the comparative dearth of European works, lies in the circumstances of that isolation which has already been referred to.'¹⁶⁶

A country like this becomes an island, even though this definition does not fit the geographical definition of island, a piece of land surrounded by water. Moving their borders is a choice that island countries have not got. In the case of Chile, it is not surrounded by water only, but by other natural, non-movable barriers: deserts and mountains. The island condition gives a country and its inhabitants definite borders while lines on maps are arbitrary: beaches, cliffs, mountains or deserts can not be moved.

Sociologists have long tried to define the link between Chilean character and identity and the country's geography. For example, for both Hernán Godoy and Bernardo Subercaseaux a key aspect in the Chilean identity is that as a result of an insular geography with the addition of great altitudes and great depths that almost come together, Chileans tend to be depressive beings.¹⁶⁷ The idea of a continental island is rooted in the national consciousness, which is at the same time a metaphor, not only for physical, but also for mental insularity and isolation. Chileans then, perceive themselves as an island community and also as a peripheral culture in relation to the rest of the continent, against which they define themselves.

The coast of Chile is about 2,800 miles, that is, more or less the same distance as that between Oslo and the Gulf of Aden. The Pacific Ocean, an ocean that in this part of the

¹⁶⁵ Edward Alsworth Ross, *South of Panama* (New York: The Century Co., 1917), p. 94.

¹⁶⁶ George J. Mills, *Chile* introd. by W.H. Koebel London : T: Fisher Unwin Ltd., 1914), p. XII.

¹⁶⁷ Bernardo Subercaseaux, *Historia de las ideas y de la cultura en Chile*, 2 vols (Santiago: Editorial Universitaria), 1997.

Hernán Godoy Urzúa, *Apuntes sobre la cultura en Chile* (Valparaíso: Ediciones Universitarias de Valparaíso), 1988.

world does not often up live to its name, washes this coast. Navigators or travellers who wrote about their experiences and impressions, give us pictures of the places and people they have seen or met. However, it is as if they navigated with their heads always turned towards one side, towards the coast. Very rarely in their descriptions is the ocean mentioned, unless it is some thoughts about a vision of an infinite sea. In doing so, they do the same as many Chileans, whose image of the immensity and even emptiness of the ocean is reflected in the title of a novel written about fifty years ago, whose title is: *Y al Oeste limita con el mar....* This title that I have freely translated as 'And then to the West, nothing but the Sea...', expresses the loneliness a never-ending sea gives those who look at the horizon.¹⁶⁸

'The people of the Iberian tradition share an appreciation of urban life. Most of the inhabitants of Chile live in the Central Valley, rather than on the mountains and they have not developed a seafaring tradition of importance'.¹⁶⁹

The country's mestizo legacy has influenced the Chileans's 'option' for the land rather than the sea. Few countries have more coasts - and richer ones - than Chile, where with the exception of the southern islands the country's cultural identity is focused on the rural central area. The reason might be that the native Indians: Mapuche, Huilliche, Picunche, Pehuenche, etc., who were more in numbers than those of the coast or the south, were and are, 'people of the land'. Besides, the majority of the conquistadors came from the Spanish regions of Extremadura, Castilla and Andalucía, areas that did not produce Spain's best sailors (as compared to those from Cataluña, Valencia and Navarra). We can find an example in Pedro de Valdivia, Chile's conqueror - from Extremadura - who founded his capital, Santiago, far from the sea. Consequently, the fact that Chile has a territorial mentality might be a cultural legacy from the country's Spanish and Indian ancestors.¹⁷⁰

One argument in the sense that Chile is not a seafaring country is that the Chilean army was not organised by Chileans but by a British officer, Lord Cochrane, who modelled it after the British navy, and its long tradition of navigation. It has had among its principal officers

¹⁶⁸ Benjamín Subercaseaux, *Y al Oeste limita con el mar....* (Santiago de Chile: Editorial Ercilla), 1937.

¹⁶⁹ Véliz, *The Centralist Tradition of Latin America*, p. 223.

¹⁷⁰ Gazmuri, p. E7.

the children and then, the descendants of the British families that settled in Valparaiso in the 19th century.

Radcliffe analyses three dimensions of official national construction around which discursive constructions of nationhood take place. The three fields of power that the state generates are the sites of history, territory and population. History then is the creative narration (or invention of histories) to suit the nation building purposes; the emphasis being on history as the territory taken for granted. Then in the field of education Geography becomes the learning the place of the nation, and maps, logos of national identity.¹⁷¹

The national anthem is one of the material artefacts that symbolise the nation and mark the territory as national. From their early childhood Chilean children memorise the national anthem that tells them that the mountains are ‘The Lord's given bulwark’ (‘Majestuosa es la blanca montaña que te dio por baluarte el Señor’), a huge defensive wall which reinforces the national perception of a safe haven, an island with God-given borders.

‘Hemmed between the cyclopean wall of the Andean range and the vast sea ... the Chilean people have grown up with their eyes set on the obstacle which separate from enforced contacts’.¹⁷²

An island, a real or a geographically imagined one like Chile can serve as a symbolic setting for defining identities. ‘Real, physical spaces are not wholly detachable from an imagined geography’ and islands help define the individual and the nation.¹⁷³ The image of the mountains as a huge wall that not only separates the Chilean inhabitants from the rest of the continent, but that would also defend them from external aggression is a familiar one. In this way the collective subject is constituted in relation to the sense of space, because geographies of identity are constituted in the sphere of imagination and the representation.¹⁷⁴ This place specific reference in the national anthem serves to map out a key place in the national imaginary. It may serve to explain the perception that although

¹⁷¹ Radcliffe, pp. 58-62.

¹⁷² Edwards, p. 4.

¹⁷³ Rober Shannan Peckham, ‘Island Essays: Coasting’, in *Beyond the Floating Islands* ed. by Stephanos Stephanides and Susan Bassnett (COTEPPRA: University of Bologna, 2002), pp. 85-88 (p. 85).

their geographical situation or external isolation has separated them physically from the rest of the world, Chileans do not regret their isolation, because they are also an internally isolated.

An example of the Chileans' internal isolation can be found in the teaching of history and geography in Chilean schools where only two histories have been thought and taught: the national and the 'universal' (or European rather). Here, the spatial referents of sovereignty and territoriality are fundamental and cannot be renounced from the moment they constitute the geographical and juridical horizon of the state, while continentality becomes a frontier.¹⁷⁵ Undoubtedly the teaching of national identity through history and geography has been a feature of most textbooks and this is why Radcliffe sees geography as a state tool.¹⁷⁶ So, the territory, for matters of sovereignty is fixed geographically, while history is understood as the history of the state. Chileans, to a great extent, ignore the histories of their neighbouring countries because they are not included in the 'Contenidos Mínimos Obligatorios' of the National Curriculum. (The continent is mentioned in the last year of secondary education, where a unit about contemporary Latin America is proposed. Its contents are geography, challenges and frustrations, relations with the United States, processes of urbanisation and re-democratisation).¹⁷⁷ Clearly Chileans tend to distance

¹⁷⁴ Radcliffe, p. 27.

¹⁷⁵ García de la Huerta, p. 244.

¹⁷⁶ Radcliffe, p. 62.

¹⁷⁷ '*Objetivos Fundamentales y Contenidos Mínimos Obligatorios de la Enseñanza Media: Actualización 2002*' (Santiago: Gobierno de Chile, Ministerio de Educación Pública), 2002.

Note: The contents of the 8 years of elementary education are designed in reference to 'my home, my neighbourhood, my town, my region and my country. Herewith the main contents for the four years of secondary education or 'enseñanza media'.

1er. Año de Enseñanza Media: Entorno natural y comunidad regional.

2º Año de Enseñanza Media:

1. La América Pre-Colombina: Grandes civilizaciones, Conquista Española, Relaciones entre Españoles e Indígenas, Herencia Cultural de España, Sociedad colonial en Chile.
2. La creación de una nación: Independencia y sus causas, Origen de la República de Chile, Pensamiento Liberal, Expansión del territorio.
3. Sociedad secular: Economía del salitre, Vida en las salitreras, Revolución de 1891, Avances en educación.
4. Chile, siglo XX hasta el presente: Influencia de USA, El estado benefactor, Cambios políticos, económicos y culturales desde 1950.

3er año de Enseñanza Media

1. La diversidad de civilizaciones: Línea de tiempo, Las grandes civilizaciones.
2. El legado de Grecia y Roma.
3. Europa medieval y el Cristianismo.
4. El humanismo y el pensamiento científico.

themselves from the Latin American context, but this is an ideological consideration in the same way as the construction of a national identity can also be ideological.

The Argentinean writer Jorge Luis Borges raised the point of the little awareness Latin Americans (not Chileans only) have of a common history – which, he said we know because it is narrated by Europe - alongside with the common physical referent of geography and the spiritual referent of the Spanish language and the Catholic religion, in spite of shared experiences and fortunes: ‘Los hombres de las Américas permanecemos tan incomunicados que apenas nos conocemos por referencia, contados por Europa’.¹⁷⁸ The Chilean Luis Alberto Sánchez also wrote ‘ Vivimos inter-incomunicados’.¹⁷⁹ An example that illustrates the scarcity (or lack of) information appears in the *Boletín de Filosofía 2001*. There is a complaint that in the departments of Philosophy in Chilean universities, Latin American philosophy is not normally studied (which does not mean that there is not one). Therefore, a philosophy student may graduate and think that this field of study does not exist and may not necessarily infer that there is an institutional lack of information.¹⁸⁰ This, to a certain extent, also applies to the music, painting and literature of the other countries, as well as the everyday life of their peoples.

5. El mundo moderno: La Revolución Industrial, La Revolución Francesa, El imperialismo moderno y Europa en el siglo XX: Guerras mundiales, Revolución Rusa, Depresión.

4º año de Enseñanza Media

1. El mundo contemporáneo: Las grandes regiones del mundo y Casos de influencia, cooperación y conflicto: La economía global, La revolución tecnológica. La sociedad moderna: Masificación, Democracia, El rol de la mujer, La cultura juvenil. Medio ambiente: La pobreza, Grandes problemas ambientales.

2. El mundo después de las guerras: Consecuencias mundiales de las dos guerras mundiales, La Guerra Fría. Un mundo bi-polar: Países desarrollados y Tercer Mundo. La caída del muro de Berlín, El neo-liberalismo.

3. La América Latina contemporánea: Geografía, América Latina en la segunda mitad del siglo XX: Desafíos y frustraciones, Relaciones con Estados Unidos, Urbanización acelerada, Proceso de re-democratización.

4. Chile y América Latina: Descripción de elementos comunes: sociales, políticos, culturales, etc.

5. Chile y el mundo: Relaciones exteriores: Tratados, Relaciones económicas. Tratados sobre: Derechos Humanos, Oportunidades, Medio ambiente, Pobreza.

¹⁷⁸ Jorge Luis Borges, *Obras Completas: Discusión: El otro Whitman* (Buenos Aires: Emecé Editores, 1974), p. 206. ('The peoples of the Americas are isolated in such a way that we know about the others by reference, narrated by Europe'). (My own translation).

¹⁷⁹ Sánchez, *Existe América Latina?*, p. 10.

¹⁸⁰ Jorge Gissi Bustos, *Psicología e Identidad Latinoamericana: sociosicoanálisis de cinco premios Nobel* (Santiago: Pontificia Universidad Católica, 2002), p. 94.

This internal isolation is also reflected in Chilean society. Julio Retamal Favereau, historian, genealogist and member of the Chilean Academy, led research that in three volumes traced the 215 Chilean 'founding families'. (The first volume covers the 16th century and the second the first half of the 17th century). The authors mention the documental darkness of the period, whose main sources are parish records, the only place where births, marriages and deaths were registered until the creation of the 'Registro Civil' in 1885. The task of researchers was immensely complicated, as numbers of documents have been destroyed, out of carelessness, indigenous rebellions, earthquakes, fires and other catastrophes. Church records are almost non-existent in the 16th century, and scarce in the 17th, and not until the 18th century was the recording system regularised. Other sources, such as legal archives, have suffered great deterioration too. What makes matters worse is that the mestizo population is often not mentioned, so their steps are difficult to follow.¹⁸¹ One of the problems the researchers had to face was the concept of family and surname, because in the three hundred years of colonial rule the use of surname was rather anarchical, and only towards the end of the 19th century was this regularised. Before, anyone could freely choose a surname among those of his ancestors, and could even be known by a succession of surnames during his life. So, it is possible to find two families with the same family name that come from different family trunks, and conversely, families that come, through male lines, from the same trunk, but who have different family names.

Nonetheless, judicial archives, where various documents, specially wills survive, have proved to be very useful. Wills specially, provide a wealth of information, as they were almost sacred documents, done before God. Often, when the person saw he could be condemned for eternity he confessed his sins and often also recognised children whose existence was unknown.

Familias fundadoras de Chile includes fertility and infant mortality rates. The genealogists headed by Julio Retamal Favereau also designed a huge genealogical tree which they called 'The Chilean Family,' that spreads from the conquest till the present day with an average of

¹⁸¹ Julio Retamal Favereau, *Familias fundadoras de Chile, 1540-1600*, 3 vols (Santiago de Chile: Zig-Zag), 1992.

eleven generations and that shows in a graphic way endogamy or inbreeding in the Chilean society. (Endogamy, defined by the Spanish Royal Academy of the Language as the custom of marrying within the same tribe, is part of the Chilean society. There are different kinds of endogamy. In primitive or isolated societies this was a common phenomenon of which we find examples in times that are so different and places, so distant such as ancient Egypt, or the Inca Empire. Whereas, geographical endogamy is determined by the impossibility of leaving a place - an extreme case in Chile is Easter Island). In the common Chilean genealogical tree the researchers traced back to the common trunk – the Ortiz de Gaete family - almost all the presidents of the republic (both Allende and Pinochet are among them) and many politicians, senators, deputies, members of the Church and armed forces hierarchies, academics, artists, people connected to TV, sports, business, etc.ⁱ The researchers thus proved something that has long been an unofficial accepted truth: people from all fields of the national activities are related. ¹⁸² Doña Marina Ortiz de Gaete married don Pedro de Valdivia, Chile's conqueror. They did not have children of their own, but together with her, came her brothers, cousins and nephews who settled from north to south of the country. The historical importance of this family trunk is that it starts with the conquest and of its connection to the conqueror through his in-laws.ⁱⁱ

In a closed and endogamic society like Chile's, family relationships are multiple, and increased by geographical isolation: 'Los lazos de parentesco son la característica básica de la estructura familiar en Chile'.¹⁸³

'En cualquier núcleo de Chilenos, por heterogéneo que sea, con tal de que salgan de las familias más antiguas se puede comprobar el lejano parentesco a través del tronco Ortiz de Gaete.'¹⁸⁴

When the team of genealogists led by Julio Retamal Favereau searched the recorded marriages in the Chilean history, they clearly observed reiterated examples of intermarriage between relatives. Even more so, there are places and times, in which almost every marriage record of a parish or region states some degree of blood relationship, in order to

¹⁸² Retamal Favereau, I, p. 56

¹⁸³ Retamal Favereau, II, p. 779.

¹⁸⁴ Ibid. p. 780.

issue the corresponding certificate of canonical dispensation.¹⁸⁵ One of the findings of this research is that nearly 75% of the Chilean population can trace their origin to the colonial period, a capacity for ‘permanence’ that is very high, compared to Argentina, for example, where it is only 25%. This permanence is part of the country’s endogamy. The country’s geographical isolation meant that not only was it difficult to get there, but that it was also difficult to leave it. This may have been an important reason why a number of families did not want to, or perhaps could not return home. Travelling home was not practical or even advisable due to the enormous distances on one hand, and the dangers of sea voyages – mainly storms and English, French and later Dutch pirates – to the ‘last corner of the world’, on the other.¹⁸⁶

The situation started to change during the 18th century with the coming of English, French and Dutch scientific expeditions, increased trade in the Indies, followed by independence and steam boats in the following century. That is why Valparaíso became one of the largest and most active ports in the American Pacific coast, (until the opening of the Panama Canal in 1914), and one of the places where European families settled. These non-Spanish settlers were the first to break an almost total and endogamic three-century isolation. So, despite the official restrictions, a few non-Hispanic Europeans had managed to settle in Chile, may be with the complicity of the authorities of perhaps by bribing them. Only in this way was it possible to understand why at the beginning of the 19th century there existed a small number of foreign residents, who somehow or other had entered the country and who were tolerated by the colonial authorities. In short, the presence of foreigners was a reality, in spite of all the efforts made by the metropolitan authorities to prevent their coming. It is interesting to notice that if in 1808 there were 77 foreign residents registered in Chile, nearly 200 years afterwards, the 2002 Census showed that in the country there were 184,464 people born elsewhere who held residence permits.

Lately the Chilean social structure has undergone changes that are the consequence of globalisation and economic transformations. As the Chilean society has traditionally had as

¹⁸⁵ Retamal Favereau, I, p. 56.

¹⁸⁶ Elena Irrázabal Sánchez, ‘Amigos o Enemigos, pero Parientes’, *El Mercurio*, 1 Oct. 2000, p. E-4.

one of its main characteristics that of being extremely static, a society where nothing seems to change, this is something that may even make it difficult to visualise changes that been taking place within the society, and which have resulted in an increased social mobility based on merit rather than on other dimensions. The historian Lucía Santa Cruz argues that 'the elites constitute a good indicator of social fluidity because they represent the hard core of a society, and because they are, in general, slower in opening to new influences'.¹⁸⁷ My hypothesis is that the social and economic changes of the last decades - the transition from a closed economy where the state had a central role, to an open economy where market relations become crucial - have brought deep alteration to the elites' social life and especially to the systems of social differentiation.

From a society whose reproductive mechanisms were based on marriage and family connections the latest decades have seen the emergence of a new groups whose access to and permanency in the elite depends on economic success. This does not mean that today criteria like family relations do not have a role to play in social access. It does not mean either that in the past market criteria were not taken into account. Far from that, but the traditional patterns of social access have given space to other considerations based on personal merit, such as the individuals' personal abilities and performance. The structural transformations of the last decades - economic growth, increase of the cultural and educational capital of the country -together with the replacement of the state institutions as the main means of social fusion for market criteria have given priority to meritocracy. The cycle of economic changes and transformations has also brought significant improvement in life style and it can be presumed that it has also produced equally important consequences in the Chilean social network, as in general prosperity, development and affluence affect the speed and intensity of social mobility and occupational structure. At the same time status symbols such as blood, birth and land ownership have been modified, while new consumerism trends tend to homogenise life styles, ways of dressing and

¹⁸⁷ Lucía Santa Cruz, Eugenio Guzmán y Héctor Martinovic, 'La Nueva Elite', *El Sábado*, 290, pp. 21-27, 10 April 2004, p. 21. The historian Lucía Santa Cruz together with the two above mentioned sociologists carried out in 2002, research on the changes that have taken place in the Chilean elite. They surveyed and interviewed people chosen from the world of politics, means of communication, academy and business. They wanted to find out what changes two decades of market economy have produced in the Chilean identity, especially the upper, and traditionally less permeable, classes.

entertainment, giving many wider access to goods that before were the privilege of a few exclusive minorities such as travelling, second homes, etc. On the other hand, apart from a transformation that is in process with a new business elite at its head, in the political arena right-wing parties have been drifting away from the Pinochet image and tend to use economic success, based on neo-liberal doctrines, to legitimise their role during the period. The right wing elites realised that it was necessary to re-think their political role, be flexible and modernise the parties. They have turned into highly dogmatic and pragmatic groups and enjoy wide popular support.¹⁸⁸

In short, the social history of Chile shows that from state institutions, state education, public service, politics and party system emerged an important middle class that established a network of connections with the traditional elites. However, until recently a strong closed society, in which the position of the parents determined that of the children and whose power was based not only on economic factors such as land ownership and participation in production areas, but also on criteria of social origin, dominated. This society was – and I argue that still is, in many aspects, - exclusive, self-perpetuating, homogenous, endogenous, rigid, and in general not open to integrate new immigrants or to accept exogenous marriages. Therefore, access has been discriminatory and selective and has translated into a gradual, slow and limited absorption by the established elites of a wealthy and well-educated middle class. Nevertheless, this has been a restricted and controlled permeability, and one on which the original elite has tended to impose its ethics and aesthetics. As can easily be deduced, a consequence of the existence of more or less impenetrable groups has naturally been powerful resentment.

II.2 HISTORY AND CHILEAN IDENTITY

In this discussion about the country's identity it is necessary to refer to issues that have to do with its history, such as the imagined community which is the Chilean state. It is

¹⁸⁸ Sofia Correa, 'En el siglo XX nunca la derecha fue tan exitosa como lo es ahora', *El Mercurio*, 12, April 2004, p. C4.

important to discuss in what way Chileans relate to the authority symbolised by the state, and why they do it in the way they do.

In every country there are national features that are the product of the country's history. How has the Chilean identity been constructed in time, that is, historically? It can be argued that since colonial times there was an intuition of the nation, long before it existed politically or historically. The best example can be found in Alonso de Ercilla's 16th century epic poem *La Araucana*, in which the country is called by its name. The poem also fixes certain features that are still present in the collective 'imaginary': a remote and narrow land that spreads from the border with Peru as far as Antarctica, and is compressed between the Andean mountain range and the ocean: an isolated and insular nation. *La Araucana* is a poem to two races, a mythology of the origin, a warlike and indomitable people. This is why Ercilla can be considered Chile's inventor.

Along these lines the sociologist Hernán Godoy thinks that what he calls the peculiar character of the Chilean people derives both from its geographical insularity, and from its history of a country permanently at war, with the long Araucanian resistance against the Spanish armies. He also points to the virtual absence of Spanish women during the conquest, which gave all classes some special features.¹⁸⁹

Chile and the other Latin American countries have a long common history of nation building projects, differing though in timing and context. In the early 19th century, the 'Fathers of the Nation' based their search for nationhood, on the notion of a common people, an imagined community united in its political independence, where the key to the origin of the nation was the anti-colonialist feelings. The Chilean historian Mario Góngora wrote as if the state was the political and spiritual reality of the people, its structuring nucleus and its rational will: 'La nación Chilena ha sido formada por un Estado que ha antecedido a ella, a semejanza, en esto, de la Argentina; y a diferencia de México y del Perú, donde grandes culturas autóctonas prefiguraron los Virreinos y las Repúblicas'

¹⁸⁹ Godoy, *Apuntes sobre la cultura en Chile*.

(Chile had a state before being a nation).¹⁹⁰ Góngora omitted the church because he thought in the State of the 19th and 20th centuries - republican- as the maker of the nation. The supposition of a non-nation without a state suggests an absolute beginning produced after 1810, before which date there would not be, according to Góngora, a 'Chile', or a Chilean nation. Nevertheless, society existed long before without the political body came into being.

Furthermore, Góngora reinforced his theses with an argument that devalued the 'pueblos originarios', from the moment he disregarded them because he assumed that they were unable to pre-create a nation. Góngora's argument was that 'la nacionalidad chilena ... ha sido formada a partir de las guerras de la Independencia, y luego de las sucesivas guerras victoriosas del siglo XIX, se ha ido constituyendo un sentimiento y una conciencia propiamente "nacionales", "la chilenidad".¹⁹¹ This is an argument that was also used by Jaime Eyzaguirre:

'Ya en los tres siglos anteriores a la Independencia el continuo oleaje de sangre española había creado una raza homogénea en la que no se integró el belicoso araucano del sur del Bío-Bío.'¹⁹²

Obviously, in Eyzaguirre's opinión, the Mapuche, whom he called Araucanos, were not part of the 'Chilean race', until at least the 19th century, and the idea of 'patria' could not have been born in them or in the other indigenous groups that existed at the time of the arrival of the Spanish soldiers. Neither Eyzaguirre nor Góngora stated if or when the Mapuche or Araucanos became part of the 'Chilean race'.

As Góngora imagined the formation of the nation based on the patriotic feelings that were born with the wars of Independence, this seems to be the reason why he attributed to the republican state the role of maker of the nation. 'Góngora presenta al Estado como la fuerza

¹⁹⁰ Mario Góngora, *Ensayo Histórico sobre la Noción de Estado en Chile en los Siglos XIX y XX* (Santiago de Chile: Editorial Universitaria, S.A., 1992), p. 37.

¹⁹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 126.

¹⁹² Jaime Eyzaguirre, *Fisonomía Histórica de Chile* (Santiago: Editorial Universitaria, 1948), p.13.

más dinámica en el desarrollo de Chile como nación.¹⁹³ There is, however, a fundamental limitation in the creation of a republic in this part of the world: it was not an authentic liberation nor meant a change of customs. It was, above all, independence, that is a conquest of political sovereignty and commercial autonomy. Moreover, what was since then narrated, sung to and commemorated, was the glory of the 'Liberation Army', associating freedom with military victories. However, the authoritarian state of Góngora's first, or Spanish foundation continued to be the great subject of history playing a tutelary role in culture and education.

Traditionalism has always been strong in Chile. Jorge Larraín identifies a special form of 'ideological traditionalism', by which ruling parties accept and encourage changes necessary for development in the economic sphere, while rejecting those changes that would lead to changes in other spheres: for example, an almost religious respect for order, authority and the family is promoted in the most traditional way. So, in the Chilean identity a combination of conservative attitudes in relation to authority, traditional values, order and security, together with an emphasis on free market, can be observed.¹⁹⁴ Furthermore, Clissold argued that although Latin American's Baroque Age seems remote and alien today, more so in many respects, than the Conquest with its trauma always discernible beneath the surface of modern life, or the ancient pre-Columbian civilisations that invite our study, it has left its mark more deeply than we may realise. His position is that it still influences the aesthetic sensibility and the many complex aspects of the collective psychology.¹⁹⁵ Claudio Véliz agrees with Clissold and stresses that the culture of the Baroque showed a clear inclination towards conserving things as they were, because novelty was dangerous. Consequently, the permanence of the traditional was highly valued and 'once it became generally accepted that Baroque society was firmly established, pious and well-ordered, resistance to change became a virtue'.¹⁹⁶ In Véliz's analysis, the legacy of centralism and traditionalism is evident in the style and practice of the Catholic religion,

¹⁹³ Renato Cristi, *El pensamiento político de Jaime Guzmán* (Santiago: Ediciones LOM, 2000), p. 144.

¹⁹⁴ Larraín, *Identidad Chilena*, pp. 206-228.

¹⁹⁵ Clissold, *Chilean Scrapbook*, p. 69.

¹⁹⁶ Claudio Véliz, ed., *Obstacles to Change in Latin America* (London: Oxford University Press, 1965), p. 86. This aspect of the problem was examined at a Conference convened in London in 1965 by the Royal Institute of International Affairs, which resulted in a volume of essays.

which provide evidence that Catholicism 'has survived virtually unchanged for almost five centuries and retains to this day its overwhelming dominance.'¹⁹⁷ Paul Johnson also comments on the religious immobility of the Latin world:

'This huge continent where paganism was quickly expunged, where great cities, cultures and sub-cultures were soon established, where Christianity was united and monopolistic, carefully protected by the State from any hint of heresy, schism or rival religions, and where the clergy were innumerable, rich and privileged, made virtually no distinctive contribution to the Christian message and insight in over four centuries. Latin America exuded a long conformist silence.'¹⁹⁸

Véliz also analyses this resistance to change that is so embedded in the Chilean identity: 'This quiet, almost inarticulate disinclination to change has proved unusually persistent and ought not to be ignored when considering the culture and society of the region, because this is part of their Baroque inheritance'.¹⁹⁹ Veliz adds that the rest of the world, since the nineteenth century has considered Latin America prone to violent and unexpected change, and he challenges this view by arguing that the 'principal feature of modern Latin America has been its overwhelming stability. There exists in the region a resilient traditional structure of institutions, hierarchical arrangements, and attitudes that qualify every aspect of behaviour and that has survived centuries of colonial government, foreign wars and invasions, domestic revolutions, a confusingly large number of lesser palace revolts. In our time, it has not only successfully resisted the initial impact of technological innovation and industrialisation but appears to have been strengthened by it.'²⁰⁰

In Chile the process creating the republican institutions was relatively short and smooth. Soon, definitions of the concept of 'order' establish a firm relationship between anarchy, or risk of anarchy, and a wider concept of social and political 'dis-order'. So, as political order was the consequence of social order, the new rational order required careful social political, economic, cultural and intellectual guidance. The political actors belonged to the ruling élite. This was socially homogeneous and endogamic, and saw itself as the legitimate

¹⁹⁷ Ibid., p. 191.

¹⁹⁸ Paul Johnson, *A History of Christianity* (New York: Atheneum), 1976), p. 407.

¹⁹⁹ Ibid., p. 87.

²⁰⁰ Ibid., p. 86.

representative of the state authority: 'the ruling class saw itself as a generator of values, whose mission was to model the society in accordance with its project of nation and state.'²⁰¹ Besides, the ruling classes established a close connection between the concept of order and power; that is, the control of state power was based on a hierarchical social order, as defined by the ruling groups and accepted by the whole social body.²⁰² The notion of order in the middle of the nineteenth century was perhaps not the 21st century one, but in the tension between peace and quiet, and risk or possibility of anarchy, the desire for order prevailed.

'Un aspecto importante que ha subsistido desde la colonia, a veces en forma más o menos atenuada, a veces en forma más o menos exacerbada, es el autoritarismo. Esta es una tendencia o modo de actuar que persiste en la acción política, en la administración de las organizaciones públicas y privadas, en la vida familiar y, en general, en la cultura chilena, que le concede una extraordinaria importancia al rol de la autoridad y al respeto por la autoridad. Su origen está claramente relacionado con los tres siglos de vida colonial en que se constituyó un fuerte polo cultural indoibérico que acentuaba el monopolio religioso y el autoritarismo político.'²⁰³

Although the democratic trends of the Enlightenment managed, from the moment of Independence, to soften in part the colonial authoritarianism, its cultural strength does not disappear easily in the social and political Chilean life. Official discourses of national identity have been predicated upon a belief that the state and its institutions can intervene positively in citizens' acquisition of a national identity and also upon a (material and highly symbolic) spatial discontinuity with its neighbouring countries, particularly Perú and Bolivia. It is here where we find the 'relationship between myth, history and identity' that Radcliffe mentions.²⁰⁴

²⁰¹ José Joaquín Brunner and Ángel Flifish, *Los Intelectuales y las Instituciones de la Cultura* (Santiago: FLACSO), 1983.

²⁰² Ana María Stiven, 'Orden y Sociedad: Mentalidad y Cultura Política de las élites Chilenas, 1830-1850' in *In Search of a New Order: Essays on the Politics and Society of Nineteenth Century Latin America*, Eduardo Posadas-Carbó, ed., N° 2 – 1998, London: The Institute of Latin American Studies.

²⁰³ Larrain, *Identidad Chilena*, p. 226. ('An important cultural aspect that has survived since colonial times in different degrees of intensity is authoritarianism. The Chilean culture gives extraordinary importance to the roles of the authority. The origin of this attitude lies clearly in the 300 years of colonial life that stressed political and religious authority, at a moment when often, religious mechanisms were at the same time a means of political control'). (My own translation).

²⁰⁴ Radcliffe, p. 78.

Chilean sociologists such as Jorge Larraín and Claudio Véliz, together with a North American, Benjamin Keen, and Stephen Clissold, a British who lived in Chile for several years coincide in that a striking feature that comes from colonial political life is the frequent non-observance, or in the best of the cases, reluctance to observe the law. Such non-observance was then (and still is), legitimated by the use of the formula 'Se acata pero no se cumple'.²⁰⁵ This feature has in many ways survived until now in the peculiar way Chileans have of relating to principles, the law and rules in general: norms are acknowledged but in practice they are not obeyed if they go against the person's interests. The origins of this attitude probably lie in the fact that although the crown was recognised as the natural source of authority and there was willingness to obey, reality or circumstances often prevented its implementation. In fact, the Royal laws could be fair and well intended but had been created in a very distant Spain, and to put them into practice could have been harmful to either the crown's or the colonisers' interests (or to the interests of both of them).²⁰⁶ This well-known dictum suggests a legalistic delay that has been interpreted as a tactic to avoid compliance without openly challenging the metropolis. The kings were in Spain but the real power was in their representatives in the Indies.²⁰⁷ What is interesting is that the unwillingness to comply with the law was never accompanied by questioning of its legitimacy or validity. On the contrary, it was and is now necessary to proclaim total respect for the norm.

Later at the moment of Independence the rulers of the new republics found themselves free of the reality or pretence of this remote control; power was no longer exercised in the name of the Spanish crown. Then they sought legitimacy in new constitutions, which may have been in many aspects unrelated to the local realities and which, therefore, were often ignored.²⁰⁸ Principles could be transgressed only insofar as they were simultaneously accepted, thus keeping an appearance of respect for the norm. This is crucial because in this

²⁰⁵ Benjamin Keen, ed., *Latin American Civilisation*, 7th ed. (Colorado: Westview Press, a Member of the Perseus Book Group, 2000), p. 105.

Larraín, *Identidad Chilena*, pp. 226-230.

Véliz, *The Centralist Tradition of Latin America*, pp. 20-26.

Clissold, *Chilean Scrapbook* (London: Cresset Press, 1952), Chapters 13.

²⁰⁶ Larraín, *Identidad Chilena* p. 229.

²⁰⁷ Véliz, *The centralist Tradition of Latin America*, p. 24. Alemparte, pp. 84-85.

way, the principle of authority, so important in Chile, is not violated. Nevertheless, Chileans themselves see this attitude as a form of national hypocrisy. This feature is also present in the Chilean's legalist mind and the formal way in which the norm is obeyed, as well as the easy manner in which it is, in practice, ignored.

²⁰⁸ Stephen, Clissold, *Latin America: a Cultural Outline* (London: Hutchinson University Library, 1965), p. 13.

III. VERSIONS OF CHILEAN IDENTITY

The object of this case study, Chile, is on one hand, usually defined as a continental island isolated from the rest of the continent, and on the other, it still is a Latin American country. Paradoxically, however, this does not mean that there is a cultural unity in the continent that Chile shares. But unity is not uniformity; it is a unity that exists in plurality.

It is possible to identify several streams in Chilean identity – some shared with the rest of Latin America - the frame in which it is located. The two main streams are a Hispanicist version, with a strong Catholic component and a militarist element, and a popular version. (In Chile there is some militarist literature according to which Chileans have a militarist identity. However, there is, parallel to it a myth that projects the image of a legalist civil society, respectful of its institutions and with obedient armed forces.) A description of the Chilean versions of identity is useful because it helps to outline the aspects in which the Chilean identity differs.

III.1. A HISPANICIST-CATHOLIC VERSION OF CHILEAN IDENTITY

Hispanicism is a view that values the distinctive character of the life style, traditions and Hispanic culture in Latin America and whose main thesis is that the roots of identity in Hispanic America are to be found in medieval Catholic Spanish traditions. In this version Latin American cultural identity is the result of the encounter between indigenous cultural values and the Spaniards' Catholic religion whose emphasis on rites and liturgy met a ritual conception of life and worship in the indigenous cultures.

Jorge Larraín has analysed the elements in the Hispanicist Catholic discourse, the central one of which is Latin America's Catholic substratum or at least, a Christian one. This is followed by the notion that Latin American identity was constructed within and in relation to baroque modernity, which has an oral, rather than a written character. Larraín's third

element stresses the fact that Latin American cultures privilege natural wisdom over rationality, and finally that this Catholic identity has not been recognised by the intellectual elites, a fact that has alienated them culturally.²⁰⁹

In Chile, among the most important names that support the Hispanicist version of the Chilean identity are those of Mario Góngora, who argues for the Hispanic character of the national identity, together with Osvaldo Lira, Pedro Morandé and Jaime Eyzaguirre. Jaime Eyzaguirre endeavoured to recuperate the Hispanic values that he considered threatened by indigenists and North American imperialism, against which he opposed 'the Hispanic-American patrimony'.²¹⁰ He argues that modern Latin America could not have existed without the Spanish presence, since it constituted a decisive unifying factor in a diverse and divided indigenous world.

'Lo que se haga por echar en olvido el nombre español en estas tierras y querer oponer a él una revalorización hiperbólica de lo indígena irá en derechura a atentar contra el nervio vital que ata a nuestros pueblos.'²¹¹

From Eyzaguirre's point of view, the category mestizo, as a founding element of Chileanness was of no relevance. Mestizos, in his view, due to their illegitimacy, were at the bottom of the social scale (even below the native Indians), because, even though they could be clever with their hands, they were basically insincere, and this made them unreliable. He also considered mestizos immoral, undisciplined, drunkards, thieves and sexually promiscuous and for him, these characteristics were the consequence of the lack of the stability of legitimacy.²¹² Here Eyzaguirre did nothing but to use the most current stereotyped images of the Mapuche people, in a sweeping generalisation.

The Jesuit Osvaldo Lira was certainly aware that Chile was an ethnically mestizo country, but he argued that the Chileans' cultural essence was provided by the Hispanic culture. Furthermore, he considered that Independence had meant a deep cultural rupture of this

²⁰⁹ Larraín, *Identidad Chilena*, pp. 186-208.

²¹⁰ Jaime Eyzaguirre, 'Prologémenos y cultura Hipano-Americana', *Estudios*, 78 (1939), p. 18.

²¹¹ Eyzaguirre, *Hispanoamérica del dolor* (Madrid: Instituto de Estudios Políticos, 1947), p. 18.

essence, 'a premature death', as he called it.²¹³ When in the 19th century the Latin American elites accepted the influence of the French and British cultural traditions, they had – in Lira's opinion - been seduced by foreign influences, forgetting, or even worse, negating those values that had given them historical existence. With this argument he accused them of being 'traitors to their real identity'.²¹⁴ Summarising, Father Lira claimed that Chile's – and the continent's as well - spiritual dimension of the cultural synthesis (the 'form' in the Aristotelic sense) comes from the European culture. The Indigenous peoples, he thought, only contributed with the 'matter', in the Aristotelic sense.²¹⁵ This explained for him - 'los valores indígenas han sido puro y simple sujeto pasivo' - why they had had so little to oppose to the conquerors' Spanish language and Catholic religion.²¹⁶ According to this thesis, it would be impossible to incorporate into the Latin American ethos, any cultural element of different origin, because it is closed. It also means that the history of the Latin American modern societies was not born with the independent republics, if they do not acknowledge the synthesis.

Pedro Morandé is a member of the Pontifical Academy and a voice of Hispanism in Chile, and his work, in its fundamental aspects, is the continuation of Lira's and Eyzaguirre's.²¹⁷ Morandé's thesis is also that during the 16th and 17th centuries a unique cultural synthesis, that included elements of the Spanish culture, especially Catholicism and the native cultures, was constituted. Morandé based his thesis on Lira's words: 'las naciones hispanoamericanas constituyeron desde un principio y siguen constituyendo todavía un todo perfectamente homogéneo de cultura entre sí y con España'.²¹⁸ This, he claims, is until today, the permanent nucleus of the Chilean identity, which even if it is forgotten will always be possible to rediscover. Furthermore, it is a necessary rediscovery, in order to

²¹² Sonio Montecino, *Madres y Guachos: Alegorías del mestizaje Chileno* (Santiago: Editorial Sudamericana; 1996), p. 129.

²¹³ Osvaldo Lira, *Hispanidad y Mestizaje* (Santiago: Editorial Covadonga, 1955), p. 55.

²¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 79.

²¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 45.

²¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 42. ('The Indian values have merely been a passive subject').

²¹⁷ Eyzaguirre, *Hispanoamérica del dolor*. Lira, *Hispanidad y Mestizaje*.

²¹⁸ Lira, p. 13. ('The Hispanic American nations constituted from the beginning and continue to constitute a perfectly homogenous whole, between themselves and with Spain'). (My own translation).

rescue the country's lost identity and historical sense.²¹⁹ Morandé's view is that the Spanish culture unified the great variety of Latin American peoples, cultures and languages that existed in the continent and besides, and that it brought a religion and a vision of life superior to those of the Indians. In other words, America could be biologically mestiza, but its cultural essence came from the Hispanic culture, that Hispanicists consider undoubtedly superior to the Indian ones. Morandé defined 'mestizaje' as 'cultural synthesis', although this theoretical option has been criticised by Larraín and García de la Huerta. The choice of the biological category of 'mestizaje' to characterise complex cultural processes creates problems of theoretical construction almost impossible to solve. Besides, the term 'cultural synthesis' indicates a unity in which the tensional or often contradictory character of the elements of the so-called 'Latin American culture' opposes each other.²²⁰ Morandé's aim is to prove that there is a baroque, Catholic and mestizo ethos that has melted in a cultural syncretism that is mainly found in Latin American popular religiosity. (A cultural ethos can be defined as an ethical way of living and of inhabiting the world, which has a historic community, that is a people or a family of peoples).²²¹ It can be concluded, then, that there can be no doubt that the Hispanicist concept of cultural identity has an essentialist character.

Hispanicists coincide in suggesting that in the elites' social, economic and political discourse mestizaje has no place, whereas, the historic memory of the cultural founding encounter is alive in the popular religious and ritual practices. In short, they point to the fact that Latin American cultural synthesis has never been recognised by the ruling classes who have denied their mestizo origin, identifying themselves with the European model, and in this way, alienating themselves from their own roots. The Chilean philosopher Ricardo Salas even suggests that the progressive elites have tried to force changes in the continent that go against its identity ignoring its ethos.²²² On the whole, all Hispanicists praise the authenticity of popular religious traditions, and I think that the only way to successful

²¹⁹ Pedro Morandé, *Cultura y Modernización en América Latina* (Santiago: Pontificia Universidad Católica, 1984), p. 32.

²²⁰ Ricardo Salas Astráin, 'Las Humanidades frente al debate latinoamericano sobre la identidad cultural' (pp. 160-181), *Boletín de Filosofía* 11/2001, p. 210.

²²¹ Juan C. Scannone, *Nuevo punto de partida de la filosofía latinoamericana* (Buenos Aires: Editorial Guadalupe, 1990), p. 148.

modernisation would be to project these traditions from the Latin American cultural ethos rather than from the Spanish tradition of the Counter Reformation.

Normally, the Hispanicist and 'Catholic substratum' visions of the collective identity are treated as inextricably linked, although the Jesuit Sergio Silva questions the fact that popular culture has a religious character: 'it is true that poor people have many Christian values, but I do not think there is a Catholic substratum in the culture'.²²³ It must be taken into account though, that sometimes the dividing lines between the various versions of identity, Hispanicist, popular another one that could be called globalised, or others based on specific interpretations of national identity. They may be constructed from different points of view but as a rule, they never leave the Catholic perspective aside. Besides, since the interpretations of national identities are constructed in relation to a foreign Other – in general European or North American in the Chilean case, a key aspect of the national identity is the feeling of racial superiority of the Chileans with respect to the darker Peruvian or Bolivian Others. Moreover, Chile's internal others, the so-called 'pueblos originarios' are often assimilated to these last groups, under the common pejorative term *Indios*.

When their eyes met, both the Europeans and the Amerindians were confronted with a novelty. Bartolomé de Las Casas describes their mutual amazement when he writes that the Christians stopped to look at the Indians, who were no less astonished than them: 'Parábanse a mirar los cristianos a los indios, no menos maravillados que los indios dellos'.²²⁴

It is easy to understand that for the Europeans it was difficult to represent the Indian whom they could not conceive as a fellow creature. When someone imagines the Other in the understanding that he is another self - or another self like me - the invention of the Other becomes paradoxically the invention of the same. But in this case Europeans and Indians did not consider each other a variety of the same human kind. They saw each other

²²² Salas, pp. 165-166.

²²³ Sergio Silva, 'Catolicismo popular', *Revista Mensaje*, 408, May 1990, p. 116.

²²⁴ Bartolomé de las Casas, *Historia de las Indias I*, Chap. 40, (Madrid: BAE, 1956), p.142.

reciprocally as an Other, in the mystery of a radical alterity. Both Europeans and Indians tried to find out whether the others were the same as them. The Europeans were not sure if the Indians had a soul, and the Indians in turn were not sure as to whether the Europeans were mortal. Both applied different methods, some of which Lévi Strauss describes, to clarify their doubts.²²⁵ For both sides it was difficult to recognise difference. The Spaniards, it is understandable, were curious. During the first fifty years they saw the South American Indian as a non-human creature, an inhabitant of a world outside the known world. Before the Pope settled the question of the humanity of the Amerindian, he was seen as a creature who had, of course, not been reached, but who could perhaps not be reached by Grace or Redemption. So, the Indigenous became an enigma for the civil and religious rulers, who did not know what they exactly were. The indigenous were in the first place an 'anthropological animal that later became, thanks to a Papal decision, a human being though of an inferior type.'²²⁶ Could it be that it is in this perception of the Indigenous peoples where the roots of the contempt and disregard that the Chileans have traditionally shown for their Indigenous peoples lie? If this is the case, is it possible that this perception has been passed from generation to generation for nearly 500 years?

The difficulty of the metaphor of the 'encounter'" is obvious from the very beginning, because for such an encounter to take place there must be equivalencies, common references. In this case, the term does not have the same meaning: it represents two different periods in history, two languages, two landscapes, two points of view, two truths, two different gods, two worlds. It is difference in itself. The asymmetry begins in the metaphor of the Discovery, which could be valid for the physical geography, but not for the human geography of an already inhabited world, a world that already had an owner. In the Spanish theological vision of the world the Pope was the great Overlord of a virtual Christian world. In this world, the Indian was paradoxically an intruder, an invader in the Spanish imagery. In 1539, a Dominican friar, Bernardino de Minaya, obtained from Pope Paul III the Bull "Sublimis Deus", which stated that the indigenous peoples had a rational

²²⁵ Claude Lévi Strauss, *Tristes Tropiques* (New York: Atheneum, 1970), pp. 79-80.

²²⁶ Ezequiel Martínez Estrada, *Diferencias y semejanzas entre los países de América Latina* (México: Escuela Nacional de Ciencias Políticas y Sociales, 1962), p. 94.

soul and were human beings whose lives and property had to be respected.²²⁷ However, some analysts claim that the indigenous peoples never became a 'same', and after being in the first place an anthropological animal, later became, thanks to the Papal decision, a human being, though of an inferior type.²²⁸ This settled the question that they were human creatures. The problem of whether the native peoples had a soul, that is their 'sameness', was added to the difficulty presented by the 'discovery' of lands not registered in the vision of the 'discoverers'. It was ruled that according to Roman Canon Law they became new theologically 'same' but at the same time, 'Others'. The question that was not then dealt with or even foreseen, was that of the effects that becoming a renegade of his own gods and culture, might have on the 'barbarian'.

Difference in the 17th century was at the most a curiosity, that could be displayed, exhibited. An example of this approach is the "barbarians" or "primitive" people that both Spanish and English explorers took with them to their respective courts to be exhibited, together with exotic fruit, plants, crafts and animals.²²⁹ An example is provided by E. Lucas Bridges, in his book *Uttermost Part of the Earth*, where he describes how 'York Minster' and a few other natives from the Chilean Patagonia were shipped to the Victorian court.²³⁰

The Spanish conquerors arrived in America with the aim of conquering new territories and saving souls. Already in his first act of taking possession the conqueror read a document - in Spanish - the 'Requerimiento'. Here the Indians were duly warned that in case they refused to accept the new faith or postponed the moment, 'les haré la guerra en todas las formas posibles. Tomaré tus mujeres e hijos y les esclavizaré, y como tales les venderé. Tomaré tus posesiones y te dañaré todo cuanto pueda' ('I will wage war against you in every possible way. I will take your wives and children and will enslave them, and as such I

²²⁷ De las Casas, *Del único modo de atraer a todos los pueblos a la verdadera religión*, Intro. Lewis Hanke, Spanish versión: Atenógenes Santa María (México: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1956), pp. 363-371.

²²⁸ Martínez Estrada, p. 94.

²²⁹ Lévi Strauss, p. 28.

²³⁰ Lucas E. Bridges, *Uttermost part of the Earth*, (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1948), p. 30.

will sell them, I will take your possessions and will hurt you as much as I can').²³¹ As a result, they were forced to abandon their own tutelary divinities and to adopt the conqueror God. What in the end made the new divinities become acceptable, was that they were at the same time represented as associated with victory, as well as forgiveness, compassion and salvation. They represented and produced the reparation that the treason of their own gods and its sequel of anxiety and helplessness demanded. From the moment the new faith made the Indians redeemed divine creatures, the emptiness was partly mitigated. "Spain offered the statute of human being to the savage willing to take the road to Grace".²³²

Only the fact that the native had been provided with a soul and was therefore a potential convert gave him the possibility of being treated as a fellow creature. So when the missionaries, in their religious zeal to convert the indigenous peoples learnt the language of the defeated, they had, like the conquerors, an instrumental motivation: they had to familiarise themselves with the natives' language and customs in order to be able to meet their evangelising objective. Their interest was focused on the subject of knowledge, not on its object. Thus the purposes of both the missionaries and of the conquerors coincided in their disregard for difference.²³³

Nonetheless, in the conquest there was not an explicit theory of violence. On the contrary, the discourse of the conquest explicitly condemned it. The Royal recommendations never changed: the Indians were to be attracted to the new faith and customs, and always treated with kindness. So, when Father Las Casas set himself to examine the Scriptures and the writings of the Fathers of the Church in order to find guidance on how to treat the Indians, his aim was to correct the errors of royal servants, conquistadors and settlers. But although the Royal instructions were to treat the Indians kindly, there often were 'incidents', in which some Spaniards thought the natives deserved severe punishment. Las Casas mentions some priests who came with Columbus on his second voyage, to evangelise the Indians and who, to set an example, sentenced to death the tribe that had destroyed the fort

²³¹ Cecilia Salinas, *Las Chilenas de la Colonia: Virtud Sumisa, Amor Rebelde* (Santiago de Chile: LOM, 1994), p. 139.

²³² Jean Monod, 'Viva la Etnología', *El Etnocidio a través de las América* (México, 1976).

²³³ Michael Foucault, *Historia de la Locura en la Época Clásica* (México: Fondo de Cultura, 1967).

that Columbus had built in his first voyage.²³⁴ It was 'incidents' like that one, which have generated deep resentment and that Pablo Neruda echoes in Canto III, of his poem 'The Conquistadors' where he describes the first encounter of two worlds:

'En esta historia de martirios ...
Los hijos de la arcilla vieron rota,
Su sonrisa'.²³⁵

Facts and poems like these dig into the collective memory and may explain why from the perspective of the natives, the intrusion was outright invasion, and that initially it might have been taken as the end of the world, an apocalypse, a 'cosmic catastrophe', in the words of Octavio Paz.²³⁶ The invasion produced, among its long term effects, premature deaths, something that father Las Casas, called the Apostle of the Indians, could not miss: 'The Indians die before their time', he observed.²³⁷ We can deduce that those anticipated deaths were the result of the loss and the end of their world. It is possible to die politically, when freedom is lost, even though one may survive physically. However, the suppression of one's world can also precipitate death. In fact the Conquest was one of the major demographic catastrophes of the human history. Nearly 90% of the population of the continent disappeared as a result of diseases and wars. A century and a half after Columbus's arrival it is estimated the about 100 million human beings had lost their lives.²³⁸ The bitter feelings produced by the slaughters are reflected in a poem written 300 years afterwards by the Chilean poet C. Walker M.:

¿No les bastaba vencer?
¿Por qué esa sed de sangre?
¿Por qué esos hechos, entonces,

²³⁴ Bartolomé de las Casas, *Del único modo de atraer a todos los pueblos a la verdadera religión*, Intr. by Lewis Hanke, Spanish version: Atenógenes Santa María (México: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1965), p. XX.

²³⁵ Pablo Neruda, *Canto General*, trans. by Jack Smith (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), pp. 194-195.

'In that history of torments
The children of clay saw their
Smiles smashed'

²³⁶ Paz, *El Laberinto de la Soledad*, p. 93.

²³⁷ De Las Casas, *Historia de las Indias I*, p. 365.

²³⁸ García de la Huerta, p. 35.

que hoy con vergüenza consigna
la historia junto a sus nombres?²³⁹

We tend to see in the conquest despoliation of lands, wealth and women. Violence is not necessarily material. Few admit that the spoliation of a faith is moral violence and a way of annulment more lasting than death. There can be a recovery in the case of violence on objects or things if their symbolic universe is not destroyed, as in the case of cities that can be reconstructed. The Conquest did not only 'convert' the infidel, but it also produced him. When someone is forced to abjure his faith and convert into another faith, he has, in a radical way, been totally defeated. Defeats not only de-structure the system of power that constitutes the subjects, but it also produces 'infidels'. These are transitive, mutant existences, which may be called converts or renegades, or deserters, collaborators or traitors, when they are on the other side.

Defeats are not meaningful only because they produce effects on power, but also because they produce other real effects: they allow us to witness the process through which treason, desertions and capitulation are born. The conversion of the Indian infidel that resulted from the destruction of his world and the consequent 'loss of sense' may have been what induced the adoption of the referents of the victor. 'To lose sense' – or deprive life of its meaning – is the same as 'conquest', a polysemic expression. It means self denial and denial of sacred bonds, because in primitive societies faith is the pivot of the world. Its degradation is the degradation of the gods, and the end of a way of life. The Indians not only died as a consequence of wars, diseases, and massacres. They also died as a consequence of orphanage, a phenomenon that like the Conquest also happened in the body, re-signifying the world.²⁴⁰ The destruction of a familiar order recognised as a true one, and its substitution for another one, demands the restoration of trust, so that dignity is restored. In the encounter everybody changed. The Indians stopped being what they had been when

²³⁹ Carlos Walker Martínez, *La Hoguera*, in 'La Conquista', Part 1, in *Romances Americanos* (Santiago de Chile: Imprenta Barcelona, 1899), p. 57.

'Defeating the others, wasn't it enough?
Why that thirst for blood?
Why those deeds then,
that now with shame, history records,
at the same time as their names?' (My own translation).

they encountered a world with different values, and had great difficulties in understanding and acquiring not only a new language, but also a new religion that brought with it a new concept of society, of man and of life. From this point of view the native American Indians can in a way be considered the inverted replication of the "Chosen People": without having been chosen, they were the first to suffer a modern holocaust but instead of becoming landless, displaced people, they became intruders in their own land.

It can not be forgotten, though, that the conquest must not be judged with our twenty first century standards. Moreover, the Spaniards were not better or worse than their contemporaries and the conquest of the South American continent was not necessarily more cruel than any other war waged elsewhere in the same period.

Furthermore, there are different views about the treatment Spain gave to its new territories. The Cuban scholar Roberto Fernández Retamar makes reference to the fact that in the sixteenth century, 'Spain and its culture had been branded by an unrelenting anti Spanish campaign, that has come to be known as the Black Legend'.²⁴¹ The Black Legend, he recalls, originated in the justifiably shared rejection of the crimes committed by the conquerors, although they may not have been worse than those committed by other conquerors in other lands. Laurette Sejourné agrees and adds that scholars have realised that the systematic accusations against Spain play a pernicious role in this vast drama, because they have located the occupation of South America outside the broad canvas of which it is a part: colonisation. 'No other nation would have done any better. On the contrary, Spain distinguished itself by a gesture of capital importance: it has been the only country where powerful voices were raised against the war of conquest'.²⁴² "If anything distinguishes the Spanish conquest, it is not the magnitude of the crimes committed, but rather the magnitude of the scruples".²⁴³

²⁴⁰ García de la Huerta, p.75.

²⁴¹ Fernández Retamar, p. 58.

²⁴² Laurette Sejourné, 'Ancient Pre Colombian Cultures' in *América Latina* 1, (1971) 5-15, pp.8-9.

²⁴³ Leopoldo Zea, *América Latina: Largo Viaje hacia sí misma* (Caracas, Universidad Central de Venezuela, Ediciones de la Facultad de Humanidades y Educación, 1983).

The voices Sejourné mentions are represented by Father Bartolomé de Las Casas called the Apostle of the Indians. Bishop of Chiapas, Mexico, he was one of the greatest and most controversial figures of the Spanish conquest. He arrived in America in 1502, as part of the first migratory wave to the newly conquered lands. Soon he became an 'encomendero'; that is, he received a grant of lands that included the indigenous people that inhabited them. This system was called 'Encomiendas'. In 1514 he gave up his 'Encomienda' because he considered the system unfair and soon became known as the protector of the Indians. In 1521 he sought peace in a Dominican convent and two years afterwards he decided to enter the Order. In the years that followed he visited several countries of the Empire, Chile among them, and finally in 1536 he started to write his memories. His doctrine was simple: In His commandment to preach His word to all human creatures, Christ had included the Indians. So, not only was it illegal to use force to dominate and convert the Indians, but it was also unnecessary. This was Father Las Casas's argument whose main point was whether force should be used to convert the Indians, an old problem that had arisen from the moment of the discovery.²⁴⁴

In Octavio Paz's opinion, religion became a mythical language, an element of mediation and union between two worlds: 'The Church used the key of baptism to open the doors of society into a universal order open to anyone'.²⁴⁵ To this the Chilean Claudio Véliz adds that given the conditions under which a 'handful of friars' had to convert the Indians, there was scarcely room for anything more demanding, and they were, therefore, forced into a pragmatic acceptance of much of the indigenous orthodoxy.

'The problem was less to ensure that the Indians understood the essence of the Catholic doctrine and became true believers than to make certain that they declared themselves to be loyal Catholics and obedient subjects of the crown, with the emphasis on the latter part of the proposition.'²⁴⁶

So the missionaries did not postpone conversion until the Indians had a full knowledge of the doctrine. As long as they accepted to recognise themselves as Catholics, and this they

²⁴⁴ De las Casas, *Del único modo de atraer a todos los pueblos a la verdadera religión*.

²⁴⁵ Paz, *El Laberinto de la Soledad*, p.29.

²⁴⁶ Véliz, *The centralist tradition of Latin America*, p. 210.

did for reasons that were perhaps unrelated to matters of faith, they were eligible for baptism. Few things can illustrate better the disparity between Catholic policy in Europe and the Indies than the way in which the Inquisition operated in Spanish America, because in the New World its jurisdiction extended over Spaniards, foreigners and Protestants. It did not extend over the Indians, in accordance with the crown's instructions to the Inquisitors in Latin America.²⁴⁷ Pope Paul IV (1555-1559) went further and ordered that 'the day, which the Indians, in accordance with their ancient rites, devote to the sun ... be used in honour of the true Sun, which is Jesus Christ and his Holy mother'.²⁴⁸

Some analysts recognise militarist elements in the Hispanicist identity, which have as a common link, a 'warrior spirit'. The leader of this position was Mario Góngora who argued that modern Chilean nation was formed in the context of a series of battles and wars, and when he said this he referred to the three hundred years war that Spanish waged against the Mapuche. This version gives the army, which he considered as an institution born before the nation and which has always been an integrative and civilising element in the country, a central role in the construction of the national identity. Góngora also claimed that the mixture of the Araucanians and the Spanish soldiers formed a new 'race' in a process that unified the Chilean people ethnically.²⁴⁹ Other followers of this thesis are Roberto Hernández and Alberto Cabero.²⁵⁰ Also Nicolás Palacios who dedicated his work to glorify 'the Chilean race' whose 'homogenous mixture' would be the result of two 'pure races' with a warrior like psychology: the Goths from southern Spain and the indigenous Araucanians.²⁵¹ The historian and analyst Ricardo Krebs drifts away from this version, although he underlines the importance of war - always against the Mapuche - in the Chilean identity. In other variant, Carlos Cousiño selects the key institutions in order to understand the national identity: the rural world and the Chilean Army, of political importance since the wars of independence of the early 19th century.²⁵² The armed forces have sometimes felt

²⁴⁷ José Toribio Medina, *Historia del Tribunal del Santo Oficio de la Inquisición en Chile* (Santiago: [n. Pub.], 1890), I, pp. 201-203.

²⁴⁸ Véliz, *The centralist tradition of Latin America*, p. 212.

²⁴⁹ Góngora, *Ensayo Histórico sobre la Noción de Estado en Chile en los Siglos XIX y XX*, p. 27.

²⁵⁰ Alberto Cabero, *Chile y los Chilenos: Conferencias dictadas en Extensión Cultural de Antofagasta*.

²⁵¹ Palacios, *Raza Chilena*.

²⁵² Carlos Cousiño, 'Razón y ofrenda' in *Cuadernos del Instituto de Sociología* (Santiago de Chile: Universidad Católica de Chile), 1990.

justified in intervening in society, but in nearly 200 years of republican life there are a few examples of such 'interventions' in comparison to other countries in the continent.

Of prime importance for those who see the militarist version of identity as the true one are the Independence Day celebrations when the Military Parade is attended or watched on TV by millions of Chileans. Also, as in other countries, the commemoration of battles such as Iquique and La Concepción is important, though both were defeats. Besides, the 'Virgen del Carmen' is honoured as 'Queen of Chile and patron of the armed forces'. These rites seek at regular intervals, to re-internalise the feelings of community and belonging that join its members.

In Chile there are totally diverging, interpretations about the role of the Church in the 16th century process of evangelisation of the country. Some authors express strong feelings against the way in which it was conducted. The Chilean sociologist Gabriel Salazar accuses: 'Si los conquistadores-colonizadores se apropiaron físicamente de la población indígena, por medio de la religión, los misioneros buscaron apropiarse de su espíritu'.²⁵³ Jorge Pinto reflects about the faith of the missionaries in Chile, whom, he says, was so absolute that everything else became relative, which would explain why even the use of violence and weapons as means for conversion would be justified.²⁵⁴ In fact it could not but be a military and aggressive religiosity since evangelisation was part of a military campaign. Salinas quotes the Jesuit who chronicled Chile, Father Olivares, who tells us that the Jesuits were both priests and armed soldiers ready to go on a military campaign.²⁵⁵ Chilean Christianity, argues Salinas was 'God's war against the internal and external enemies of the Holy Spain' which included from pirates to Protestant countries, and of course the Mapuche Indians.²⁵⁶ The Chilean Indians were people living in a tribal state, who worshipped their earthly divinities, with their wise men and their magic. It is impossible to imagine a sharper

²⁵³ Gabriel Salazar and Julio Pinto, *Historia Contemporánea de Chile II: Actores, identidad y movimiento* (Santiago de Chile: LOM, 1999), p. 145. ('If the conquerors-colonisers took physical possession of the indigenous population, the missionaries tried to do the same with their spirit'). (My own translation).

²⁵⁴ Jorge Pinto, 'Franciscanos y Jesuitas en La Araucanía, *Nütram*, 24, 1992. Pinto makes a difference between Franciscans in favour of conversion and Jesuits in favour of conversion. This may explain why the latter were less in favour of ethnocide than the latter.

²⁵⁵ Maximiliano Salinas, *Historia del Pueblo de Dios en Chile* (Santiago: Ediciones Rehue), 1978.

²⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 28.

contrast. The problem was that the Spanish world was unable to conceive a world outside Christianity and outside a European cosmological vision because they were the product of an age, when non Christianity was regarded as sinful.

Soon, in central Chile, in the area controlled by Spain many Indians accepted the missionary discourse, although this did not mean that they had totally given up their old religiosity and cosmological vision, because they did not and could not assimilate the Christian message in the way that missionaries would have liked. The result was a popular Christianity that has permeated the Chilean popular culture and that has developed up to a point, in a way, parallel to the central hierarchy. The message was decoded according to their own conceptions, and this perhaps could be interpreted as a form of spiritual resistance. The attitude of the Mapuche in the south was different because resistance was not merely spiritual but armed resistance.

The great majority of the indigenous world live in poverty. In this respect the historian Cristián Parker proposes the argument that popular culture and popular religiosity in particular, form a sub-culture, a subaltern or dominated one, whose capacity for resistance and innovation is circumscribed to the same community where it originates. In other words, Parker's thesis is that popular culture can only be a reflection and a dependent cultural formation and that popular religious culture is but a shadow of the official one. But, what is nowadays considered the 'Christianity of the poor', or the way in which the popular majorities that are not influenced by liberal thinking live their religiosity, is no doubt a form of religious resistance, because often the symbols of their devotion are pre-Hispanic symbols and traditions. These persistent, less articulated, forms of popular religiosity constitute a real syncretism that takes elements from Christianity and also from indigenous cultures.

The Marianist cult, a constituent factor of the religious identity of the Chilean people, is the legacy of pre-Hispanic symbols and traditions. According to Evelyn Stevens Marianism and machismo operate together in the social mestizo order as ideal patterns and the former, more than a religious practice, is a cultural stereotype, that conditions men and women to

certain attributes and behaviours. As a stereotype (sacrifice, abnegation, maternity, etc.), Marianism may or may not be part of everyday life, but Stevens thinks it gives all Latin American women a strong sense of identity and of historical continuity.²⁵⁷ I do not agree entirely with Stevens and argue that Marianism is a universal cultural symbol that acquires certain particularities in the Latin American ethos, because in the continent it has a syncretic character. The Marian allegory is meaningful because it is part of the founding narrative of the continent: religions have since ancient times been connected to the earth. The earth is the life giver that has a double referent: religious and agricultural; cult and cultivation. In the mythical order the binary mother/earth constitutes the divine origin of things alive, confirming this association of the earth with maternity and fertility. Moreover, this myth solves the mestizo problem: that of being the child of an Indian mother and a Spanish father, and it gives, Chileans in particular, an unequivocal identity in a common Mother.²⁵⁸ Thus the Virgin became a mestizo figure, not because of her skin colour or features, but because she was a symbol of the conquerors, she was superimposed on the feminine figures of the Indian cult. Montecino adds that this identity, born in Chile together with the negation of its mestizo origins, has allowed Chileans to construct an apparently non-problematic identity: a common mother obliterates the mestizo identity. In this sense, Marianism has made the process of cultural whitening possible, because it becomes a central element in the concealment of Chilean origins, replacing them with a collective genesis.²⁵⁹

With respect to the syncretism of the Catholic religion and aboriginal myths and rites, it can be observed that in this process the male gods were displaced from their central places and that the figure of the Virgin-Mother – a powerful goddess like the pre-Colombian feminine deities took the main place. Montecino attributes the hegemony of the female figure exclusively to the centrality of the mother in the family with an absent father, and associates it with illegitimacy: a woman on her own with a fatherless and illegitimate child.

²⁵⁷ Evelyn Stevens, 'Marianismo: the other face of Machismo in Latin America' in *Female and Male in Latin American Essays*, ed. by Ann Pescaxello (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1973), p. 98.

²⁵⁸ Paz, *El Laberinto de la Soledad*, 1959.

Pedro Morandé, 'Consideraciones acerca del concepto de cultura en Puebla desde la perspectiva de la sociología de la cultura de Alfred Weber', in *Revista CELAM: Religión y Cultura*, Colombia, 1981.

²⁵⁹ Montecino, pp. 29-31.

With the conquest the image of the absent father who 'made' but did not 'have' children was reinforced. and in this way the Marian symbol of the Virgin Mary with the Child appeals to the collective. In the symbolic order the Virgin, mother of all, is also the mother of all the 'huachos' (illegitimate children), and in this way She compensates and repairs the offence to the mother – given away, taken, raped. She also solves the problem of legitimacy/illegitimacy, the dilemma of fertility/sensuality and the ascetism of the Catholic doctrine, as the 'Pachamama', the mother-earth, would have done. The Marian cult in its Latin American version can be understood as a double compensating phenomenon of Octavio Paz's 'cosmic catastrophe': a response to the treason/death of the vernacular gods and the affront of the invasion: the raped mother.

Van Kessel, an expert in Andean cultures, corroborates that the Marianist cult was understood 'according the autochthonous symbols, realised in their simple temples and felt in their mystic Andean hearts'.²⁶⁰ Functions that their ancestors attributed to the 'Pachamama' – mother earth – were transferred to the Virgin Mary, a mother that protects people from evil and for which, her faithful express their gratitude. For this purpose they hold colourful festivals or go on pilgrimage – sometimes even to the same pre-Hispanic places of worship that today are dedicated to the Virgin. Examples of this are the homage to the Virgin Mary as in the shrines of Lo Vásquez and Santa Rosa de Pelequén, in the form of pilgrimages practised by hundreds of people whose formal Catholicism may not always be orthodox. This can also be observed in the northern indigenous communities of the Aymara, Atacameños and Tarapaqueños. There, the 'Andeanisation' of the Christian symbols has allowed them to keep the cultural substratum of their cultural identity, as can be seen in the festival of the Virgin, in 'La Tirana', where by means of rhythmical dances they express their own religiosity.²⁶¹ La Tirana is often considered representative of

²⁶⁰ Juan Van Kessel, *La Iglesia Católica entre los Aymaras* (Santiago: Rehue), 1989.

²⁶¹ In places like these the Church is still in a constant process of re-evangelisation. For example at a missionary centre for Aymaras in the 'altiplano', a high Andean plateau north west of the 'Mama Guanapa' hill, a sacred place for the indigenous communities, three nuns work. Their potential flock are 2,000 Aymara Indians who live in the remote village of Cariquima, at an altitude of more than 4,000 meters. What is it that attracts them to an inhospitable desert? It could be the dramatic spread of the Pentecostal faith that has changed the traditional scenario. The nuns have found climatic challenges as the little oxygen that there is at such altitude and the temperatures of -20° C during the night, followed by burning sun in the day, typical of the mountain geography. A more important challenge is the traditional reluctance of the Aymaras to meet 'foreigners'. But the three modern missionaries are determined to evangelise as many of the Altiplanic

syncretism in Chile Montecino compares it to a foundational myth: 'La Tirana is the virtual mother of all Chileans'.²⁶² This is a surprising statement because the devotion and festivities of 'La Tirana' are of northern origin and are part of the Aymara culture. In general Chileanness has been understood as the Mapuche-Hispanic mixture. This points to the difficulty of defining cultural mestizaje, because, how can one mixed identity emanate from a diversity of native cultures? The only answer to this question lies in the need for Chileans to recognise their country as a multi-cultural one.

Nonetheless, in the Chilean south, the land of the Mapuche, the religious syncretism sometimes did not go beyond a masquerade: the altars with images of the Virgin and Christ were the facades behind which pagan divinities were worshipped. So, the *machis* or Mapuche magicians called their gods Jesus so as not to be accused of witchcraft. In this case there is not a clear mediating background and the traditional ritual survived intact or almost intact. This coincides with the fact that the Mapuche or Araucanian resistance was not crushed until the end of the 19th century. (Although recent events seem to indicate that it was definitely not crushed). It was the strategic efficiency of the tribal organisation that contributed to protect their religious organisation and to produce a certain anomaly in the syncretism.

It should not be forgotten that some ceremonial and liturgical aspects are part not only of the Indian religiosity, but also of the Hispanic Catholicism, and that religion is not by any means the only space of syncretism between both worlds. (There are undoubtedly, other spaces of transference, as important as the rural world, servants and of course, sexuality). No doubt religion plays an important role in the Chilean identity, whose main sources would be a strong Catholic one and an indigenous one, perhaps weaker, but very influential in the popular religiosity. During the colonial period religion had a central place in Chilean cultural identity. It was a Catholicism that did not make a difference between the religious, political or commercial spheres and the religious observance of the crown's

villages as possible, even though they reckon that their social work is more appreciated than their evangelical message. Nonetheless, they keep trying and stress that their first objective is to understand and respect them. Mauricio Silva, 'Las Monjitas del Desierto', *El Mercurio*, 20 December, 2000, 'Visión Nacional' p. 2.

²⁶² Montecino, p. 73.

officials was an element of definition in the identity of the whole 'New Spain'.²⁶³ Therefore, the defence of the true religion, the cultural identity and the political and commercial interests of the New Spain were one thing. It was normal then that anything that was perceived as a threat to that cultural identity was also perceived as a threat to the true religion.

While a deeply traditional Catholic identity was being constructed in Chile, in Europe, modernity and the end of a homogeneity or unity of the religious dimension was taking place. It is logical then that secularisation started later in Chile and was slower than in Europe. Nevertheless, a progressive displacement of Catholicism as the central nucleus of the Chilean identity also took place slowly. This does not mean, though, that today its presence in Chile is not deep or persistent and that it does not show its strength in today's daily Chilean life. Secularisation in Chile has not meant the end of religion or religious feelings but rather a loss of centrality of a Catholic vision of the world.

In 2001, the sociologist Eduardo Valenzuela, director of the Institute of Sociology of the Catholic University, conducted the *Encuesta Nacional de la Iglesia*, (The Church's National Survey), on the religious habits of the Chileans. The country's religious distribution showed that 75% considered themselves Roman Catholics, though only 14% of them admitted going regularly to church. However, the analyst reminded us the levels of attendance to the Sunday Mass have been traditionally low in the country. Therefore, if some Catholics are not always seen at church on Sundays, it does not necessarily mean that they have lost their faith. Moreover, being a Catholic continues to be an elite mark -clearly the country leaders do not come from the new Protestant groups. On the other hand, it is impossible to know how deep the religious feelings of the elite are. It may also have to do with the fact that attending Mass and other religious ceremonies are spaces where it is possible to get in touch with people belonging to the same social circle, establish social networks and reinforce the sense of belonging and group identity. Historically, 'hard' elite women have passed on their religious beliefs and traditions to their children and these families adhered to the right and centre of the political spectrum. The 'new' elites, on the

²⁶³ Larrain, *Identidad Chilena*, p. 234.

other hand, tend to be the children of laicism and, politically, feel more comfortable in the centre or centre-left.

Due to the above, in general, it did not really come as a surprise to anybody that the results of the April 2002 Census, published a year afterwards, showed that the numbers of Roman Catholics had decreased, and they were now 70%, while Protestant denominations had now increased to 15.1 %.²⁶⁴ In reaction to these figures Monsignor Precht, a member of the Episcopal Council, on behalf of Cardinal Errázuriz pointed to the need to improve evangelisation. At the same time Arturo Chacón from the Evangelical Faculty of Theology indicated that the shrinking of Catholic numbers was to be expected because in the past being a Catholic was part of the cultural identity, but not any longer. He considered the figures an exercise in honesty.²⁶⁵

Protestant groups tend to be conservative especially in moral matters such as paternal responsibility, an important issue in a country where there is a traditional pattern of paternal absenteeism and irresponsibility. 'Evangelical' churches, oriented to personal conversion and a change in the life style, have had a great appeal in the popular sectors and this may be the reason for their spread.²⁶⁶

The decline of the traditional identification with the Catholic Church in Chile and loss of faith can be attributed not only to external factors like the more and more dynamic secularisation processes and the great expansion of Pentecostalism, but also to internal factors such as the emergence of religious challenges within the Church in Chile. For example, in the 1960's, a progressist religious identity was fairly dominant on the Chilean Episcopal landscape, a tendency identified with Vatican Council II. During the following decade there was a polarising shift of a more political character among the clergy who encouraged small communities chaired by local leaders in popular areas. They were inspired by the Theology of Liberation and a search for a revival of the Church at the

²⁶⁴ Gutiérrez P., and Vásquez, S., 'Censo 2002: El nuevo Chile', *La Tercera*, 26 March, 2003, p. 14.

²⁶⁵ G.J., S.V. y A.R., 'Censo 2002: El nuevo Chile', *La Tercera*, 27 March 2003, p. 16.

²⁶⁶ Arzobispado de Santiago, *Mirada a la realidad: anexo al documento de trabajo para la 1a. Asamblea pre-sinodal*, Nov., 1995, Cap. 2, pp. 93-94.

service of the poor and the oppressed, with social justice and human rights.²⁶⁷ Whether they disappeared because they did not respond to the people's religious needs, or because they only reflected the political radicalisation, is unknown. What is interesting is the social strength they had, although they did not transform traditional Catholicism.²⁶⁸

In the last decades there has been a debate that has attracted many Chilean scholars, historians and theologians, among others. The Chilean historian Ricardo Krebs, a Catholic himself holds that Roman Catholicism has failed to conquer the soul of the popular masses, something that the missionaries of past times always held: 'Las masas son paganas, no sólo porque no practican, sino porque su mentalidad es pagana, ajena al espíritu cristiano, indiferente a nuestros dogmas'.²⁶⁹ The thesis proposed by the Catholic theologian Sergio Silva, is that among the poor there are many Christian values.²⁷⁰ He refused to accept, however, the existence of a Catholic substratum. Moreover, according to another well known historian, Mario Góngora, the Chilean people have never been Christians in the traditional sense of the word, but Marianists.²⁷¹ And last but not least, Father Alberto Hurtado, a Jesuit who devoted all his energies to work for the homeless and the abandoned children and whose canonisation process is almost complete, had the same doubt. He asked this same question in a book written in the 1950's, and which he entitled '*¿Es Chile un País Católico?*' (Is Chile a Catholic Country?).²⁷² This question he asked more than fifty years ago now, shows his insight into the problem although in the 2000 National Census, the majority of the population still defined itself as Catholic.

One of the institutional bases of the Church is the great power and capacity to influence it has in Chile, where a civil society with a long tradition of obedience is comes face to face with the extraordinary power of the Church in political and legislative matters.²⁷³ This can

²⁶⁷ A. Pastor, et al, *De Lonquén a Los Andes, 20 años de iglesia católica Chilena* (Santiago: Rehue, 1993), p. 66.

²⁶⁸ Larrain, *Identidad Chilena*, p. 238.

²⁶⁹ Ricardo Krebs, *Catolicismo y laicismo: las bases doctrinarias del conflicto entre la Iglesia y el Estado*. ('The masses are pagan, not only because they do not practise but because their mentality is pagan, alien to the Christian spirit, indifferent to our dogmas'). (My own translation).

²⁷⁰ Sergio Silva G., 'Comentario', *Mensaje*, Vol. XLI, Mayo 1992, N° 408, p.14.

²⁷¹ Ricardo Krebs, *Aspectos de la ilustración católica en el pensamiento y la vida eclesiástica Chilena*.

²⁷² Alberto Hurtado, *¿Es Chile un País Católico?*, (Santiago: Ediciones los Andes), 1992.

²⁷³ Larrain, *Identidad Chilena*, p. 216.

partly be explained by the privileged role the Catholic Church has had since colonial times in keeping political and social order, at the collective and personal levels. At the moment the Church's authority spreads throughout the whole political spectrum and there is not a matter of importance about which it is not consulted. We have seen it intervene in issues such as the divorce bill or the 'mesa de diálogo' - committee to discuss the end of the political transition (2000-2001) – where the Church representatives endeavoured to generate an atmosphere that facilitated the handling of information by the Armed Forces.

'Until the present day the Catholic Church remains without doubt the central and dominant religious institution; the only de facto national religion. Anticlericalism did not manage to erode the supremacy of Catholicism'.²⁷⁴

The important role of the Catholic Church, with all its contradictions, in the generation and sustenance of national ideologies, is a pattern reproduced the length of the country, expressed in the notion that to be Chilean is to be Catholic. Thus, people are interpellated as nationals in part through Catholicism as the traditional religion of the country. These processes are part of everyday life in religious practices and celebrations within communities. Catholicism, in this sense, is embedded in the national identity and provides an important, but fractured site for the production of correlative imaginaries in relation to the nation, in part due to the powerful emotional appeal of religion and religious feelings.²⁷⁵ The way in which the imagery of religion forms part of the national collective memory, is reinforced, for example in Chile, in the procession of the 'Virgen del Carmen, 'Queen of Chile and Patron of the Armed Forces'.

The Chilean church is a very complex organisation, characterised by its political heterogeneity, a feature that gives it great flexibility at the moments of crisis, although the power is in the hands of the Church hierarchy. Nowadays, it tries not to get involved in party struggles, though one of its strengths lies in the diversity of visions its members have represented in Monsignor Piñera's 'three churches - that allows it to have a presence in all

²⁷⁴ Véliz, *The Centralist Tradition of Latin America*, p. 194.

²⁷⁵ Radcliffe, p. 100.

layers of Chilean society.²⁷⁶ In the opinion of the historian Sofía Correa Sutil, the Chilean Church is an institution that, since the arrival of the first missionaries that accompanied don Pedro de Valdivia until the present day, has always been articulated with the country's political processes with pragmatic and realistic positions.²⁷⁷

Until recently the Church had not discussed from the pulpit the attitude of the Chilean people towards the Indigenous Peoples. Besides the Araucanía, the land of the Mapuche people has traditionally been 'tierra de misiones'. This means that they were under the direct spiritual care of the Vatican and did not depend on the local Church hierarchy. But on 26th August 2001, the sermons were about 'our Mapuche brothers, and also in the weekly newsletter that is distributed on Sundays in every parish church, there was an article signed by the Fundación Instituto Indígena. The article explained that the perceptions of Indigenous and non-indigenous people were based on prejudices and stereotypes and advised Christians to endeavour to see the Other as a brother:²⁷⁸

'Para todos, de uno y otro lado, resultan impactantes y sorprendentes las respuestas basadas en estereotipos absolutamente negativos, llenos de prejuicios que explican

²⁷⁶ Monsignor Bernardino Piñera, Bishop of La Serena says that in Chile - and probably everywhere at least in Latin America - and for reasons that are not dogmatic but historical and cultural, there are three churches. One that he calls 'traditional' to which the majority of the Chileans adhere and that is the result of more than 450 years of evangelisation, the work of Spanish and later, mestizo missionaries: Dominicans, Mercedarians, Augustinians and Jesuits of the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries. This process continued into the 19th and part of the 20th century, in the hands of Chilean priests and newly arrived religious orders: Salesians, Capuchins and Redemptorists, who have educated a high proportion of the Chilean inhabitants. The 'traditional church' is strong and stable, faithful to tradition and to personal religious feelings. It is characterised by a strong religious background passed on from one generation to the other in the home.

The 'second church', that Monsignor Piñera calls 'critical' and to which, in a way, also everyone belongs combines two centuries of liberalism, radicalism, laicism, anticlericalism and freethinking and developments in education and culture outside the Church boundaries. It represents a century of socialism and Marxism, Protestantism, Pentecostalism, sects, pluralism, tolerance, and sometimes, fanaticism, and half a century of consumerism and more liberal customs. All this marks everybody, not only Catholics, who may criticise, disagree, or feel a long way away from some of the Church's positions, but all the same, there is still something in them that continues to be Catholic. In the third place Monsignor Piñera identifies a 'church of the present', which he supports, and that groups the 'involved hierarchy and laity'. This church, active in schools and parishes must preserve, he claims, the faith of the traditional Church and understand the critical church.

(Bernardino Piñera Carvallo, 'Tres iglesias católicas en Chile', *La Segunda*, 2 October 2002, p.9).

²⁷⁷ Correa Sutil, Sofía, 'La Iglesia Chilena y los cambios socio-políticos', *Dimensión Histórica de Chile*, 6-7 (1989-1990), 272-275.

²⁷⁸ Fundación Instituto Indígena, 'Los prejuicios y los Indígenas', *El Domingo: día del Señor* (Santiago: Editorial San Pablo), Año XXVI, 1, Aug. 2001, p. 4.

las conductas en las relaciones entre indígenas y no indígenas y en cómo se han elaborado las políticas para los Pueblos Indígenas.’

‘Actualmente, por la intervención de varios actores, en primer lugar los propios dirigentes indígenas, la Iglesia católica, académicos, organismos de la sociedad civil, organismos internacionales y la voluntad del Gobierno, debemos reconocer que se están produciendo grandes y profundos cambios en nuestra sociedad y en el estado.’²⁷⁹

The position taken by the Church hierarchy and the ‘intervention’ in which they acknowledge they have been involved, can not fail to have deep effect in the faithful’s consciences. Therefore, it can not be denied that the Spanish Catholicism has, for better or for worse, marked the country, and probably no other institution in Chile has ever had greater social and cultural influence – and as a matter of course, political – than the Catholic Church.

III.2. A POPULAR VERSION OF CHILEAN IDENTITY

In an article entitled ‘Where have all the natives gone?’ Prof. Rey Chow from the University of Indiana seeks answers to the questions ‘How do we construct the native’s identity? What processes of identification are involved?’²⁸⁰ He suggests that in the politics of identifying ‘authentic’ natives, several strands of the word identification are at stake because Indigenism has never been a homogenous stream and it also has several versions.

The Spanish called the native peoples of the American continent Indians or Indigenous, a term that is the result of a historical mistake, since Columbus did not arrive where he thought he had, that is in India. The term, on the other hand, does not account for the ethnic

²⁷⁹ ‘In the case of Indigenous and non-indigenous people it is astonishing to hear answers based on negative stereotypes and prejudices. This explains the reasons for the types of relationships between both groups and the way in which the policies for the Indigenous Peoples have been developed.

At the moment, thanks to the participation of several actors, the Indigenous leaders, in the first place, the Catholic Church, academics, social organisations, international organisations and with the Government support, we can see that big and profound changes are taking place in our society and in the State.’ (My own translation).

²⁸⁰ Rey Chow, ‘Where have all the natives gone?’ in *Contemporary Postcolonial Theory*, ed. by Padmini Mongia (London and New York: Arnold, 1997), pp. 122-141, p. 123.

diversity of the Pre-Colombian peoples. An added difficulty is that the term Indigenous is a problematic one. In 1998 the Instituto Indigenista Interamericano, stated that today indigenous means native although it has no etymological relationship with Indian. The term then, represents a cultural trend that appreciates the pre-Colombian past and condemns the wrongs the native population suffers. In this case, the expression *Indigenous literature* refers to the type of literature that refers to indigenous problems. At the same time, the Instituto Indigenista Interamericano defines *Authors of indigenous literature* as those authors who belong to ethnic communities. In the same way, *Indigenist policies* are defined as actions towards native communities and an *Indigenist action*, as a coherent set of state policies. The publication also mentions that today, the term *Indigenist* has acquired a negative connotation – associated with ethnocide tendencies of state policies and recommends to use *Indianisms* instead, that is the name of a political movement of the 1980's that questions integrationist state policies.²⁸¹

To the problem of how appropriate the term is, it is necessary to add a question of greater depth: What defines the indigenous? There are various criteria, one of which is the cultural one: the indigenous is someone who speaks the language and follows practices considered as such. One of the accepted criteria is belonging. It has to do with identity, the space people belong to that makes them what they are and also makes them different from others. Another dimension that defines the indigenous has to do with their historic territory, the power relations and their socio-economic structure. For the conqueror the term Indian referred to the colonised natives. But this relationship of subordination has not disappeared yet: in Chile the Indigenous peoples, or 'pueblos originarios' are among the poorer and also socially discriminated against groups. This has provoked strong protests from those who criticise the way in which the people of indigenous origin are treated.

Scholars such as the Chilean Rolando Mellafe have explored the nature of 'mestizaje'. He describes it poetically as 'two cultures in one space which is at the same time a frontier', that is, a space used by different cultures which do not necessarily die but become a

²⁸¹ Barié, p. 71.

historical reality different from the preceding one.²⁸² For many, 'mestizaje' – the mixture of Spanish, South American Indians, and in some countries, African people also, represents a problem, as they consider mestizaje a bad mixture, and the mestizo a hybrid creature that does not inherit the virtues but the vices of both sides. On the other hand José Vasconcelos and other Mexicans not only defend the purity of the Indian culture, as the only one that possesses the ancient virtues, but also contend that mestizaje is the matrix of a new race. In *The Cosmic Race* Vasconcelos envisions a unified Latin America that will lead the world into a new aesthetically and spiritually oriented era. Vasconcelos's 'cosmic race', the child of interracial love is the mix in which race will disappear and which will incorporate the positive characteristics of all previous people.²⁸³

Human reality is dissimilar, heteronymous and diverse with respect to itself. It is not possible to present identity as something univocal or affix it to a privileged historical moment when its essence was constructed. This would be discrimination against what is or is not an identity feature. If I argue that identity is expressed through the indigenous element, I would be excluding the European stream. This ambiguity is inherent to everything plural and diverse. It is tempting to solve the problem by means of a hybrid, mestizo identity but this would solve the problem only apparently because 'mestizo' is not something univocal. Perhaps no one coincides less with his self than the mestizo. Racial mixture does not define identity because not everybody is mestizo in the same way. While, cultures can superimpose each other, translate and adapt and adopt elements of other cultures and become hybrid in certain aspects, the term mestizaje does not only refer to a racial category but it is cultural as well. Mestizaje is a kind of umbrella concept, the same as the term 'indian' that covers what is diverse and creates the illusion that diversity disappears. So, if an essentialist identity eliminates plurality, it includes violence in that it suppresses a plurality that is constitutive of the human reality and the diversity of the collective.²⁸⁴

²⁸² Rolando Mellafe, *Historia Social de Chile y América* (Santiago de Chile: Editorial Universitaria, 1986), p. 12.

²⁸³ José Vasconcelos, *La Raza Cósmica* (México: Espasa-Calpe, S.A.), 1966.

²⁸⁴ García de la Huerta, p. 32.

It is interesting to see that to this day there are totally diverging positions in relation to the native Amerindian cultures, that can be summarised from the opposing points of view between Juan José Sebreli, an Argentinean scholar and Jean Marie Le Clezio, a French writer. In answer to the question whether the pre-Colombian cultures can be considered civilised cultures or barbaric ones, Juan José Sebreli says that the majority of the Amerindians were survivors of prehistoric periods, not less than six thousand years before the European Renaissance and that far from being the 'new men' of the Indigenists, the Latin American Indians are nothing but a fossil of ancient times.²⁸⁵ He adds that the Pre-Colombian civilisations are only a matter for historians, and that integration, although slow is irreversible and quotes the Spanish poet Amado Alonso who suggested the Indians should be 'de-indianised'.²⁸⁶ As to whether the Conquest brought the Indian civilisations to an end or was a blessing in disguise, Sebreli says that the europhobic, third world interpretations only remember the Europeans' greed for gold, while they forget the transference of plants, animals and technology from Europe. He quotes Juan Bautista Alberti: 'Everything in civilised South America is of European origin.' He adds that there is no doubt that many Indians died because of the war or slavery, but he thinks that the genocide has been exaggerated.²⁸⁷

On the contrary, Jean Marie Le Clézio considers that the conquest of the New World was not the exchange that Erasmus or Thomas More would have dreamt about. Because instead empires were destroyed, princes assassinated, culture, religion and social order silenced. The conquest produced a demographic catastrophe that reduced a population of several million to a few hundred thousand in only one generation. For him, the indigenous silence is one of the greatest dramas of mankind.²⁸⁸ Le Clézio reminds us that the Amerindian civilisations were ahead of Europe in medicine, astronomy, irrigation, drainage, urbanism and something that today is a vital issue: their harmonious relationship with the physical world. He adds that the strength of the European weapons prevented all this from being

²⁸⁵ Juan José Sebreli, *El Asedio a la Modernidad* (Buenos Aires: Editorial Sudamericana, 1992), p. 276.

²⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 285-290.

²⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 275-276.

²⁸⁸ Jean Marie Le Clezio, *El pensamiento interrumpido de la América India* (México: Nueva Epoca, 1990), pp. 27-29.

seen.²⁸⁹ Based on these considerations he claims that integration should not be inevitable and that the ancient cultures should be rescued.²⁹⁰ The importance of this task lies in the fact that the survivors of these civilisations who are still the guardians of 'mother Earth' and obey the laws of nature and the cycles of time can also teach us the dreams of the ancient civilisation and their value of freedom and solidarity

On this same point, the cultural geographer, Michael Watts stressed the importance of the remote past in the process of constructing national identity.²⁹¹ For him the construction of a sense of place and a historical geography, with ur-stories at its heart, is at the root of the problem. He refers to what Benjamin called the 'dialectical optics' of modernity: the ancient and the new. Its constituent parts are the fossil - relics of a historical culture which leave a trace in the present; the fetish - the arrested form of history; the wish image – the dream form of that potential embodied in the fetish; and the ruin, that is the semantic and material parts of tradition.²⁹²

One of the most typical representatives of the thesis of cultural mestizaje as a source of the Latin American identity, is the Venezuelan Arturo Uslar Pietri (1906-2001). He was awarded two important Spanish and Latin American Literature prizes: the 'Premio Príncipe de Asturias' in 1990 and the 'Premio Rómulo Gallegos' the following year. He underlines three aspects of the Latin American identity:

Firstly, that it is of mestizo character. He says that Latin Americans have created their own reality with a mixture that is not only biological but that has produced a new culture which is a mixture with European and native elements that can not be compared to any other colonisation in other continents. From the conquest, a spontaneous process of cultural mestizaje, whose expression was the transformation the conquerors and colonisers went through, took place. As the Latin American landscape and geography were so different from the European, every cultural component could not but be transformed. The Indians

²⁸⁹ Ibid., p. 30

²⁹⁰ Ibid., p. 31.

²⁹¹ Watts, pp. 85-107.

²⁹² Ibid., p. 100.

also went through a similar transformation in their vision of the world. Many Latin Americans, Chileans in particular, are not aware of this fact and they do not consider their cultural reality a rich one. So, their first task must be to come to terms with their past, without exclusions.²⁹³

Secondly, for Uslar Pietri the mestizo identity is the result of a historical evolution and the continent's task is to assimilate its past and accept it. Latin Americans are what they are because a historical process has made them the way they are, and that is something they have to accept no matter what other preferences they may have. In the third place Uslar Pietri states that a mestizo cultural identity has a conflictive character. In his essay *El Mestizo* he tells and analyses the story of the mestizo poet 'The Inca Garcilaso de la Vega', the son of the Spanish captain Sebastián Garcí Lasso de la Vega and the Inca princess Isabel Chimpú Ocllo, who was the cousin of Atahualpa, the last Inca.²⁹⁴ Here we see how difficult it is to live the experience of cultural mestizaje because the elements that make it are not only dissimilar but also contradictory.²⁹⁵

One problem with Uslar Pietri is that he sometimes uses the category 'mestizaje' in a way that is ambiguous and polysemic. Semantically, in his texts, 'mestizaje' sometimes means 'synthesis'; but it also means syncretism, or mere influence, or hybridity, local character, or opposing influences. So, any relationship between cultural elements of diverse origin would be 'mestizaje'. He uses the term in such a general sense that it is almost impossible to contrast it. García de la Huerta points to this ambiguity when he says 'tampoco lo mestizo es algo unívoco'.²⁹⁶ He is right, because definitely the mestizo is someone who does not coincide with himself.

²⁹³ Le Clezio, p. 16.

²⁹⁴ Garcilaso de la Vega (1539-1616) was born in Cuzco, in Perú. He was educated by his tutor, don Juan de Alcobaza. At the age of 20 he moved to Spain, where he served in the Spanish army and fought in Granada under don Juan de Austria. He died in Córdoba, Spain. In 1605 he published his *Historia de la Florida y Jornada que a Ella Hizo el Gobernador Hernando de Soto*. His most important work is *Los Comentarios Reales, que Tratan del Origen de los Incas, Reyes que Fueron del Perú, de su Idolatría, Leyes y Gobierno en Paz y en Guerra*, published in Lisbon in 1609. In this work Garcilaso de la Vega describes the great Inca empire before the Spanish conquest, based on his childhood memories and his personal contacts with a few survivors of this important pre-Colombian civilization.

²⁹⁵ Arturo Uslar-Pietri, 'América no fue descubierta' in *500 Años: Descubrimiento de América*, ed. by Jaime Antúnez Aldunate (Santiago: El Mercurio, 1992), pp. 43-46.

²⁹⁶ García de la Huerta, p. 132. (mestizo does not mean univocal).

In general, in the mestizo Latin American identity the cultural unity of the Latin American identity is presented as a homogenous whole and differences between the vernacular cultures tend not to be considered, as if they were one or as if their specificities were irrelevant. Even though essentialist conceptions of identity perceive it as something permanent and closed that is kept unmodified by the historical processes, it is in fact, open and permanently incomplete and subject to the constant transformation produced by the historical process. We also know that cultural identity does not only refer to what we have become, but also to what we want to become. Moreover, the past is never univocal: the different versions of identity are interpretation of a same past, constructed from a selection of past events and trends, and that is why they can always be the object of controversy, can be modified, and are open to transformation and added complexities.²⁹⁷

Undoubtedly, the Latin American culture(s) share a common origin, but in this case history seems to be an insuperable fate because if mestizaje is defined as a cultural identity that privileges the past as a source of identity, it consequently, makes it a synonym of legacy or tradition. In this case, the essentialist view that the region's cultural identity was constituted during the colonial period does not take into account the contribution of the non-Spanish European cultures that arrived shortly after the wars of Independence, and which, therefore, could not form part of the national identity(ies) which are excluded. For example, in the appreciation of cultural mestizaje there is often a total lack of acknowledgement of the English and French and other non-Spanish cultural contributions during the 19th century. These contributions would be representative of an enlightened modernity opposed to the Spanish baroque modernity where, in the essentialist conception, the cultural Latin American ethos was constituted.

In short, the mestizo, is no doubt the result of a synthesis that did not exist before, but who is, no doubt, not free from further transformations. I conclude, therefore, that the theses of cultural mestizaje may dangerously reduce the complexity of the term, because, while

²⁹⁷ Vergara Estévez, Jorge, 'Cultura y mestizaje en América Latina', *Boletín de Filosofía*, 11 (2001), 195-220, p. 211.

giving importance to the mestizo (Indian-Spanish) identity they may minimise or exclude others. Whereas these theses assert the continental unity, they may increase a lack of awareness of the Other.²⁹⁸ In fact the many languages spoken by the different native peoples, who may not even be speakers of Spanish are a demonstration of the presence of Others. Though, there are other Others who are not necessarily native peoples only. The societies in the region are culturally fractured and these are fractures which exist between the culture of the elites and the popular ones, or between the urban and the rural cultures. Besides, none of these sectors is unified or homogeneous.²⁹⁹ So, the term mestizaje may encompass many types of multiculturalism, the recognition of which requires the recognition not only of the native peoples with their own cultures, but also the recognition and respect of all the 'mestizo' groups.

Octavio Paz argues that all the conflicts in the Latin American countries have immediate and long-term causes (of long history and structure), and have their roots in remote superimposed layers in the past. He is right though, in that there is no synthesis or encounter, but a succession of layers that make their cultural identity more complex. Sigmund Freud has taught us that no matter how old or faded, childhood is never without meaning and will always condition our future identity. In the same way human societies cannot build their future and their identity from a vacuum; they have to start from the legacies of their past, that heritage that they receive willingly or unwillingly. In this respect, Luis Suárez Fernández, Spanish historian and former Rector of the University of Valladolid, Spain, quotes Jacob Burckhardt who warned that the responses to this 'legacy' can take diverging ways: it may be accepted and idolised, or accepted and used as a platform for a new stage. It can also be rejected, what would be equivalent to suicide.³⁰⁰

While Chileans turn their backs to their mestizo past, Paz says that Mexicans are in search of their identity, their origin that is, they want to recover their identity and their happiness in the past. He argues that the myth of the uprooting from an ideal past produces a nostalgic

²⁹⁸ Fernando Calderón, Martín Hopenhayn & Ernesto Ottone, *Esa Esquiva Modernidad: Desarrollo, ciudadanía y cultura en América Latina y el Caribe* (Caracas: Editorial Nueva Sociedad), 1996.

²⁹⁹ Vergara, p. 215.

feeling that also blocks the future and produces a feeling of impotence in the present.³⁰¹ But the myth does not operate in the same way in the different regions of the continent. On the contrary, in Chile for example, the past is not idealised, but denied. This attitude makes the country more vulnerable, because its remote history is here now, present in its conflicts. As Paz says 'The old times never disappear completely and all the wounds, even the oldest ones, still bleed'.³⁰² Both the conquerors and the native peoples are part of the continent's cultural past. It is not possible to reject part of this total, to drop it, because that is to turn our backs to our true identity.³⁰³

The 'denied past' of the Chileans – their mestizo making – was brought to light in a survey carried out in 1997 by the Sociology Department of the University of Chile, 28.3% of the sample did not object to the statement that Chile was a country more developed than others in the continent because there were fewer Indians. The sociologist Jaime Aymerich commented that answers like this one show a fragmented though incipient racism.³⁰⁴ He also claimed that although Chile is not a political agent producer of racist attitudes, it is a country with a false ethnocentric discourse that operates on the assumption, which is part of its collective identity, that it is a white country, and this makes the perception of the collective crossbreeding disappear. This characteristic of the country is also mentioned by Jorge Gissi, who comments Chileans have forgotten their 'mestizaje' and agrees with Aymerich in that Chileans besides thinking of themselves as white, also have some racist ideas'.³⁰⁵

It can be concluded that in Chile there is clearly what for Radcliffe is a national investment in their self image. Radcliffe defines the concept of 'correlative imaginaries' as the emotional investments people make in relation to national identity and claims that the imaginary is usually bound to a homogenising account of 'race' and nation.³⁰⁶ There can be

³⁰⁰ Luis Suárez Fernández, 'América, Vista desde Europa, in *500 Años: Descubrimiento de América*, pp. 7-10 (p. 8).

³⁰¹ Paz, *El Laberinto de la Soledad*.

³⁰² Paz, *Corriente Alterna*, p.11.

³⁰³ Uslar-Pietri, pp. 11-15.

³⁰⁴ Oscar Contardo, 'Indio, Negro y Feo', *El Mercurio*, 19 July 1998, p. E14.

³⁰⁵ Jorge Gissi, *Psicología e Identidad Latinoamericana: sociosicoanálisis de cinco premios Nobel*.

³⁰⁶ Radcliffe, p. 28.

many sites in which correlative imaginaries can be produced, such as popular form of religiosity or the ensemble of relations that produce national identity. States often make use of it in times of crises.

That Gissi is right can be seen in the Chileans' discrimination against their internal Others. The historian José Bengoa, like many others, defines Chileans as hypocrites because they deny their racism on the assumption that in their country everybody is equal. Nonetheless, when some behaviour patterns are analysed, traces of racism appear explicitly.³⁰⁷ Racism is specific and according to Bernardo Subercaseaux it can be seen in the roles played in general by the Mapuche people in the society.³⁰⁸ Subercaseaux also interprets as a type of paternalistic racism the fact that some Mapuches change their surname in order to 'whiten' themselves. In fact, between 1970 and 1990, more than a thousand Mapuche applied for a legal change of surname.³⁰⁹ This fact brings to light the inadequacy of the Chilean society to value or at least tolerate its 'culturas originarias', because changing one's own name means to silence it, to reject it. It also explains why some of the descendants of the Mapuche warriors have related in such a conflictive and painful way to their own origin that they have finally rejected it. A 'mestizo' country, that thinks of itself as white and uses expressions like 'blackie' or 'chocolate' as both terms of endearment or insult, is it or is it not a racist country?³¹⁰ The idea of 'whitening' has been privileged and the language in which this is expressed speaks volumes for the ways in which a Eurocentric view of the world is maintained. The positive evaluation of whiteness at the top of a racial and colour hierarchy is founded upon the negative evaluation of darkness.³¹¹ That is why, 'indio' is a pejorative term used to denote backwardness and distance, and to be an Araucanian or an Aymara, - or look like one- is a handicap in Chilean society, since the prejudice is that darkness does not signify a civilising development. Actually, since Independence, leaders have 'imagined' all Chileans as equals, while in practice, social and ethnic divisions have meant widely differing experiences for the country's inhabitants.

³⁰⁷ José Bengoa, *Historia del Pueblo Mapuche: Siglos XIX y XX* (Santiago: Editorial Sur), 1985.

³⁰⁸ Bernardo Subercaseaux, *Historia de las Ideas y de la Cultura en Chile*.

³⁰⁹ Gabriel Salazar y Jaime Pinto, *Historia contemporánea de Chile II: Actores, identidad y movimiento*, p. 172.

³¹⁰ Bernardo Subercaseaux, 'La Constelación Racial', *El Mercurio*, 19 Julio 1998, Artes y Letras, pp. 12-13.

³¹¹ Radcliffe, p. 33.

A reading of the Chilean historians of 'Chileanness' allows us to trace the stereotypes that have become part of the collective memory. Francisco Antonio Encina and Jaime Eyzaguirre among the best known, together with Nicolás Palacios have developed what can be considered a mythological truth with their narrative of the genesis of the Chilean society.³¹²

As early as 1910 Francisco Antonio Encina, trying to define the Chilean identity as a collective, wrote that 'peoples, as individuals have their own character and temperament, and there are not two races that think, feel and do exactly the same'.³¹³ Nearly eighty years afterwards, Hernán Godoy continued the discussion and pointed out that a people's identity cannot be reduced to lists of qualities and features and that national identity cannot be reduced to national character.³¹⁴

The reading of Encina and Eyzaguirre's narratives knits a Chileanness that is built upon a racial homogeneity. The prevalence of whiteness is the milestone of this mythology of origins, an origin culminates in a biological (Encina) and cultural (Eyzaguirre) unity, which makes Chileans 'be' white Europeans. Encina explored the foundational myth of the Chilean people, the lower classes especially, which he saw anchored in a mestizaje that was the mixture of men of 'a superior race' and women of an 'inferior' one. This resulted in a new 'race', in which the indigenous component predominated over the 'old western races' but missed its virtues. For him mestizaje was a biological, rather than a cultural phenomenon and this may explain why he established a social hierarchy with the whiter ones at the top. It is easy to realise that in Encina's thesis, white equals positive, while the popular sectors full of Indian blood, have all its 'characteristics', being, therefore, drunkards, lazy and spendthrifts.

Breaking away from this type of mythology and from the canonical historians, Eyzaguirre

³¹² Francisco Antonio Encina, *Historia de Chile* (Santiago de Chile: Ediciones Zig-Zag), 1983.
Jaime Eyzaguirre, *Historia de Chile* (Santiago de Chile: Ediciones Zig-Zag), 1973.
Palacios, *La Raza Chilena*.

³¹³ Encina, *Nuestra inferioridad económica*.

and Encina, Nicolás Palacios' mestizo becomes the subject that constitutes the nation. Palacios developed the topic of mestizaje in a way in which the racial and biological elements are mixed with the cultural. Contrary to Encina, he did not consider the Indian dimension as inferior, but argued that mestizaje had not been understood or valued by the social and political elites. He tried to de-mystify the stereotype of the elites and attacked the 'europeasation' of the Chilean customs. Palacios' problem was that he was not appreciated by Chileans who do not want to be mestizos, any trace of which must disappear behind a white European type homogeneity. Lately, Cristián Gazmuri has strongly criticised Palacios for his implicit racism, a mixture of biology, genetics, linguistics, sociology and politics, that he considers contradictory and leading to an aristocratic populism.³¹⁵

The poet Vicente Huidobro was a member of the aristocracy, a class much criticised by Palacios for being under French influence. He wrote in 1924, in a letter from Paris that the Chilean race was essentially foolish because of its Indian mixture, and that this had no solution unless the country sent for not less than 500,000 Europeans a year.³¹⁶ Implicitly or explicitly, honestly expressed or deliberately provocative, in this discourse was the utopia of the 'improvement' of the 'Chilean race'. In summary, as Radcliffe says, racisms are plural, 'drawing on the past but always of the present'.³¹⁷

It may seem contradictory but not surprising that while authors like Palacios, at the turn of the 20th century, presented the Mapuches of the conquest as heroes, and spoke of the 'glorious Chilean race', in the same period the Government tried to attract German immigrants to the southern part of the country, a place from where the Araucanians, an 'inferior race of savage Indians', had been expelled. These territories, the government wanted to transform thanks to the presence of European settlers because European immigration would balance negative native forces. In fact, as Radcliffe puts it, 'racisms

³¹⁴ Godoy, *Apuntes sobre la cultura en Chile*.

³¹⁵ Cristián Gazmuri, 'Notas sobre la influencia del racismo en la obra de Nicolás Palacios, Francisco A. Encina y Alberto Cabero', *Revista Historia*, N° 16 (Santiago de Chile: Instituto de Historia, Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile) 1989.

³¹⁶ Vicente Huidobro, *Epistolario* (Santiago: Dibam, Archivo del Escritor), 1997.

³¹⁷ Radcliffe, p. 41.

and the processes of racialisation contribute towards the de-centring of the nation through difference'.³¹⁸

III.2.1. WOMEN AND MESTIZAJE

Conquest, Colony and Republic, besides being successive periods, are the strata of the country's being, sediments that the past left in institutions, practices and customs. The conquest specially, defines a central aspect of the culture, not only because of the missionary character of the Spanish state, but because the wars do not end when the battles end but are prolonged in bodies, families and practices. The wars of occupation are not only military events: they are also an invasion of a place and of an inner space, in other words, of a world. Remains of this type of conquest can not be found in museums but in both bodies and souls.

We know little about the heroines of the Chilean past: only about a few brave Mapuche women, whose names outlive them, such as Fresia, Tegalda and Guacolda. They embody the Araucanian women, whose determination and heroism represent the counterpart to the ferocity of the conquest, and the initial impulse to the three hundred-year-war against the invaders of their country, and that the poet Alonso de Ercilla describes in *La Araucana*. We also barely register a few Spanish women like Inés de Suárez, an intrepid lady who crossed the mountains on horseback accompanying Pedro de Valdivia and his soldiers to found a city and a country in the southernmost region of the plane, and also to wage war against the natives. All these women are part of the country's collective memory because they responded to the challenges of their time with the only thing they had then available: their physical strength, warfare, and loyalty.³¹⁹

Initially very few wives, sisters or other female members of their families could accompany the Spanish armies to wage war in Arauco, and only later did they start to arrive, when the

³¹⁸ Radcliffe, p. 49.

³¹⁹ Godoy, *El carácter Chileno*. Lucía Santa Cruz, Teresa Pereira, Isabel Zegers and Valeria Maino, *Tres ensayos sobre la mujer chilena* (Santiago: Editorial Universitaria), 1987.

situation was considered less dangerous. In the conquest of a territory, women specially, may be part of the booty, and this country was no exception and from the very beginning the unions between indigenous women and Spanish men were a permanent feature³²⁰. The opposite, however, was a much less frequent situation.³²¹

Magnus Hörner holds that in this respect the Spanish conquest was a conquest of women. So, the term 'conquest' also carries an additional polysemic resonance both military and erotic. This same idea is expressed by Ricardo Herren in his book *La Conquista Erótica de las Indias*, an ambiguous title, as 'Indias' can be understood as both, the female indigenous population of the continent, and the whole Spanish empire in America).³²² To explain his title and the fact that the conquistadors took the women whom they has taken as hostages, the author states that the conquest was 'el festín licencioso más grande y prolongado de la historia'.³²³ Mestizaje is a difficult topic in the Chilean identity, something that is obvious in Montecino's comment: 'the first present the conquistadors gave to this land was mestizaje'.³²⁴ The Spanish soldiers took or kidnapped Indian women and founded what Garcia de la Huerta calls a 'war family', that is a family centred in the mother, where illegitimacy predominated.³²⁵

Initially perhaps a mere object, the Indian woman gave her master her loyalty and got from him a kind of reciprocity, if unwillingly, which consisted in her incorporation into a new order. The 'mestizo' child meant for the mother a greater degree of integration, greater security for herself and it also meant better prospects for the child. Both Indian men and women understood the change in power relations, only that for her, access to the new order, was less difficult. With the white man she had the safety her own people could no longer guarantee. In fact, the higher her new master's social position, the better the future for herself and for her children. From the moral point of view, polygamy was not a problem for

³²⁰ Pedro Mariño de Lobera, *Crónica del Reino de Chile* (Santiago: Editorial Universitaria) 1970.

³²¹ Francisco Núñez de Pineda y Bascuñan, *El Cautiverio Feliz* (Santiago: Editorial Universitaria), 1973. (In such cases, often Spanish women opted to stay with the Indian who had captured them, both because they were pregnant, and therefore, dishonoured, or because the Indians treated them better than the Spanish).

³²² Ricardo Herren, *La Conquista Erótica de las Indias* (Buenos Aires: Planeta), 1991.

³²³ Ibid, p. 13.

³²⁴ Salinas, p. 46.

³²⁵ García de la Huerta, p. 104.

the indigenous women of the Araucanian world, where it was more a problem of economic or political capacity rather than a moral issue.

In order to be able to legitimise these unions the Indian women had to acquire the status of 'Christians', because unions with non-Christians were penalised by the Spanish law, even though in practice, these conversions were little more than the acceptance of baptism.

'La constitución de la familia sin padre o con padre ausente/itinerante resultó funcional a la mantención de un contingente poblacional de recambio, tras la sangría demográfica provocada por la guerra y las enfermedades. De modo que la familia acéfala de padre resultó *funcional a la reproducción* de la población, pero a la vez *funcional a la exclusión sexual* del indio varón, quien desde el punto de vista de la nueva familia emergente era excedentario.'³²⁶

The political function of the 'war family' was, therefore, a double one: it combined a mediating inclusion of the Indian women with the exclusion of the male Indian. This exclusion was neither the result of the choice of the Indian women or of a racist policy, but rather the consequence of this new type of family, the 'matristic' family. The absence of the father was reflected and replicated in the 'new family': the absent white father represented an empty space left by the excluded Indian. This is why, in general, the stream of crossbreeding has its source in a white paternal line.

In this way, the 'new family' becomes a space for the reproduction of power and also an instance of mediation, although the Spanish soldiers rarely married the Indian women they lived with. Obviously the abandoned mother remained to look after her illegitimate children or 'huachos'. Mellafe's argument was that the Indian female population did not object to this type of union because they saw them as a way of changing their social status.³²⁷

³²⁶ García de la Huerta, p. 105. (The constitution of the fatherless family, or with an absent/itinerant father, was functional to replacing the population that was lost as a result of the demographic bleeding caused by wars and plague. In this way the acephalous family was functional to the popularion reproduction but at the same time it was functional to the exclusion of the male Indian, who had no place in the new type of family). (My own translation).

³²⁷ Mellafe, *Historia Social de Chile y de América*, p. 225.

It can not be forgotten that the dividing line male/female was also part of a larger divide: believer and non-believer, a distinction acted both as assimilation and as an exclusion technique. Since the process of constitution of the individual as a social subject takes place through the identification of, or in opposition to an Other, the only way of acquiring the 'political' existence that was offered in the new society was as a faithful and loyal subject of the crown. Otherwise, the native was invisible. To become 'someone' it was necessary to go through the rite of passage - conversion - which allowed the natives to become a 'same'. By means of this arrangement the indigenous men entered the labour-production sphere, and the indigenous women entered the family reproductive sphere. In this way women became part of the new order through their bodies and through their children, and it is also through their passive complicity in this new type of family that the system of power was reproduced.

This is when the fundamental role of the Indian woman emerged. When she accepted a white man as her master she went through a process of transculturation, but at the same time, he was also changed because he was incorporated into her world; in other words, the white man was converted to the native polygamic order, instead of his own indissoluble monogamic marriage. This was the Indian woman's moment of glory and of revenge because the new union produced, even if it was without its actors' will, a kind of reciprocal transculturation and conversion.³²⁸

In Chilean literature it is possible to find the 'mater', impregnated in the mestizo culture. For example, Jorge Guzmán, in his analysis of Gabriela Mistral's texts, wrote about the 'symbolic drama' that starts when a Chilean woman, deeply in love is abandoned.³²⁹ The poet, a single mother herself, associated the image of maternity with the earth. The epilogue of the 'drama' is the absence of the 'pater', who 'es siempre un espejismo, como el agua en los desiertosy que en nuestra realidad mestiza origina un fantasma referencial'.³³⁰

³²⁸ García de la Huerta, p. 106.

³²⁹ Jorge Guzmán, *Diferencias Latinoamericanas* (Santiago de Chile: Ediciones del Centro de Estudios Humanísticos, 1984), pp. 45-67.

Gabriela Mistral, *Poema de Chile* (Santiago de Chile: Seix Barral), 1985.

³³⁰ Guzmán, p. 77. (The father is always a mirage, like water in the desertsand who, in our mestizo reality becomes a referential phantom). (My own translation).

Marian devotion became an expression of religious syncretism: slowly in the Andean cultures it started to be linked to the 'Pachamama' a feminine divinity that is both the earth and fertility. Thus, the Indian mythology confronted with Christianity, structured a new symbology and a network of substitutions.

In the 20th century, authors like Joaquín Edwards Bello and José Donoso dealt with the topic of identity, the mestizo identity and the white/non-white relationship in Chile.³³¹ Edwards' mestizo is a sort of social chronicle, where he explores the margins of the society, grotesque and impure. His mestizo is more Indian than white, his women are sensual and passive, an image of the Indian women taken by the white man, all of them impregnated by fatalism and poverty, characteristics associated with the indigenous.

José Donoso's world is a more complex one where social classes and ethnic groups mix, and where everyone needs each other and all have a need of constant feedback. The illegitimate child bears with certain pride the mark of his father though he will never be his same. However, when it is a white woman who gives birth to the child of an Indian father, the child loses all traces of identity, his origin disappears. For Donoso, mestizaje, more than a biological matter, was a cultural and mythical one, whose dimensions intertwine to make Chileans what they are. The union of an Indian woman and a white man, or 'ahuincamiento' (Huinca = white man), in Donoso's language can be read as a mask or appropriation of characteristics that belong to the Other, in a yearning to become an Other, something the mestizo child will never be.

It is interesting to note that in the Mapuche tradition, mestizaje is also problematic. It is asymmetric because the fruit of this 'unnatural' union is also unnatural: the mestizo will be a half-human monster. In turn, this half-monster or 'imbunche' will bear and symbolise other anomalies such as traitor, quarrelsome, sly, etc.³³² These terms are nothing but the stereotypes normally used by many Chileans to describe the Mapuche people.

³³¹ Joaquín Edwards Bello, *El Roto* (Santiago de Chile: Editorial Universitaria), 1989.

José Donoso, *El obsceno pájaro de la noche* (Barcelona: Seix Barral), 1970.

³³² Montecino, p. 152.

So, mestizaje, a repudiated condition, despite everything remained, and could not be erased. One example is Bernardo O'Higgins, 'el Libertador' (also contemptuously called 'el huacho O'Higgins'), whose father, the Irish-born Spanish Viceroy did not marry Isabel Riquelme, his son's mother. Later, Bernardo O'Higgins himself did not marry his children's mother either. Mestizaje, therefore, represents a tension in the Chilean culture and defines many of its characteristics. In other words, the original pattern of behaviour based on the mediating role of the Indian women, became and continuous to be, a permanent feature of Chilean society, where a high rate of illegitimacy and female headed households have since been characteristic of the popular culture.

Nowadays, discrimination against the Mapuche can be appreciated in the economic and social spaces. In Araucanía, where the greater Mapuche concentration is found, their level of poverty is higher than that of the non-indigenous in the same area. The 2002 United Nations Report analyses the causes of the Mapuche poverty and concludes that discrimination against them has been a determining factor.³³³ Moreover, in Chile there are information vacuums on indigenous women and on Mapuche women in particular. There is an analytical invisibility in that, in documents about women in Chile, there are no mentions of cultural diversity or gender difference based on ethnicity.³³⁴ This means that Mapuche women are discriminated against as women, indigenous and poor. Besides, the rights of the indigenous women are not only not recognised in the national legislation, nor have they been a priority.³³⁵ An example that illustrates this is that the 2002 Census states that the 35.3% of the Mapuche working women, are employed as domestic servants. Another example the difficulties Mapuche women face is access to education. The 2002 Census tells us that 7.3% of the Mapuche women have no formal education, in contrast to 3.23% of the female population of the country. The Mapuche women are also at a disadvantage when compared to the masculine Mapuche population, of whom 4,2% have no schooling. This situation is a matter for concern and is related to the social stratification of the country.

³³³ Programa de Naciones Unidas para el Desarrollo (PNUD), Universidad de la Frontera y MIDEPLAN, *Índice de Desarrollo Humano en la población Mapuche de la Región de la Araucanía* (Santiago), 2002.

³³⁴ A. Collinao, et al., *La Participación Organizacional de la Mujer Mapuche en Santiago* (Santiago: Cedesco), 1999.

³³⁵ *Los Derechos de los Pueblos Indígenas en Chile: Informe del Programa de Derechos Indígenas* (Temuco, Instituto de Estudios Indígenas: Lom, 2003), p.402.

Even if the educational coverage is high (over 90%), it is concentrated in the middle and upper strata and as the indigenous population in general and the Mapuche in particular belong to the lower socio-economic stratum, they find it difficult to access an education that makes them climb socially.

An extremely serious situation that has become worse and worse in the last years is that of gender violence against Mapuche women who have been involved in protests for territorial rights. There are many cases that exemplify the magnitude of the repression and arbitrary and discriminatory treatment against Mapuche women that have been corroborated by the 'Programa de Derechos Indígenas'.³³⁶

The root of the problem in a mestizo country like Chile, where the great majority has Mapuche blood in their veins, is how to be reconciled with one's origin. Reconciliation is essential to produce change and develop a better cultural understanding of the process of mestizaje, of a mestizo cultural synthesis. In this way, Chilean identity would no longer be a veiling of the 'monster (imbunche) of the Chilean origin. It would no longer be a question of opting for an indigenous mother or a European father, but to chose the synthesis of both. It would mean linking the oral and the written tradition, the rite and the myth.

³³⁶ Programa de Derechos Indígenas (EIE UFRO), in www.derechosindigenas.cl.

IV. THE PRE-COLOMBIAN PEOPLES OF CHILE

National identity is a complex construct composed of interrelated elements, ethnic, cultural, territorial, etc., that include shared memories, myths and traditions. With independence, the new Latin American republics inherited the colonial societies that had been built in the previous three centuries and of which the indigenous cultures were part. Their identity has rested upon a shared colonial experience, together with a common language and religion.

The native peoples of the Chilean territory are also bound together, but by a different 'colonial' experience which has resulted in the almost total loss of their native languages, but which has not been capable of changing entirely their own cosmological visions.

The social sciences have several criteria as to what defines the indigenous and an accepted one is belonging, so an indigenous is someone who speaks the language and follows the practices considered as such by the group he belongs to. The Collins dictionary of Sociology defines an indigenous group as an ethnic group originating and remaining in an area subject to colonisation.³³⁷ Therefore, it has to do with identity, with the space people belong to, that makes them what they are, and that makes them different from others. In this way the notion of ethnic identity has to be understood as a type of social collective identity connected to relations with other groups, power, etc., and presupposes, therefore, the simultaneous operation of a principle of sameness and difference.³³⁸

It is difficult to have an understanding of the problems of the pre-Colombian peoples of Chile without a reference to the past because their present condition is the direct consequence of processes throughout time. Histories of the country sometimes start, erroneously, with the arrival of the Spanish soldiers and even though the Spanish presence altered their culture and way of living significantly, there was a generally unknown

³³⁷ Collins, *Dictionary of Sociology*, ed. by Davis Jary and Julia Jary (Glasgow: Westerhill Road, Bishopbriggs., 1991), p. 292.

previous history. It is, therefore, necessary to incorporate the vision, history and institutions if we want to have a better understanding of past and present identity and culture.

500 years ago, the conqueror used the term 'Indian' to refer to the colonised sector, a relationship of subordination that has not yet disappeared entirely. The imagined superiority of the Spaniards and their descendants has rested upon the pre-eminence of the Spanish language, as well as upon a shared sense of imagined 'white' community. The separation of Indians and Spaniards continued into the Republic – now between Indians and Chileans – despite a high degree of miscegenation. And still, in 21st century Chile, the term 'Indian' often defines someone bordering on the inferior, reluctant to work and suffering from vices that do not let him 'advance' or look for better prospects. Of course, this is an image that corresponds not to what the 'indian' is, but rather to what centuries of psychological inferiority have made of him.

But in republican Chile, a strong national identity constructed around external references such as western civilisation, Eurocentrism, modernity, scientific knowledge, etc., is in opposition to its antitheses represented by the indigenous peoples (myth, backwardness, etc.). This becomes a formidable ideological and political obstacle for both national minorities (Mapuche), or tiny ethnic communities, such Aymara and Atacameño, to see their aspirations for recognition come true. Nevertheless there is one aspect of their indigenous identity that 'modernity' has not totally penetrated. It is through women and their fertility associated to the earth and specially the mountains, that the communities' historical and spatial identity has been able to perpetuate.³³⁹

'Caminar hacia la montaña es ir a tu propio encuentro. La manera como caminas es cómo te relacionas con tu propio cuerpo. Una vez que empiezas a conocerte a ti

³³⁸ For Geertz (1973) bonds such as kinship and shared territory, language, religion and experience are important. A. Smith (1968) also shares this view and considers that ethno-political ideologies and nationalism have cultural roots and are not mere constructs of beliefs and re-invention of the past.

³³⁹ P. Arévalo, 'Persistencia de los patrones de subsistencia y opuestos complementarios en el espacio económico del extremo norte de Chile', in *Comunidades Indígenas*, USACH, Santiago, (1992), pp. 45-59 (p. 52).

mismo, cuando estás más cerca de la cima, empiezas a encontrar la verdad. Esta es una cima interna, no física, porque es en la montaña donde hablas con tu Dios.³⁴⁰

In Chile the native peoples were given the formal condition of citizens, willingly or not, mainly because the main issue was the building of the nation. The creation of a sense of national belonging was first priority for the governing elites, whereas for the indigenous peoples this was only a type of formal equality and legal citizenship. To speak of indigenous citizenship in Chile, where the meaning of one term is naturally associated to equality whereas the other is associated to social inequality is an anachronism. Indigenous citizenship represents nothing but an empty space, a lack.

The Chilean State recognises the existence of these ethnic groups but not the existence of ethnic peoples.³⁴¹ In fact this would mean to recognise the existence of several nations within the national space and territory. This seems to be the classical case in which the vision of one nation and one state would justify giving priority to assimilation. As a counterpoint, the Indigenous organisations state that the ethnic groups do constitute peoples, because of their history and their common ethnic, religious, linguistic and territorial identity, and that if all the peoples that occupy the nation's space were equal they could legally aspire to self-ruling. The perspective of this analysis has to do with the relationship between indigenous cultures and the nation state, which is a critical one, and can be referred to as internal colonialism. Assimilation or in their words the implementation of measures that tend to suppress elements of distinctiveness and ethnic identity has been a way to solve the 'problem' of ethnic minorities, thus, leading to an eventual fusion with the majority, so that the whole population can be defined under a common culture, national identity and citizenship.³⁴²

It is of great importance to have the present government's official view on the matter. On 2nd March 2001, Minister Alejandra Krauss was interviewed with respect to the Mapuche

³⁴⁰ Gina Nanetti, 'La mujer de las montañas', *En Viaje*, 1904, (2003), 4-7 (p. 5). ('To walk towards the mountain is going to meet yourself. The way you walk is how you relate to your own body. Once you start knowing yourself, when you are closer to the summit, you start to find the truth. It is an internal, rather than a physical, summit, because it is on the mountains where you speak to your God.'). (My own translation).

³⁴¹ Ley N° 19.523 (1993).

³⁴² Gunderman, Foester, et al., p. 38.

people in particular and other indigenous communities in general. She was then head of Mideplan – Ministerio de Planificación Nacional, which is the ministry that deals with Indigenous affairs.³⁴³ She gave her own opinions as well as the official views, which can be summarised as follows:

Minister Krauss expressed the official views on the topic by pointing out that the government had got a loan from the World Bank to buy lands for the Mapuches. She explained that the government had to purchase the land, not because they were considered incapable of doing so, but because they were prevented by law from selling or taking up mortgages on their land and added that the reason for such legislation was that the issue of land was such an essential one for the Mapuche that they have to be prevented from parting with it. Krauss excepted some communities as the Atacameños and Rapa Nui for whom, she said, the issue of lands was not high priority.³⁴⁴ Minister Krauss also mentioned the newly created ‘Historical truth and new treatment committee’, which, in spite of the fact that the most conflictive groups had no representation and although its main objective was not the issue of lands, was important because for the first time a government was willing to analyse the past and suggest new alternatives for the future in relation to the society. Krauss added she hoped that the Mapuches might in the future, have access to this committee.

The Minister said that when she took office she had been ‘surprised’ to learn that there were several countries within the country, with a total lack of common links, as well as by the depth of the Mapuche culture and traditions, their identification with the land and by the need they had to be recognised. Not surprisingly, she was also amazed at their mistrust. Since then her main concern had been to put out the fire of the Indian anger. Her view was

³⁴³ Transcript of the interview in Appendix

³⁴⁴ The minister was right. The fundamental issue for the northern Aymara and Atacameño communities is not land, but water. In 1982, a new ‘Código de Aguas’ was passed, which allowed private individual or organization to register their rights to use this resource, regardless whether it had previously been in the hands of the Indigenous communities. This meant that as from then only the new legal registration was valid, and that ancestral un-registered rights were not taken into account. This was consistent with the notion that in the country there were no indigenous individuals or groups but only Chileans. Therefore, the indigenous communities were not able to register their rights, because legally they were non-existent as such. As a result, mining companies currently administer and use most of the water and many communities have lost access to this resource that in the arid desert was essential for a basic agriculture that eventually served to prevent emigration.

that there had been progress in social politics and the Indian question was and would continue to be a priority subject for the government, even if there was no conflict. Moreover, she did not want to think of the late confrontations as a serious ones, but rather as a minor ones that did not involve an important percentage of the population, nor could she foresee any real violence in the future. Nevertheless, in a straightforward way the Minister expressed that the government had never contemplated the possibility of the Mapuches having their own territory with some level of self-determination. She insisted that although she recognised that in the future the political rights of the Indigenous peoples would have to be discussed, the idea of a Mapuche nation was totally unacceptable for the government. It is clear that the government is not prepared to accept the view of a state within the state but while at least some system of self-rule is acceted by both parties, steps ought to be taken to restore their full rights over their land and together with that, their dignity, and to recognise fully their ancestral culture, stressing the cultural diversity and political equality of the inhabitants of the country.

The Minister's opinions need no further explanation, except, that it may also be of interest to consider a comparative study of the Constitutions of twenty Latin American countries published in 1998 by the ASA's Instituto Indigenista Latinoamericano.³⁴⁵ This is a specialised institute of the American States Organisation of the UN and it is chaired by a the Chilean Luis Maira. With respect to the Chilean Constitution, it concludes that in it there is no mention of any type of Latin American integration and furthermore, the Chilean State does not explicitly recognise a multiethnic identity or its historical existence. As far as language, only the Spanish language is recognised as official language, and there is no mention of either bilingual or intercultural education. What respect to territorial indigenous rights, the Chilean Constitution does not mention common property or participation in the exploitation of natural resources. There is no mention either to collective right to property, common law, autonomy or political representation.

³⁴⁵ *América Indígena, Pueblos Indígenas y Derechos Constitucionales en América Latina: un panorama*, Vol. LVIII, N° 3-4. July Dec. 1998, Instituto Indigenista Interamericano, Organismo Especializado de la OEA, México, 2000.

The limitations of the Chilean legislation are evident when analysed in comparison to international legislation with respect to indigenous peoples. In fact, only six Latin American countries (Chile, Belize, Costa Rica, French Guyana, Surinam and Uruguay) do not mention ethnic minorities in their constitutions, and when members of minorities are discriminated against, they have no legal tools, a situation that generates marginalisation and anomie.

To the social and cultural criteria that define the indigenous it is necessary to add the biological ones, from which phenotypes derive. The physical appearance is decisive at the moment of classifying someone as Indigenous, even if he is/she is a person of mixed blood, or even if it is a person who has forgotten or abandoned the community's basic cultural features, such as language or customs. In this case, Indigenous could be someone defined as such by the rest of the population. In Chile there are pre-Colombian communities whose religion, values and history are different from those of the rest of the population. They exist but they are 'invisible' to the person in the centre; in fact they have nearly always been (they had been to the Minister). Culturally the members of these communities perceive themselves as different and they are also perceived as different by the rest of the population. They are aware of belonging to communities in whose culture, a kind of 'collective honour' is above class considerations and where any member has its own place regardless of social condition. For centuries they have occupied and identified themselves with the same territory. They are the Aymara, Mapuche, Qawasqar, Yamana, Quechua, Colla, Atacameño and Rapa Nui communities.

The results of the 2002 National Census were released in April 2003.³⁴⁶ It is interesting to compare these results with those of 1992, that is ten years before, in what concerns the ethnic groups of the country.

³⁴⁶ *Censo 2002: Síntesis de Resultados*, ed. by Jefe Departamento de Atención al Usuario y Difusión de la Comisión Nacional del XVII Censo de Población y VI de Vivienda, Instituto Nacional de Estadísticas (Santiago de Chile: Instituto Nacional de Estadísticas, 2003), pp. 23-24.
Censo 1992 (Santiago de Chile: Instituto Nacional de Estadísticas), 1992.

<u>Peoples and regions of origin</u>		<u>1992</u>	<u>2002</u>
Mapuche	Araucanía	928,060	604,639
Aymara	Northern mountains	8,477	48,501
Atacameño	Northern deserts	1,600	21,015
Colla	Northern mountains	150	3,198
Quechua	Northern Altiplanic region	350	6,175
Kawashkar	Patagonia	101 (Alacalufe)	2,622
Yagán	Patagonia	74 (Yámana)	1,685
Rapa Nui	Easter Island	<u>21,848</u>	<u>4,647</u>
	Total Numbers	970,560	692,192 ³⁴⁷
Total population in Chile		13,348,401	15,116,435

According to the 2002 Census, 4.6% of the total population belonged to ethnic groups, nearly half the figure indicated in the 1992. The result of the 2002 Census has opened a new focus of conflict that affects the indigenous governmental policies. In fact the figure 4.6% of the population that acknowledges belonging to an ethnic group differs greatly from those of a decade before. The gap can be interpreted in various ways. The Servicio Nacional de Estadísticas has explained that the Chilean 1992 Census stated that an Indian was someone who descended from a native culture, who had an Indigenous surname or who was married to a member of an ethnic minority and that then the question asked had been 'identification with a culture', while in 2002 it had been 'belonging to an ethnic group'. (The question in the 1992 census was 'Si usted es chileno, ¿se considera perteneciente a alguna de las siguientes culturas?' The possible answers were Mapuche, Aymara, Rapa Nui, none of the above. In 2002 the question was '¿Pertenece usted a alguno de los siguientes Pueblos Originarios o indígenas? This time there were eight different ethnicities as the possible answers: Alacalufe, Atacameño, Aymara, Colla, Mapuche, Quechua, Rapa Nii and Yamana).

³⁴⁷ A 2001 survey – 'Encuesta Casen' –, that does not include the Rapa Nui people, gives a total number of 634,674, divided as follows: Mapuche 517,125; Aymara: 90,000; Atacameño: 10,000; Colla: 5,000; Quechua: 3,436; Kawashkaer: 138; Yagán 975.

It is common knowledge that the total indigenous population is a key question in indigenous groups' demands. Actually, when in Chile in 1992 many thought that the Indian population had been assimilated or acculturised, it came to light that nearly 8% of the country's inhabitants recognised himself or herself as such. In the Letters to the Editor section of a leading paper, Dr. Sebastián Donoso Rodríguez, Professor of Indigenous Legislation and State Policies wrote that he considered that the change of question was not serious and suggested that it was in the government's interest to 'decrease' the numbers of the indigenous population, at a moment when the Indigenous question had become a source of conflict and destabilisation that was embarrassing for the government.³⁴⁸ Four days afterwards the Director Nacional del Instituto Nacional de Estadísticas answered and said that as in 1992 some might have felt identified with an ethnic group he or she did not really belonged to, it had been deemed necessary to re-phrase the question. His opinion was that the 2002 results were closer to reality.³⁴⁹ It also seems clear to me that the 1992 question encouraged Mapuche to admit their identity more effectively, as it was made clear that this would not exclude them from being Chilean; in the 2002 question, however, anyone affected by the social stigma associated with being indigenous would be reluctant to acknowledge his or her origins. For this reason, I consider the 1992 figure to be a better (albeit imperfect) reflection of the reality.

Another element that makes it difficult to compare both censuses is that in 1992 children up to 13 were not included, while the 2002 Census claims to have surveyed the total population. Even more confusing is the fact that the Instituto de Estadísticas' official publication states that the 1992 Census only consulted identification with the Mapuche, Aymara or Rapanui groups and that the Alacalufe, Atacameño, Colla, Quechua and Yámana groups were disregarded. However, 1992 official publications assigned 1,600 members to the Atacameño, 150 to the Colla, and 350 to the Quechua groups, respectively. More difficult to understand is the fact the Alacalufe and Yámana minorities which according to the 2002 official information, would not have been included in 1992, do

³⁴⁸ Sebastián Donoso Rodríguez, 'Letters to the Editor' *El Mercurio*, 20.4.03, A2.

³⁴⁹ Máximo Aguilera Reyes, 'Letters to the Editor' *El Mercurio*, 24.4.03, A2.

appear then, but under the synonyms they are presented by in the various school Histories of Chile: Kawashkar (Kaweshkar or Alacalufe), and Yagán (Yámana).³⁵⁰ If they are the same (there is no official clarification as to the point so far), Kawashkar or Alacalufes now are 2,622 (an increase of more than twenty times from the original 101 in the decade!), and Yaganes or Yámanas, who are now 1,685 instead of the 74 registered a decade before.

In 1990 the government created a Special Committee for the Indigenous People, chaired by the former president Patricio Aylwin and whose main objective was to give fair treatment to the indigenous communities.³⁵¹ Aylwin, like hundreds of Chileans seems to have been scarcely aware of the problems of the so called 'pueblos originarios', because in an interview he gave to the academic Rodrigo Cerda he recognised that he had only recently learnt about the indigenous communities situation, sufferings and history when he ran for the presidency of the country. In his opinion the Chilean historians have hidden the truth about the Indigenous peoples, especially the so called 'Pacificación de la Araucanía'. He also said that one of his main concerns was that in spite of the democratic governments' efforts, the UN rapporteur, the Mexican Stavenhagen, could ask for sanctions against Chile in view of a series of irregularities committed against the Indigenous peoples' human rights, the most serious of which was the flooding of the Pehuenche valley in order to build a hydroelectric plant. Aylwin added that it was in this respect that the UN rapporteur expressed his sympathy for the constitutional recognition of the Indigenous peoples.³⁵² Aylwin emphasised though, that the main objective of the commission he chairs is to find out the truth. More than 10 years afterwards this is still a pending task that has to be done. In this respect Professor Sebastián Donoso went as far as saying that unfortunately for the indigenous peoples of the country he could see that the indigenous policies lack leadership.³⁵³ I think that the Indigenous peoples must be respected. It is unacceptable that after having been encouraged to develop expectations, frustration is all they can expect.

³⁵⁰ *Historia de Chile Ilustrada* (Santiago: Las Últimas Noticias, 2003), pp. 17-24.

Sergio Villalobos, *Chile y su Historia* (Santiago: Editorial Universitaria), 2001.

³⁵¹ Patricio Aylwin took power in 1990, after Augusto Pinochet left the government.

³⁵² Rodrigo Cerda Q., 'Ex Presidente: relator puede pedir sanciones contra Chile', *El Mercurio*, 2 August 2003, p. C11.

³⁵³ Sebastián Donoso Rodríguez, 'Política indígena', *El Mercurio*, 24 April 2004, p. A2.

Only a reformulation of the objectives of the indigenous policy could help them to overcome 'hard' poverty and keep their cultural identity.

IV.1. MAPUCHE, A 'PEOPLE OF THE LAND'

Mapuche constitute the largest pre-Hispanic society in Chile. In their language they called themselves Mapuche or 'people of the land' – (Mapu=land; che=people), a term that indicated belonging to a territory rather than to a people.³⁵⁴ They have kept an ancient culture, their own vision of the world, their thinking or 'rakidwan' and their tongue alive. More than a million in number, at the conquerors' arrival they were scattered in a loose federation of tribes. The most important ones were the 'Picunche' or People of the North, the 'Huilliche' or People of the South, and Pehuenche or 'People of the Araucanía (place where Araucarias grow – '*Araucaria Araucana*', the 50 metre tall trees of the region and whose fruit was their staple food).

Before the Spanish arrival the Mapuche occupied a large territory in the southern part of the continent. From their first encounter with the Spaniards of Diego de Almagro's expedition in 1536 Mapuche resisted all attempts at conquest for 350 years. Not only did the encounter with the Hispanics altered drastically the Mapuche society but also two thirds of the population died in the first fifty years.³⁵⁵ Since then the history of their relations with the white world, that is with both Spaniards and Chileans, has been a history of their gradual but inexorable separation from their land.

The Mapuche culture has always been inextricably linked to the natural space. When the Spanish armies arrived they found out that in spite of speaking the same language, different blood related groups shared a land but not a political unity, and they only joined together under a common leader or 'toqui' in case their land was in danger. Their social, cultural and political life, as well as the attachment to their land was determined by their belonging

³⁵⁴ I have used the term 'Mapuche' in the singular form, because in the Mapuche language it has no plural.

³⁵⁵ *Los derechos de los pueblos indígenas en Chile: Informe del Programa de Derechos Indígenas, Instituto de Estudios Indígenas, Universidad de la Frontera* (Santiago: Ediciones LOM, 2003), p. 160.

to a family institution led by a 'longko'. The Mapuche people were politically, economically and territorially autonomous and their authorities ruled them according to the 'ad mapu', that is their own normative system for their own space. The Araucanians were free men. That was their strength.³⁵⁶ This dimension of their culture represents a great difference with the Western civilisation for which, nature is an object of domination rather than being an integral part of a cosmos where man and nature cohabit harmoniously. The Bishop of the Dioceses, Monsignor Sergio Contreras has argued that the 'huinca's' (white man's) synonym for land is economic power whereas for the Mapuche their land is life. It is a cosmic vision that makes them feel linked to their ancestral land".³⁵⁷ Neruda also touched this point in his poem *The Earth and Man come together*, where he describes the Mapuche, his people, as made of stone, tree and roots woven in the woods.³⁵⁸

The Mapuche spoke dialectal varieties of Mapudungun. There are relatively few documents that study the language spoken by the Mapuche people, which did not have a written form until comparatively recently.³⁵⁹ Armando Baltra explained that Mapudungun is a typical example of an agglutinating language, that is one in which words are composed of a sequence of morphs, with each morph representing one phoneme. He argued that the problem that all the grammars that have been written to describe this language are entirely based on Latin, an inflected language. As a result of this Latin approach all sorts of

³⁵⁶ Malú Sierra, *Mapuche, Gente de la Tierra*, (Santiago: Persona), 1992.

³⁵⁷ Ibid., 'Mapuche, Gente de la Tierra', *El Mercurio*, 26 March 1999, p. A2.

³⁵⁸ Pablo Neruda, *Canto General*, 'III Los Conquistadores', 'XX Se Unen la Tierra y el Hombre' (Buenos Aires: Editorial Losada, 1967), pp. 368-369.

'Mis padres araucanos	'My araucanian forefathers.....
Eran piedra y árbol, raíces	were stone and tree, roots
Se hicieron sobre los padres de piedra,	The sone fathers became shadow,
Se anudaron al bosque, a las tinieblas.....	They tied themselves to the wood, to darkness
Y así esperaron en las profundidades	and so, they waited in the depths
de la soledad indomable.'	Of indomitable loneliness'. (My own translation).

³⁵⁹ The Mapuche 'official or written history' comes from texts written during the colonial times, by military or ecclesiastical historians. But, as strict Catholics they were prejudiced against the Mapuche culture which they considered pagan. Missionaries, like father Luis de Valdivia (1606), were the first to write about the people and their language. During the republican period there have been attempts to study the language such as:

Rodolfo Lenz, *Estudios Araucanos*, 1895-97;

Diccionario Araucano, ed. by Félix José de Augusta, 1915;

Adalberto Salas, Robert Croese and María Catrileo, *A proposal for a unified system for the phonemic transcription of Mapudungun*, 1986;

Anselmo Ragileo Lincopil, *Graphemario: (grapheme proposal) for the Mpuche Language*, 1986.

linguistic problems irrelevant to the nature of Mapudungun appeared and the real characteristics of this language had not been effectively captured for centuries.³⁶⁰ Baltra also seemed pessimistic about Mapudungun's survival as a spoken language:

‘Spanish is in Chile, not only the official language but also the language of prestige. Mapuche, a totally different language without any degree of intelligibility, is regarded as the sociolect of a minority. The Mapuche children are incorporated into a Spanish education system, in spite of the fact that they are usually monolingual in Mapuche at school age.’³⁶¹

Actually, except for the fact that now in the city of Temuco, in Araucanía, there are some pilot bilingual elementary schools, nobody could tell that this was written more than 25 years ago. However, in spite of the fact that a number of Mapuche choose to deny their identity because of anti-indigenous racism or social stigma, in many Mapuche an interest for their ancestral language seems to have been born. For example, the first translation of the New Testament into Mapudungun has been published and since 1995 The Chilean National Library has sponsored a programme to promote the learning of the native languages in urban centres. The programme aims, not only at teaching Mapuche their own language, its grammar and ‘orality’ from their own cosmological viewpoint, but at the same time, to restore the bonds with their culture so that they are not ashamed of it. Vicente Ruiz, Director of the Programme has said, ‘The Mapuche have silenced their mother tongue, urged to learn the dominant one, to such a point that the first urban generation has almost totally lost it’.³⁶² Thus, new generations of Mapuche have been given the chance to recover their language, though through the ‘huinca’ (white man) written form. This is therefore, a means of reappropriation of their own culture, language and cosmology, which are inextricable linked, and of which they must once more be proud of.

‘The name Mapuche means ‘people of the land’ in Mapudungun, a word which itself means ‘language of the land’. Mapuche people believe that their language is intrinsically linked with the land. They define themselves through their relationship

³⁶⁰ Armando Baltra, ‘Mapudungun, the Mapuche Language’, (unpublished MS.C’s thesis), University of Edinburgh, 1976 pp. 16-20.

³⁶¹ Ibid., p. 12.

³⁶² Sebastián Urzúa, ‘La enseñanza de las lenguas nativas en Chile’ *Metro*, 3, July, 2001, pp. 12-13.

with it, and to be separated from it is considered a form of death for them as people.’³⁶³

Professor Mora from the University of Concepción has approached Mapudungun not from a linguistic point of view, but from a different perspective.³⁶⁴ With material gathered from the oral tradition he analyses the language and how it expresses reality. A long practice has allowed him to systematise the underlying cosmic vision of the language, getting close to what could be understood as the ethnics’ philosophy, validated through their customs, beliefs and history. Mora thinks that belonging to the western culture does not constitute an advantage over the people studied. Moreover, he is amazed at the wealth of wisdom he has discovered and one could say that he feels at a disadvantage in a world a long distance from wisdom and consequently poorly prepared to understand them.

Mora has decoded what he calls associated semantic fields of the original monosyllables that are part of the Mapudungun words. His phonetic and semantic associations show how, what psychology calls ‘analogical mind’ works. These processes can be explained as those through which the world and the place man occupies in it are known by means of analogies, which connect in an inseparable way, the cosmic and the psychic.³⁶⁵ The researcher found out that beyond purely phonetic and communicational similarities, a great referential structure is articulated by means of analogies of high semantic and poetic content, which as a whole interlace a cosmic vision. Thus, man, in his view, becomes one who has descended from heaven and a wife constitutes the channel of a man’s energy. From the reading of Mora’s book it can be inferred that those who have not had access to the repertoire of primordial images of Mapuche’s analogical mind have not got the key to understand the meanings they give to things their language has a name for, and that have been included in their semantic fields. The book makes the reader think that there was a golden age of meaning which is the great spiritual legacy of the Mapuche culture.

³⁶³ Leslie Ray, ‘And the word was good’, *The Linguist*, 42 (2003), 80-82, (p. 80).

³⁶⁴ Ziley Mora Penroz, *Filosofía Mapuche* (Concepción, Chile: Editorial Cushé), 2002.

³⁶⁵ Prof. Mora has analysed the associated semantic fields of words as I (Inche), vitality (alwe), soul (alm), spirit (púllú), man (wentru), heart (piuke), mentor (wenú), heaven (wenu), warrior (kona), great wise old man (fúta), woman (domo), maid (futapura), wife (kure), family, descent (kupal), God (Fúta Chau, Nguenechen, Pillán).

Eduardo Klein contrasts the western thinking of the Chileans based on reason and the Mapuche metaphysical thinking born from their mythology and on which they base their spiritual activity. The Mapuche myth has its own way of incorporating 'wisdom' and they are united by a shared belief in the ultimate sense of life, a moral order and respect for the religious ritual.³⁶⁶ Of course these are also western values but the way of incorporating them into their lives, from a different viewpoints, makes their thinking different from has traditionally been considered a western mind.

Mapuche have found in poetry a way of expression their cosmological vision of the world. For example, participants of the National Library Mapudungun course produced in 2001 a CD with their own poems. Lorenzo Aillapán described the living forest in his *Poemas Alados* and Elicura Chihuailaf has written about his roots in his land.³⁶⁷ Chihuailaf is a poet who was born in a Mapuche community in Quecherehue ('Five places of purity'), the son of a 'lonko' who sent the young boy to boarding school, to 'city exile', where for a time he 'lost his language and his world' - the world, which he says, 'inhabits him'.³⁶⁸ In his opinion this is a feeling that exiles can understand, as one never learns to totally decode the other society, because, in the poet's words, 'what lives in us, is the land where we were born'.³⁶⁹ His is a world of woods, silence and 'orality' (oralidad). In fact, Chihuailaf describes himself as an '*oralitor*'. ('Alguien que en la escritura pero al lado de la oralidad, que es el pensamiento de mi gente').³⁷⁰ He says his poems are blue because that is 'the colour of the Mapuche soul'. He adds that one day this blue energy will leave him 'to travel west, to the land of the dead, from where it will return to close the cycle'.³⁷¹

³⁶⁶ Eduardo Klein Koch, 'El Ser Mapuche', *El Mercurio*, 22, April 2002, A2.

³⁶⁷ Carlos Aldunate and Leonel Lienlaf, ed., *Voces Mapuches*, (Santiago: Ediciones Museo Chileno de Arte Precolombino), 2002.

³⁶⁸ Marcela Escobar, 'El hombre de Azul' *El Mercurio*, El Sábado, 30 de Julio 2001, p. 16.

³⁶⁹ Ibid, pp. 16-20.

³⁷⁰ (I am 'someone who is in writing, but who writes from the point of view of orality which is my people's thinking'). (My own translation). Elicura Chihuailaf, has twice been awarded the prize of the National Council of the Book, first for his collection of poems *Winter, her image and other Blue Poems*, and then for his essay *Confidential Message to the Chileans*. He has also translated Neruda's poems into Mapudungun, and published three other collections of poems, one of which is *Of Blue Dreams and Counter Dreams*.

³⁷¹ Escobar, p. 16.

From the early days of the conquest the Catholic Church made efforts to penetrate the Mapuche world. Until they were expelled from the Spanish lands (1767) this was the Jesuits' job. After they left they were replaced by the Franciscans who had already been in Araucanía. In the 19th century the Capuchin monks took over and they organised the diocese, built churches and founded schools. However, when father Luis Manuel Rodríguez was interviewed by the historian Gonzalo Vial he recognised that Christianity had had little real penetration in the indigenous world, although 75% of them are baptised. For him the reasons that explain this fact are the Mapuche identify Christianity with the 'huinca' (white) world, specially after the so called 'Pacification of Araucanía towards the end of the 19th century, although then the congregations protected the Mapuche against the Chileans. Vial considers that the main problem is that the Mapuche have always viewed Christianity as alien to their identity and culture, perhaps a good friend but a distant one.³⁷²

The effect of the conquest on the Mapuche communities varied depending on their geographical location. Those north of the Bío-Bío practically disappeared as a consequence of illnesses and confrontations with the invaders. In the long run the survivors accepted their new masters and were assigned to Spanish 'encomenderos'. Even though these were abolished towards the end of the colonial period, (1791), after centuries of submission, the great majority, by then, ethnically and culturally mestizos, could only stay on the farms having with the farmers the same relation of subordination they had had with the 'encomenderos'. Those south of the Bío-Bío resisted the invasion and even made the Spanish authorities sign several 'parlamentos' or agreements, the most important of which were those of Quilín (1641 and 1647) and Negrete (1726). Today Mapuche people claim the status of international treaty for the institution of 'parlamentos'. However, Rolf Foerster, has pointed out that while 'parlamentos' were for the Mapuche a system of equal representation, they were understood by the Spanish as a policy that would allow them to penetrate the indigenous society in order to establish hegemonic control.³⁷³

³⁷² Gonzalo Vial, 'Mapuches en Chile 7. Cultura: La fuerza del idioma y de la religión', *La Segunda*, 11 June 2002, pp. 11-13.

³⁷³ Rolf Foerster, *Jesuitas y mapuches 1593-1767* (Santiago: Editorial Universitaria, 1996), Ch. 2.

In the colonial past the Spaniards used the myth of the wild, untamed Araucanian in order to justify the war against them and thus to ask for more resources for the army.³⁷⁴ The sociologist Alvaro Jara has added that Mapuche were also used later by the leaders of the Independence in a way that their resistance against the Spanish Empire could be assimilated within the war of emancipation.³⁷⁵ Thus the epic aura and the untamed spirit of the Araucanians provided the first icons for the origin of the nation, and often nationalist discourses draw upon their warlike qualities. In all probability there is not a Chilean child who has not recited, with pride, the lines the sixteenth century Spanish poet Alonso de Ercilla y Zúñiga wrote: 'la gente que produce es tan granada, soberbia gallarda y belicosa, que no ha sido por rey jamás vencida, ni a extranjero dominio sometida'.³⁷⁶

However, the Mapuche, the people the poet describes have been the protagonists of an unending conflict with the Chilean governments, in which their main complaint is that they have been the victims of systematic discrimination that has deprived them of their land and has eroded the roots of their culture. The great value granted to the 'Araucanian heroes' contrasts sharply with the negative vision many Chilean people have of their descendants. The Hispanicist historians Jaime Eyzaguirre even refused to accept any Araucanian contribution to the Chilean national culture, which he viewed only as the fruit of the Spanish, who brought 'civilisation' represented by the Spanish language, the Catholic religion and the Spanish administrative system.³⁷⁷

Negative representations of the Mapuche - for example, that they are essentially lazy and that is their fault that country's progress is slow - have justified discriminatory conducts have gone beyond the academic field to form part of the national imaginary. About fifty years ago university theses already reproduced these ideas: 'Los Chilenos son aún demasiado indígenas, y necesitan una mayor proporción de sangre Europea, lo que los haría ahorrar y ser más honrados. Es absolutamente necesario, para aumentar la producción y la

³⁷⁴ Salazar, p. 139.

³⁷⁵ Álvaro Jara, *Guerra y sociedad en Chile: la transformación de la Guerra de Arauco y la esclavitud de los Indios* (Santiago de Chile: Editorial Universitaria), 1981.

³⁷⁶ Ercilla y Zúñiga, Canto the 1st, 6th stanza. ('The people of this land are so proud, graceful and warlike, that no king has ever ruled them and no foreign power ever subjected them'). (My own translation).

³⁷⁷ Eyzaguirre, *Hispanoamérica del dolor*.

demanda, mejorar el nivel humano de nuestra gente'.³⁷⁸ Only at the end of the 20th century have voices like those of Gabriel Salazar and Alvaro Jara defended the indigenous peoples.

After the creation of the Chilean state the greatest impact came with the military occupation of their lands, a campaign euphemistically known as 'Pacificación de la Araucanía' (1881), a real genocide for which, in the end the Chilean nation is responsible. In his book *History of the Mapuche People*, José Bengoa calls it 'the insurrection that Chile forgot' and blames historians in general for the younger generations' ignorance of this war. He accuses them of having systematically omitted these episodes from their texts, in spite of the existence of documentary sources: 'Tal vez se avergonzaban de estos capítulos de la historia de Chile, porque es imposible que no se hayan encontrado con los documentos oficiales. Encina, por ejemplo, le dedica menos de cuatro líneas a estos hechos'.³⁷⁹ The Mapuche warriors were finally forced to capitulate. The historian calls this, 'one of the blackest pages on the Chilean history', and adds that it is a page that has been hidden so that it cannot be read, a fact for which there is be no excuse.³⁸⁰

Nevertheless, the Mapuche had already had another defeat. In the last years of the colonial period their society had suffered radical transformations because they developed a basic type of trade with the Chileans. In his book *Misioneros en Araucanía*, Jorge Pinto points out to alcohol as the western weapon that in the long run defeated the Indians.³⁸¹ Defeated and reduced to reservations they became ghosts, so much so, that many forgot they existed.³⁸² Pablo Marimán, of Mapuche descent, explains that the 'Pacification of the Araucanía' meant a new fate for the Mapuche society: the state has tried to Chileanise them

Jaime Eyzaguirre, *América Nuestra*, (Santiago: Imprenta El Esfuerzo), 1944.

³⁷⁸ Francisco Walker Linares, *Nociones Elementales del Derecho del Trabajo* (Santiago: Editorial Nacimiento, 1957), p. 45. ('The Chilean people are still too indigenous and need a greater proportion of European blood, which would force them to save money and be more honest. It is absolutely necessary, in order to increase production and demand, to improve the human level of our people'). (My own translation).

³⁷⁹ Bengoa, p. 207. (Perhaps they were ashamed of these chapters of the Chilean history, because it is impossible that they have not come across them in official documents'). (My own translation).

³⁸⁰ Bengoa, p. 207.

³⁸¹ Jorge Pinto & José Bengoa, 'Misioneros en la Araucanía, 1600-1900', *Proposiciones*, 17 (1989) pp. 216-218.

³⁸² Federación Internacional de Derechos Humanos, Organismo Consultor de Naciones Unidas, *Pueblo Mapuche: entre el olvido y la exclusión*, March 2003.

forcing upon them the language and customs of the Chilean society.³⁸³ . We can conclude that the denial of and discrimination against the indigenous and their cultures was a state policy because in fact during the republican period the existence of the Mapuche as a people ethnically and culturally differentiated has been denied to them in a way consistent with this policy. However, Chileans do not seem to understand that for the Mapuche integration meant a tacit death sentence.

‘Podemos concluir afirmando que en los últimos años en Chile, no solo se ha desconocido a los Mapuche sus derechos políticos, vinculados a la participación en la definición de sus propios asuntos y en la vida nacional en general, y sus derechos territoriales, vinculados a la protección, uso y beneficio de las tierras y los recursos naturales que poseían desde antaño, sino que además, se han vulnerado sus derechos más fundamentales, tales como la integridad física y síquica, la libertad, la justicia e incluso la vida’.³⁸⁴

But Mapuche are not easily defeated. Military defeat, the loss of much of their land, poverty and discrimination have helped to lay the basis for the re-creation of a strong ethnic identity.³⁸⁵ Therefore, the violent events the country has witnessed lately were foreseeable because for the Mapuche people the War of Arauco has not ended. Citizenship, not only for Mapuche, but for other indigenous peoples is linked to respect for their cultures and social, political and economic ways of organisation. To this, Bengoa adds, the recognition of their rights, specially in areas as the law, administration of resources and decision taking in fundamental matters such as the future of their lands.³⁸⁶ At present, even though, politically, they do not constitute a nation, their identity is linked to a land, which is meaningful to them, although they have no national territory in which to express their identity. Though, as Radcliffe says, they can still ‘imagine the space of the nation.’³⁸⁷

³⁸³ Pablo Marimán, *Elementos de la Historia Mapuche* (Temuco: Relmu), 1995.

³⁸⁴ *Los derechos de los pueblos indígenas en Chile: Informe del Derechos Indígenas*, p. 257. (‘We can conclude that in Chile, in the last few years, the Mapuche have been denied their political rights not only in reference to the management of their own affairs, but also in the national life in general. In the same way they have also been denied their territorial rights, in what has to do with protection, use and enjoyment of the lands and resources that were theirs in a distant past. At the same time, their most basic rights, such as rights to physical and psychological integrity, freedom, justice and even life have been injured’). (My own translation).

³⁸⁵ Gunderman, Foerster & Vergara, p. 37.

³⁸⁶ José Bengoa, ‘Bases para un diálogo’, *El Mercurio*, 10 March, 2002, p. D30.

³⁸⁷ Radcliffe, p. 20.

After the 1973 coup, the military government passed laws and decrees that intended to establish individual property for the Mapuche, following the principle laid by the then Minister of Agriculture, Alfonso Márquez de la Plata, who stated: ‘en Chile no hay indígenas, son todos Chilenos’.³⁸⁸ The minister referred to new legislation that stated that any member of a Mapuche community who applied for individual property from part of the common land, could do so and then neither the land nor its owner would be considered Indian. (DL. 2568, 1978). Contrary to what might be expected, this measure contributed in a way to reinforce the ethnic identity and strengthened the construction of an identity different from the Chilean one and the defence of the land, as well as their language and history became a matter of survival. A century after the so called ‘Pacification of Araucanía’, the conflict between ethnic and nation was re-born, albeit in a different context and different circumstances.

The governmental policy of ethnic recognition is questioned, because according to the ‘Consejo de Todas las Tierras’, the ‘1993 Ley Indígena’, does not even deserve its name but it is only a piece of legislation for, and by the state. Their arguments is that the ‘Ley Indígena’ is alien to the Mapuche, because it does not recognise the Mapuche nation, because to speak of ‘ethnic minorities’ or of indigenous people (‘pueblos originarios’) is to impose a definition from outside to keep them under oppression:

‘cuando nosotros decimos que somos una nación, corresponde a nuestra definición y por lo tanto cuando nos definimos con ciertas características determinadas, queremos que se nos trate y se nos defina de acuerdo a una nación.’³⁸⁹

Nevertheless, among the Mapuche leaders there are differences in their appreciation of the problem and style of action. For example, the poet Elicura Chihuailaf, does not make a very sharp distinction between the Chilean State and the Mapuche ‘nationality’.³⁹⁰ He would like

³⁸⁸ Alfonso Márquez de la Plata, Minister of Agriculture (from 20 April 1978 until 29 December 1980), *Diario Austral de Valdivia*, Aug. 22, 1978, p. 1.

³⁸⁹ Rolf Foester G., y Jorge Iván Vergara, *Etnia y nación en la Lucha por el reconocimiento. Los Mapuches en la sociedad Chilena, in Mapuches y Aymaras: El debate en torno al reconocimiento y los derechos ciudadanos* (Santiago: Universidad de Chile, Facultad de Ciencias Sociales, 2003), p. 138. (‘when we say that we are a nation, this is our definition, and from the moment we define ourselves with certain characteristics, we want to be treated and defined as a nation). (My own translation).

³⁹⁰ Elicura Chihuailaf, *Recado Confidencial a los Chilenos* (Santiago: LOM), 1999.

the Chilean society to re-formulate the unitarian concept of Nation-State and replace it for a multi-nacional one:

‘La redefinición de este país tendrá que incluir, en nuestra perspectiva, el reconocimiento de nuestros derechos colectivos como un Pueblo Nación distinto.’³⁹¹

On the other hand, José Bengoa, one of the experts on the Mapuche question, considers that the ethnic and the national dimensions must not be confused and questions the idea of ‘unity between people, nation and State’ and based on a modern notion of democracy, unless diversity is given its real value:

‘Es necesario reconocer, como lo haría hoy la visión moderna de la democracia, que la valorización de la diversidad del pueblo y esa diversidad forman una nación más rica... no se debilita la identidad del Estado ni la nación si se reconocen en el interior del pueblo chileno numerosas diversidades’.³⁹²

The force of Mapuche ethno-nationalism can be appreciated and the declarations published as from the late 1990’s, where it is possible to find terms like our ‘rights’ and ‘fighting our land back’. There are mentions about the collective dignity of the Mapuche people, their poverty, discrimination and the territorial, cultural, religious, political, social and economic despoliations.³⁹³ These questions are not new in the Mapuche discourse but now appear

³⁹¹ Chihuailaf, p. 206. (‘In our perspective the re-definition of this country will have to incorporate the recognition of our collective rights as a different People/Nation’). (My own translation).

³⁹² José Bengoa, ‘Una historia inconclusa’ (Interviewer, Daniel Swinburne), *El Mercurio*, 1, November, 1999, p. E-7. (‘It is necessary to recognise, in accordance with the modern vision of democracy, that diversity and appreciating it in what it is worth, makes a nation wealthier. If we acknowledge that there is diversity in the Chilean people, this does not weaken the identity of the state or the nation’). (My own translation).

³⁹³ José Quidel, *Organización Wenteché Ayjarewegetauayíñ*, November 1999: ‘A nuestros hermanos en el mundo. Siendo las 6:30 de la mañana de hoy lunes 29 de noviembre, hemos iniciado el proceso de recuperación territorial Wenteché. El territorio de Xuf Xuf y sus Ayjarewe. A pesar de la dura respuesta armada que se nos dio en el fundo, prevaleció nuestro espíritu combativo y por siempre libertario mapuche. Tres heridos de mediana gravedad, de los oponentes, fue el resultado de la refriega. Doce lof mapu organizados, que significan, Pupapy, pu lamgen, pu peñi, pu logko, pukoha, hemos dicho, presente, aún estamos vivos. A pesar de la marginación y la pobreza en que nos encontramos, no hemos perdido nuestra dignidad. Hemos sacrificado a muchas generaciones de los nuestros, forzándolos a emigrar de su territorio ancestral, condenarlos a vivir muchas veces en la marginalidad de los grandes centros urbanos. Pero todo tiene un límite, señores autoridades de este reciente país, denominado CHILE. Basta de pobreza, marginación, discriminación y despojo territorial, cultural, religioso, político, social y económico. Por nuestros derechos, por nuestro pueblo, por nuestros hijos y su dignidad a vivir en un territorio digno. ¡ Tus hijos estamos aún vivos y dignos! ¡Rumel Wewkuleayíñ! ¡Por siempre haremos fuerza! ¡Rumel Wewkuleayíñ! Por siempre triunfaremos! Desde ek terrutirui de Xuf Xuf.’ (‘José Quidel, Wenteché Ayjarewegetauayíñ Organisation: ‘To our brothers in the world. Today 29th November, at 6 o’clock in the

linked to the land issue. Although, the expression 'Mapuche nation' is not used, it seems to be implicit that the recuperation of their lands could also mean autonomy within them. This is what would legitimise the occupation of lands, which in this become 'ancient ancestral lands. It can be deduced that the concept of a Mapuche nation does not seem to contemplate belonging to a shared political space with the Chilean, or to a hypothetical – to be built - one. Neither is it a way of cultural citizenship within the Chilean nation/state, whose society and social organisation are alien to the Mapuche.

For a great many Mapuche, nothing but political autonomy would allow them to recover their lost dignity. Anyway only Elicura Chiuilaf, makes a difference between the rights of the Mapuches as citizens and as members of an ethnic group. Obviously, here is a supposed attempt to reconcile both rights, but which does not define how Mapuches would participate in a shared citizen space with the rest of the Chilean society. It does not state either which would the Mapuche own space defined by their collective and individual rights would be.

At the moment one of the most interesting aspects of the present confrontation between the Mapuches and the Chilean state is no doubt the use of the national legislation by the indigenous lawyers in favour of the indigenous communities.³⁹⁴ On the other hand, the so called 'deuda histórica' can be considered a symbolic representation of the balance of the Mapuche/Chilean relationship. Germán Quintana, in his capacity as Ministro de Planificación wrote: 'Es evidente que no podemos retroceder en el tiempo. Tenemos que partir del presente, de donde estamos, reconociendo las injusticias, la deuda histórica que

morning, we have started the process Wenteche territorial recovery. The Xuf Xuf territory and its Ayjarawe. In spite of the hard armed answer we received, our warrior and forever free spirit prevailed. The result of the confrontation was three wounded men from the opponents. Twelwe organized lof mapu, that mean Pupapy, pu lamgen, pu peñi, pu logko, pukoha have said, here we are, we are alive. In spite of our marginalisation and poverty we have not lost our dignity. Many generations of our own have been sacrificed, forcing them to emigrate from our ancestral land, and condemning them to live marginalized in the great urban centers. But we will put a limit, you authorities of this new country, called CHILE. Enough of poverty, marginalisation, discrimination and territorial, cultural, religious, political, social and economic deprivation. For our rights, for our people, for our children and their dignity and right to live in a dignified territory. Your children are still alive and in dignity! Rumel Wewkuleayin! We will always try! Rumel Wewkuleayin! We will finally win! From the Xuf Xuf territory'). (My own translation).

³⁹⁴ Aucán Huilcamán, 'Libertad para Mapuches detenidos en disturbios', *El Mercurio*, 29 Jul. 01, p. C4.

los “huincas” (white people) tenemos con el pueblo mapuche y ahí reparar.³⁹⁵ But although the fight for the Araucanian territory has moved to the legal sphere, and if we take into account Minister Krauss’ words, it is almost impossible to imagine that the Chilean state could accept a territorial loss in the near future. However, and in spite of the fact that the different governments have always been afraid of ‘separatist’ institutions, in the last years the ‘pueblos originarios’, especially Mapuche, seem to have started to re-conquer spaces in the national configurations. Nevertheless, a total solution to the problems affecting the ethnic minorities, that is, one that brings the conflict to an end seems to be unrealistic in the near future.

IV.2. THE PEOPLES OF THE NORTHERN MOUNTAINS

The Aymara people, as well as the Colla tribes have always lived in the northern most high plateau or Altiplano, while the Atacameños have been farmers in the small oases in mountain valleys such as San Pedro de Atacama. It is not known what the latter called themselves because their language disappeared shortly after the Spanish conquest.³⁹⁶ At that moment they used to grow potatoes and quinoa, and kept large llama and alpaca herds, which they used for transport, food and clothing. In order to fight the effects of height, hunger, thirst or fatigue they chewed coca leaves. Small communities related by paternal blood –Ayllú – cultivated their common land and built stone fortresses of ‘pucarás’ for protection. South of the northern tribes lived the Diaguita people. Not many in numbers, they were expert metal workers and craftsmen able to produce gold and silver jewellery embellished with lapizlázuli and turquoise. They probably had their own language and religious beliefs, but there are not traces of either. It is estimated that in 1536 the Diaguita population was around 25,000.³⁹⁷

³⁹⁵ Germán Quintana, ‘Diálogo con el Pueblo Mapuche: Puentes y no Muros’ en *La Revista de Mideplán*, Año 1, N° 2, (Santiago: MIDEPALN), Sept. 1999, pp. 25-26, p. 26.

³⁹⁶ According to the 2002 Census there are 48,501 Aymara and 21,015 Atacameños and 3,198 Colla people, of which 80% live in the northern end of the country (1st and 2nd Regions).

³⁹⁷ Francisco Antonio Encina y Leopoldo Castedo, *Resumen de la Historia de Chile*, 3 vols. (Santiago de Chile: Zig-Zag, 1961), I, pp. 11-55.

The Atacameños, Kunza or Lickanantay settlements in the small oases in mountain valleys around what today is San Pedro de Atacama started about 10,000 years ago.³⁹⁸ They managed to develop in a hostile environment, the Atacama desert, where temperatures in winter drop to -20°C . These communities developed basic agriculture and built ‘pukaras’ or strong stone defensive fortresses. Their language is the ‘kunza’. The ‘Comisión Verdad Histórica y Nuevo Trato’ describes as different from their neighbours, yet capable of establishing all kinds of relations with them:

‘... se diferenciaban con los pueblos vecinos por su uso del espacio, lengua, cultura y el régimen de contactos fronterizos que establecían, los que se caracterizaban por su transversalidad y vinculación con espacios y poblaciones que geográficamente estaban muy distantes entres sí’.³⁹⁹

As from the moment of the European invasion in the 16th century there was a break in Andean society. It was the start of what today is the ‘indigenous question’, or in other words, the problematic relationship between the pre-Hispanic peoples and the new society. The European occupation re-defined the Andean political order. A new spatial distribution useful to the economic and political interests of the conquerors was introduced. The Aymara, just as the other Andean peoples were subjected to the colonial government represented in the incorporation of the Aymara to the ‘encomienda’ system, taxation and their confinement to Indian villages.⁴⁰⁰ The territory was administered in accordance with Hispanic interests and legislation. After an unsuccessful resistance the northern peoples were incorporated into the Spanish , the colonial structure and were used as the main labour force in silver mines. The difficult working conditions produced a dramatic decrease in population, which came together with an also dramatic decrease in territory, the best parts of which fell into the hands of the ‘encomenderos’. Also some Aymara communities of the

³⁹⁸ Lautaro Núñez, *Cultura y Conflicto en los Oasis de Atacama* (Santiago: Editorial Universitaria), 1991.

³⁹⁹ Comisión Verdad Histórica y Nuevo Trato (Subgrupo de Trabajo Pueblo Atacameño, del Grupo de Trabajo Pueblos Indígenas del Norte), *Informe Final del Subgrup de Trabajo Pueblo Atacameño* (Santiago: CVHNT-2002-061), 2002. (‘They differed from other neiboughring peoples by their use of space, language, culture and the type of contacts they established with them, whose main characteristic was that they took place at all levels and with very distant spaces and populations’). (My own translation).

⁴⁰⁰ *Los Derechos de los pueblos Indígenas en Chile: Informe del Programa de Derechos Indígenas* (Temuco: Instituto de Estudios Indígenas de la Universidad de la Frontera, 2003), pp. 30-35.

area of Tarapacá became 'doctrinas' in charge of religious orders, but keeping the system of indigenous taxation paid by labour and agricultural products. In order to prevent rebellions the Spanish crown implemented a series of measures to eliminate the institution of hereditary 'caciques' that had become mediators between the Spanish administration and the natives, replacing them by mayors elected for one year. Already in the 18th century there was a school in the village of Toconao, that became an efficient agent in the process of assimilation of the Kunza.⁴⁰¹

From the 16th to the 18th centuries there was an intense evangelisation process also known as 'extermination of idolatries', whose aim was to eliminate the Indian beliefs and symbols. These were burnt and Christian churches were built in indigenous ceremonial places and crosses put up on their sacred mountains. Though the northern indigenous peoples adopted the Catholic religion and rites, first of the colonial and later of the republican authorities, but some ancestral cults associated to fertility were never abandoned and still continued to be practiced.

The 'War of the Pacific (1879-1884) war ended with the Chilean annexation of the northern territories including the Atacama desert up to the present borderline.⁴⁰² For the indigenous communities, however, it meant the violent disruption of a national space they shared with other communities that became politically segregated. In the Chilean legal and administrative framework the Indigenous communities or Ayllu were non-existent and this represented a real legal death for the northern communities, which for Van Kassel, was the consequence of the supposed legal equality of the indigenous peoples and the rest of the Chileans. He accuses the latter of ethnocide because in his view, the ancient Indian's solidarity was weakened when they were deprived of their lands and this gave origin to new types of conflicts.⁴⁰³ Besides the War of the Pacific and the nitrate mining expansion had other consequences to the Aymara population. Initially they were used as cheap labour but at the same time this meant that they were incorporated into a modern labour culture where

⁴⁰¹ Comisión Verdad Histórica y Nuevo Trato.

⁴⁰² Gonzalo Bulnes, *La Guerra del Pacífico*, 3 vols. (Santiago: Editorial del Pacífico, S.A.), 1955, Chs. I-VI.

⁴⁰³ Juan Van Kassel, *Holocausto al Progreso: los Aymara de Tarapacá* (Ámsterdam: Centro de Estudios y Documentación Latinoamericanos, 1980), p. 227.

they were able to acquire political awareness. The nitrate and mining industries also incorporated the Kunza people to the industrial world, where they were preferred because their easy adaptation to hard work in very high places.

‘En el Norte de Chile se dio un Estado involucrado en la asimilación de las poblaciones indígenas y que por esta vía, buscaba alcanzar inclusión social’.⁴⁰⁴

The industrial process started cultural changes, such as the loss of the vernacular languages (except in isolated Aymara communities). Finally, they also lost control of their resources.

However, the traditional way of living and the communities’ cultural reproduction were more threatened (and continued to be) by a state policy that aimed at ‘de-Aymarising or chileanising’ the area: children started to receive a ‘western’ education, in a language that was not the language spoken by their ancestors, to study a history that was not the history of their people, and to acquire a ‘culture’ that was not their own. This new order opened a different socio-cultural space undermining the respect due to their traditional authorities. Functional to this purpose was the school, an efficient tool for a cultural, ideological, linguistic and institutional homogenisation.⁴⁰⁵ It must be taken into account that the state system of education for all the inhabitants of the republic is mono-cultural, with an emphasis scientific studies and rationalism that slowly results in the loss of the spiritual-religious vision of the world characteristic of the Aymara, thus threatening their ethnic, individual and collective identity. At present at the level of elementary education the lack of bilingual and intercultural education is notorious in mountainous areas such as Colchane and General Lagos where 100% of the school pupils are Aymara and speak their vernacular language.⁴⁰⁶

The processes of change of the Andean social space included the transformation of the indigenous identity into the homogeneity of the citizen. This was a socio-cultural change that involved the relationship between the indigenous peoples and the political system and

⁴⁰⁴ Gundermann, Foester and Vergara, p. 55. (‘In the north of Chile the State was involved in the process of assimilation of the indigenous populations, in an effort to get their social inclusion’). (My own translation).

⁴⁰⁵ The first school in Putre (a small village in the Altiplanic region) was founded in 1905.

⁴⁰⁶ *Los Derechos de los Pueblos Indígenas en Chile*, p. 36.

the state. The decade of the 1960's was significant in that the adult indigenous population was granted the right to elect representatives, provided they could read and write.

This process had an important interruption under the Pinochet government. The military coup interrupted all the ongoing processes, including local elections, and repression was felt in the Andean regions. In the Indigenous communities new local authorities were designated among people with sympathies to the new government. It is in this period that an administrative re-definition of the Andean space took place and new Andean 'comunas' were created. Its objective was to transform the state dimension and functions in order to apply the neo-liberal model. (1975-1990). This, however, did not affect on the surface the characteristic centralism of the country, because everything continued under the control of the central authorities and without political participation.

In these 'communal units it is now possible to observe three dimensions that can be analytically separated, though empirical differentiation is less clear: in the first place the local economy that generates economic agents and relationships (family production, land owning, work and income). Then social relations based on family relationships with its own subjects (home, everyday life, and sometimes the re-location of these relationships), and finally, the political sphere, the 'comuna' as a socio-political field where local agents compete, negotiate, agree, etc., in an effort to control the local power. This has generated the Andean and also ethnic social category (especially Atacameño and Aymara, although the latter, not as part of a wider ethnic project but explicitly local), which reveals an existing tension between a 100 year republican local identity and a newly constructed ethnic identity. However, even if the appeal to an ethnic identity may have lately permeated the social relationships in the Andean 'comunas', it has had a relative political importance depending on the type of 'comuna' and has not translated in more ethnic control of the political spaces.

The policy of integration and assimilation into the national society that was enforced from the early twentieth century has resulted in a re-definition of the old characteristics of the northern minorities. It is yet unknown, though, how new constellations of factors (new

elites, new types of discourse and resources, etc.), will finally affect them. All these factors and processes form the background in which the collective ethnic identities of the northern peoples have been formed and transformed. Authors like Gunderman observe that in spite of evident acculturation or perhaps changes in regional indigenous cultural contents, such as language, religion, customs, the law, etc., there has emerged a parallel collective distinctiveness, that 'operates in tensional and often contradictory way, in a parallel process to that of citizenship building'.⁴⁰⁷ In fact it can be considered two, not antagonic, but inverse processes: one of acculturation and dissolution of the Andean ethnicity in the region, and another of development of ethnicity and of ethnic identity. Since the 1990's also the local political discourse has integrated the concept of Andean ethnic identity. This recent process of search of a cultural and ethnic individuality clearly points to the failure of the project of integration by means of assimilation.⁴⁰⁸

Since the 1990's the local political discourse has integrated the concept of Andean ethnic identity and it has been possible to detect two, not antagonic, but inverse processes in the region: one of acculturation and dissolution of the Andean ethnicity in the region, and a process of development of ethnicity and of ethnic identity. In fact, in spite of the evident acculturation, or rather, changes in the indigenous cultural contents of the region (linguistic, social, economic, religious, etc.) a collective distinctiveness has not only been maintained but also developed. This distinctiveness is now expressed through an ethnic codification. This, in other words, means that in spite of the increased penetration of the Spanish language, and various cultural aspects, the permanence or replacement of a set of dimensions that operate as markers of difference, there has been reproduction of the ethnic distinctiveness. And also, new elements that re-mark and develop that alterity have been incorporated.

Collective identities and forms of ethnicity are not fixed and a process of ethnic awareness that emerges from a complex constellation of factors can progressively modify them. This is what has been happening in the Chilean Andean peoples. With the linguistic and cultural

⁴⁰⁷ Gunderman, Foester and Vergara, p. 48 and 85.

⁴⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 48 and 85.

changes, access to education the authorities expect that through assimilation difference will be eliminated. Yet, a process of assimilation into a society whose vision of the indigenous other is stigma and with relationships marked by asymmetric spaces of meaning, will not succeed easily. In this space both the individuals and the social indigenous groups in a system of polarities, are found on the negative polarity. The negative image they have of themselves as individuals and as a group, defined from the regional society has not entirely disappeared. On the contrary, it is reproduced, for example in the urban communities. So, for the individuals assimilation becomes a mask in a hostile, rather closed and not very receptive society.

Several other sociological phenomena can be related to the current social transformations and with social tensions they generate. One is the case of the Protestant churches, the Pentecostal in particular, to which around 30% of the Aymara population adhere. This can be interpreted as the reconstruction of the meaning and practice of the common faith of the community. Other recent phenomena are the youth culture imitating North American groups and the beginning of a new Aymara and Atacameño urban intellectual class, with a secondary or professional educational level. Organised by the latter, the First Congress of Aymara People took place in 2001. Alfredo Chipana chaired it and its objective was recognition for their organisations with objectives focused on the development of their ethnicity (such as distinctiveness), of ethnic identity (as level of ethnic identity) and of the people (as an ethnic minority), as well as for the rights of their people in the Chilean Constitution.⁴⁰⁹ At the moment their demands include not only a relationship of equality but also one of alterity. However, autonomy is not in the Chilean government political agenda, in spite of the new organisations with objectives focused on the development of their ethnicity (such as distinctiveness), of ethnic identity (as level of ethnic identity) and of the people (as an ethnic minority).

⁴⁰⁹ Alfredo Chipana, 'El pueblo Aymará pide cambios para el desarrollo', *El Mercurio*, 29 July 2001, p. C5.

IV.2.1. THE BRITISH IN THE NORTHERN DESERTS

In the nineteenth century, the British became popular in Chile as the cultural and economic allies of the rulers. These, who had inherited the colonial social order, looked to France in matters of art and fashion, but viewed the British as the providers of commerce and economic progress. British ships took Chile's copper and wheat to England for thirty years from the 1840's.⁴¹⁰ By 1870, the development of the Pacific Steam Navigation Company and the Bank of London assured the British dominance of the commerce along the west coast.⁴¹¹

Moreover, throughout the century Chileans, who were proud of their constitutional order, were anxious to attract more British and Europeans. Much of their anxiety was racial and cultural, a fear of being overwhelmed by a non-white and 'uncivilised' populace. Even more, in the 1870's the Chilean government financed Germans, British and other Europeans to settle in the country. By the time of the War of the Pacific (1879-1883), much of the commercial and nearly all the banking business was in British and also German hands. It is estimated that by 1865 there were about three thousand British in Chile.⁴¹² They had their centre in Valparaíso but British merchants also ran outposts along the coast, including ports in the Atacama Desert.⁴¹³ They never became 'others': British were readily accepted.⁴¹⁴

The desert was as barren of vegetation as it was rich in minerals. Huddled between the sea and the Andes, the coastal towns had had to import most of their food and water. British merchant houses established trading posts in the major ports as well as smaller ones. The mines in the interior valleys required capital, machinery and railways, so merchants based in Valparaíso supplied them. In addition to their commercial roles, the British were

⁴¹⁰ Benjamín Vicuña Mackenna, *The First Britons in Valparaíso (1817-1827)*, (Valparaíso: Gordon Henderson & Co.) 1884.

⁴¹¹ John Mayo, 'The British in Chile before the Nitrate Age' *Historia*, 22, (1987), 135-150.

⁴¹² *Ibid.*, p. 137.

⁴¹³ John Mayo, 'A "Company" War? : The Antofagasta Nitrate Company and the outbreak of the War of the Pacific, *Boletín de Estudios Latinoamericanos y del Caribe*, 28, (1980), 3-11.

⁴¹⁴ *Chile y Gran Bretaña: Una reseña de la contribución británica a la independencia y desarrollo de Chile para conmemorar la visita de S. M. Isabel II y S. A. R. el Príncipe Felipe*, 1968.

technological innovators in the development of the nitrate factories (oficinas), and they were also the major shippers to England, from where they often re-exported nitrate (salitre) to Europe. No one challenged the cultural and economic pre-eminence of the British in the desert, who together with other Europeans and some enterprising Chileans made up the elite of the desert whose social life was spent in exclusive clubs.⁴¹⁵ The belief that their sojourn was to be brief meant that in general individuals were uninterested in Chile outside what involved their jobs. That is way, besides the language barrier, they looked to their own countrymen for company and recreation. So 'conscious communities' came into existence.⁴¹⁶

The British ruled over a mixed workforce of Chileans and Indians. The Chileans were recruited from agrarian villages and the lower urban class by offers of high salaries. The Aymara Indians were the most despised element, living in tent camps with poor sanitation. They kept their customs and did the most arduous tasks for little pay.⁴¹⁷

The expansion also attracted adventurers. In 1871, John T. North, an English mechanic, arrived in Iquique in search of work. Within twelve years, he had become the 'Nitrate King', a legendary imperialist figure in Chilean historiography. By 1885, a 'nitrate circle', led by North dominated the ownership of the nitrate production and marketing. There was speculation and the chief profiteers were North and his associates. Thanks to high profits North could consolidate his hold over the water supply of the province of Tarapacá, buy the major railroad of the province, develop the largest machine shop in Iquique and acquire new nitrate fields.

But social antagonisms developed in the mines and ports. Chilean labourers who had fought in the War of the Pacific became embittered by their treatment when they returned

⁴¹⁵ Harold Blakemore, *From the Pacific to La Paz: The Antofagasta (Chili) and Bolivia Railway Company 1888-1988* (London: Antofagasta Holdings PLC Kester Crook Academic Publishing), 1990.

⁴¹⁶ John Mayo, 'The British in Chile before the Nitrate Age', p. 140.

⁴¹⁷ Michael Monteón, (University of California, San Diego), 'The British in the Atacama Desert: The Cultural Bases of Economic Imperialism', *The Journal of Economic History*, Vol. XXXV, 1975, Ed. by R. Cameron & L. Galambos, N°1 March, Published by the Economic History Association at the John Hopkins University, Papers presented at the Thirty-fourth Annual Meeting of the Economic History Association, 116-134, (p. 119).

to the mines. Although they received nominally high wages, they were paid in tokens, cashed in company stores. This system could be and was manipulated, and 'good' wages were reduced to poor ones. The nitrate miners and dock workers rebelled twice in Iquique, in 1890 and 1907, and both rebellions were violently repressed by the Chilean government, 'at the insistence of mine owners and merchants'.⁴¹⁸ In a conflict between the President of the Republic, Balmaceda, and the Congress, North helped the Congressional rebels and British 'economic imperialism' has often been blamed for destroying Balmaceda, who finally committed suicide. Pablo Neruda made reference to this in poem XXXIII of *Canto General*, entitled 'Balmaceda de Chile (1891)':

'Mr. North ha llegado de Londres.

Es un magnate del nitrato.
Antes trabajó en la pampa,
De jornalero, algún tiempo,
Pero se dio cuenta y se fue..
Ahora vuelve, envuelto en libras.

"You are very clever, Mr. North".⁴¹⁹

However, according to other interpretations North seems to have acted almost alone in providing support for the rebels.⁴²⁰ On the other hand, in this 'imperialist' controversy, it is clear that North had little influence with the British parliament or the foreign office. The Atacama Desert was briefly a 'state within a state', but North and his circle were as independent of the British Empire as they were of Santiago. Besides, for the British the

⁴¹⁸ Monteón, p. 127.

⁴¹⁹ Pablo Neruda, 'Balmaceda from Chile (1891)', in *Obras Completas*, 2 vols (Buenos Aires: Losada, S.A., 1957), I, 429-432 (p. 429).

'Mr. North arrived from London.

He's a nitrate magnate.
He worked in the pampa before,
as a day labourer for a time,
but he saw the light and left.
Now he's back, wrapped in sterling.

"You are very clever, Mr. North".'

(Translator: Jack Smith, Berkeley, U. of California, 1991).

⁴²⁰ Blakemore, pp. 20-47.

control of the nitrate market was far more important than the control of the desert area. After his death in 1896, North virtually disappeared from the economic folklore.

It is clear that it was not numbers that gave the British their influence. Their impact was largely the result of a demonstration effect rather than of conscious effort of the British to push their way of life. There was in the cities where they settled imitation of British customs, dress and education with the diffusion of new sports and imported goods. But in the Atacama Desert the workforce became militantly anti-imperialist, in reaction to the poverty and repression in the nitrate factories and ports. The formation of the strong working-class consciousness in the north dates from the treatment Chilean labourers received at the hands of the 'oficina' owners. By comparison with these changes, the role of North in the Revolution of 1891 could be considered a minor issue.

IV.3. THE PEOPLES OF THE SOUTHERN END

Hunters and gatherers settled in this part of the world from ancient times but in the last two centuries the story of the indigenous peoples of the southern end of the country is one of extermination. In only about 150 years, of the four peoples that inhabited the area, two have disappeared - at least from the Chilean territory: the Selk'nam and Aónikenk. The other two, Yámana and Kawésqar survive in small and impoverished communities, culturally assimilated and in danger of extinction.

While the Mapuche in the north resisted the conquest, the peoples of the south continued to lead a peaceful life in their vast spaces, totally ignorant of what lay in their future.

For more than three hundred years after the conqueror's arrival, the native tribes and Europeans in general had little contact and in this, the physical geography and the weather were decisive. The region was a distant and marginal part of the Spanish Empire and legends about its inhabitants were passed on. They were, in fact, the Alacalufes or Kawashqar, Yámana or Yaganes, Aonikenk or Tehuelches, Chonos, and the Selknam or

Ona tribes.⁴²¹ The ethnic groups that navigated along the fragmented coasts were first described by the expedition of Joaquín de Loaysa in 1526 (Drake also saw their huts in the distance in 1586). However, apart from a few and often violent encounters with the western world the southern spaces saw no European settlements for a long time.⁴²²

The Kawáshkar or Alacalufe people inhabited the islands between the Chonos archipelago and the Strait of Magellan. In their language, now almost extinct, they were 'Kawáshkar' or men, term that identified them with the different groups that navigated the area. They navigated in the southern channels and archipelagos, most of them inhabited because they lacked fresh water. Their homes were their canoes, big enough for one family, and their main challenge was to keep the fire in a 'land' of water.

The majority of the few descendants of these sea nomads live in Puerto Edén a tiny fishing village on Wellington island in the Patagonia inhabited also by about 200 Chileans, where tourists boats come for one hour once a week. One of them, Gabriela Paterito (70) still speaks Kawéskar, their original language, but little can she do to prevent its death, when in the homes people watch Televisión Nacional de Chile and at school children are taught in Spanish and also learn English.⁴²³ The death of a language can be compared to an environmental catastrophe, because each language is unique in that it represents a culture and its 'philosophy' and even its 'theology'. For example, perhaps due to their nomad past, the Kawéshkar language rarely uses the future tense, while its has a highly detailed past tense, that distinguishes between an immediate past, a recent past, a distant past and a mythological past.⁴²⁴

Carlos Edén, (thus named because he was born in Puerto Edén) claims he is one of the three Kawáshkar or Alacalufe alive. He was adopted by a Chilean Air Force pilot at an early age and now lives in New York. His awareness of the situation of the indigenous peoples was awoken by the 500 years of the 'discovery' of America. At that moment he realised that for

⁴²¹ According to the 2002 census there are 2,622 Kawashkar people (also spelled Kawéshkar or Qawasqar) and 1,685 Yámana of mixed descent.

⁴²² Salazar, p. 160.p.

⁴²³ Jack Hitt, 'Los Últimos Hablantes', *Revista el Sábado*, 286, 13 Mar. 2004, pp. 30-35, p. 31.

his people life had not changed for the better since then: entire peoples have disappeared and those who have not, have become outsiders in their own land.⁴²⁵ In his view, Kawáshkar not only is a terminal culture but this also shows that its final agony started at the end of the 20th century, at the end of the world

Yámanas or Yaganes were the southernmost inhabitants of the continent; they lived and navigated south of the Strait of Magellan, down to Cape Horn. Also known as Yaganes, in their own language they were Yámanas or human beings. The name 'yagán' may originate in an abbreviation made by the Anglican missionary Thomas Bridges, of the name this ethnic group gave to a sector of the Murray channel, that according to Bridges was an area of settlement called 'Yashgashaga'.⁴²⁶

In spite of having lived among the Yámana for a long time Thomas Bridges thought they lacked religious concepts. This opinion was later challenged by the ethnologist Martin Gusinde, who also lived among the Yámana.⁴²⁷ Gusinde argued that although the Yámana led a simple material life they had at the same time a spiritual dimension that was perplexing. It was as if they had some knowledge of the great western religions: God was mighty, he ruled all men and was the only one that could be worshipped. There was life after death and the spirits of the dead, who they buried in the huts where they had died, went to a kind of paradise, where the sun always shone brightly.⁴²⁸ Another important aspect of the Yámana culture is the wealth of their language. Thomas Bridges compiled more than 30,000 terms in his *English-Yámana Dictionary*.

Anne Chapman is a world authority on the Yámana and Selk'nam cultures. She worked with the last survivors of the Yámanas, the sisters Cristina and Ürsula Calderón,

⁴²⁴ Ibid, p. 32.

⁴²⁵ Marcelo Simonetti, 'La travesía del Alacalufe Carlos Edén: regreso al fin del mundo', *El Sábado*, 225, 10 January 2003, 23-27.

⁴²⁶ Simón Kuzmanich, sdb., *Cuatro Pueblos ... y un destino* (Santiago: Editorial Salesiana, 1980), p.85.

⁴²⁷ Ibid., p. 84. Bridges also published in London *The Acts of the Apostles* in the Yámana language, probably the only written document in this language.

⁴²⁸ Ibid., pp. 85-88.

Hermenegilda or Emelinda Acuña and Rosa Yagán.⁴²⁹ She has been busy writing a new book *The Native People of Cape Horn before and after Darwin*, where she deals with the ‘confrontation’ seen from both sides between Europeans and Yámanas. At the end of the 19th century the success of the mining and commercial activities led the Chilean government to develop a plan for ‘colonising’ the space of the ancestral Yámana lands. As part of this plan private settlers received territory, among the British Thomas Bridges who was assigned 40 hectares on Picton Island.⁴³⁰ In an interview Chapman has made reference to Jemmy Button, the Yámana who together with three other of her people was taken to the Victorian court, and who is emblematic of the cultural lack of encounter that took place. According to Chapman, Button and his companions were kidnapped because they were taken to England without the consent of their parents and community. In Chapman’s words, Lucas Bridges blamed Jemmy Button for instigating a massacre of Anglican missionaries after his return. In her opinion Lucas Bridges had quoted his father, Thomas Bridges, who had known Button and who considered the Yámana youth ungrateful for not having gone back to England to enjoy ‘civilisation’. The missionaries actually died of starvation, scurvy and rheumatism after long months of solitary agony.⁴³¹ Chapman argues that the Yámana tradition and identity have come to an end because there are only three elderly Yáman women left alive.

After a few years the Yámana people had been swept away and also faced demographic collapse. Martin Gusinde estimated that the Yámana population was not more than seventy people in 1923, all of who still led a nomadic life, hunting and fishing, and kept some of their religious beliefs. In the 1960’s the Yámana population was moved to Villa Ukika – an army naval base – where they lost almost all of their cultural identity.⁴³² The last two

⁴²⁹ Úrsula Calderón, one of the last three Yámana women died on 16th January 2003. Her home was the island of Navarino, and there, she was buried. The two survivors were Úrsula’s sister Cristina (76) and Emelinda Acuña (81). Úrsula was proud of her language. She used to go to the local school to speak to the children. Emelinda, when interviewed by Jack Hitt in March 2004 said she could only speak to herself in her own language. The linguist Óscar Aguilera, who is currently working on a Yámana Grammar was able to make some recordings of her speech. A century before the Anglican missionary Thomas Bridges (Lucas Bridges’ father), had compiled about 30,000 words in his English-Yámana dictionary.

⁴³⁰ Aylwin, 1995.

⁴³¹ Marcelo Somarriva Q., ‘Historias del fin del mundo: Anne Chapman y los Yámanas’, *El Mercurio*, 3 March 2002, E8-9, (p. E8).

⁴³² Mateo Martinic Beros, *Crónica de las Tierra del Sur del Canal de Beagle* (Buenos Aires, Santiago: Editorial Francisco de Aguirre, 1973), pp.41-44.

Yámana women to speak the language of their ancestors were Cristina and Úrsula Calderón. Before Úrsula died her voice was recorded.

At present, the descendants of the indigenous peoples of Patagonia are lower on the social ladder than even migrants from other areas of the country in search of better prospects. The few Kawésqar in Punta Arenas are often discriminated against and most of the Yagán people make a precarious living from some traditional crafts and fishing.⁴³³

IV.4. RAPA NUI, A PEOPLE OVERSEAS

Few in number (4,647), its inhabitants call their island, 'Rapa Nui'.⁴³⁴ This small island situated in the middle of the Pacific is also known as Easter Island.⁴³⁵ But the name that best defines its essence, also given to it by its inhabitants, is 'Te Pito Te Henua', or the navel of the world.⁴³⁶

The island has two types of inhabitants, some are human (Pascuences or inhabitants of Isla de Pascua –Easter Island), and some are made of stone, 'moais', which Pablo Neruda defined in this way:

'Y en la estatua el prodigio de un retrato:
porque la soledad tiene este rostro.'⁴³⁷

The opinion of the archaeologist Gonzalo Figueroa who has specialised in the Rapa Nui culture is that 'moai' is a metaphor for sex because the word 'moai' is in fact two words:

⁴³³ Óscar Aguilera, *Cultura Yagán (Lenguas y Culturas de Chile)*, 1999, in <http://uchile.cl/cultura/lenguas/yaganes/1a.html>>. Downloaded March 2003.

⁴³⁴ According to the 2002 Census Rapa Nui are only 4,667.

⁴³⁵ It was discovered on 6th April 1772, Easter Sunday, by the Dutch navigator Jacob Roggveen.

⁴³⁶ Thor Heyerdal, *Kon Tiki: a través del Pacífico en una balsa* (Buenos Aires: Editorial de Ediciones Selectas, S.R.L., 1962), Ch. 1.

⁴³⁷ Pablo Neruda, *La Rosa Separada* (Buenos Aires: Editorial Losada), 1973. ('And on the statue the marvel of a portrait; because that is the human face of loneliness'). (My own translation).

‘mo’ that means ‘for’, and ‘ai’ which is copulation. For him the huge statues that look east, because this is where wisdom comes from, speak a silent language that must be decoded.⁴³⁸

According to the foundational myth the Rapa Nui people descend from a king called Hotu Matu’a. But, in spite of the archaeological, ethnological or historical research the remote origin the Rapa Nui culture continues to be one of the great scientific enigmas of humanity.⁴³⁹ In her review of Malú Sierra’s book the writer Isabel Allende wonders about who the Rapa Nui really are:

‘La pluma de Malú Sierra me condujo de vuelta al ‘ombligo del mundo’ para verlo desde su misteriosa alma volcánica. ¿Quiénes son en realidad esos contradictorios pascuenses, verdaderos naufragos del planeta, que viven con los ojos puestos en el horizonte? Más que los grandes altares, las tremendas estatuas de gigantes ciegos, las vulvas talladas en las piedras, los mitos y leyendas, creo que lo más sobrecogedor de esta isla es la historia de su pueblo. Los pascuenses han perdurado durante siglos de aislamiento con una apasionada tenacidad de vivir y a la vez una oscura vocación por autodestruirse. No son los únicos. Rapa Nui es un espejo donde todos podemos reflejarnos. Una verdadera metáfora de la Tierra’.⁴⁴⁰

This Chilean island, where Chileans become mistrusted foreigners, others in what they consider their own country, has its own culture, that through ceremonial objects has kept continuity with its past, and also an oral language. (Those who could read the only written language of Polynesia, that to the present day has not been decoded, perished when taken to Peru as forced labour in 1862.⁴⁴¹

The encounter with the ‘civilised’ world did not bring peace or prosperity to the island. The first settlement of Easter Island probably took place in the 5th century AD. By the 15th century the Rapa Nui society had reached an important social and productive development

⁴³⁸ Malú Sierra, *Rapanui: Naufragos del planeta* (Santiago: Editorial Persona, 2002), Ch. 2.

⁴³⁹ Ramón Campbell, *La herencia musical de Rapa Nui* (Santiago: Editorial Andrés Bello, 1971), p. 5.

⁴⁴⁰ Isabel Allende, on the back cover of Malú Sierra’s book. (‘Malú Sierra’s pen brought me back to ‘the navel of the world’ to see it from its mysterious volcanic soul. Who are really those contradictory “pascuenses”, real shipwrecks of the planet, who live with their eyes on the horizon? More than the big altars, the huge statues of blind giants, the vulvas carved in stone, the myths and sagas, I think there is nothing more overwhelming on the island than the history of its people. “Pascuenses” have survived centuries of isolation with a passionate eager to live, together with a dark vocation for self destruction. They are not the only ones. Rapa Nui is a mirror where we can all look at ourselves. A real metaphor of the Earth.’ (My own translation).

⁴⁴¹ Luis Mizón, ‘El último secreto de la Isla de Pascua’, *Correo de la UNESCO*, (1979).

but this was followed by a series of wars between the tribes that inhabited the island and a social, political and economic deterioration. During the 17th century navigators, Captain Cook among them, missionaries and traders visited it. In 1722 the Dutch navigator Jacob Roggeveen disembarked and gave the island the name of Easter Island. Others followed but it was not until 1862 when problems started. In that year there was a massive and forced deportation of slaves to Peru. At least 35% of the population was enslaved and the great majority died in the continent. Many were well prepared leaders and wise men so their forced exile produced a huge vacuum in the Rapa Nui collective memory. To make things worse, those who returned carried with them, among other illnesses small pox and tuberculosis that decimated the island population. The result was a huge demographic collapse: by 1877 only one hundred Rapa Nui survived.

The Rapa Nui were evangelised by missionaries from Tahiti. Chile has a debt with bishop of Tahiti, Monsignor Tepano Jaussen who advocated that the island should become a Chilean possession and who, with that purpose in mind transferred the ecclesiastical jurisdiction of Easter Island to the Chilean archbishopric.⁴⁴²

The island has been in Chilean hands since 1888 when an agreement ('Acuerdo de Voluntades') signed between the Chilean Government and the Rapa Nui, established the bases for the relationship between the Chilean state and the Rapa Nui people.⁴⁴³ But the Rapa Nui saw no improvement with the Chilean administration. For decades the island became a place to confine lepers and the islanders lived in real slavery under the joint administration of the Valparaiso based British company, Williamson Balfour and a Chilean representative. But of all the past actions the one that causes more resentment is that in 1933 the Chilean government registered all the lands in Easter Island under its name. The islanders since then claim that this was measure violated previous agreements and deprived

⁴⁴² Alberto Hotus, 'El Pueblo Rapa Nui', in *Informe Comisión Verdad Histórica y Nuevo Trato – SE- 2002-071*, Santiago, 2002.

⁴⁴³ Acuerdo de Voluntades, 9 de Septiembre de 1888. Primer documento: 'Los abajo firmantes jefes de la Isla de Pascua, declaramos ceder para siempre y sin reserva al gobierno de la república de Chile la soberanía plena y entera de la citada isla reservándonos al mismo tiempo nuestros títulos de jefes de que estamos investidos y que usamos actualmente.' ('Wills Agreement, 9th September 1888. First document: "The chiefs of Easter Island who sign this document have agreed to grant for ever, without reservations, to the

them of the right to their ancestral land. In 1988, the Rapa Nui Assembly of Old Men officially claimed back their lands.⁴⁴⁴

IV.5. PEOPLES THAT NO LONGER EXIST

It is highly likely that the radical decrease in the numbers of native peoples was caused by their sheer extermination. But there were other causes that killed many more, such as the working conditions and a 'loss of vital energy', produced by the destruction of the social and cultural networks. Also, a decrease in birth rates was the result of the forced transportation of the male population to places where labour was needed. And in this the colonial guilt can not be mitigated.

Some authors also mention mixed breeding as a cause for the disappearance of natives. For example, Salazar, in his *Historia Contemporánea de Chile*, argues that since the sexual encounter between Spaniards and natives (usually Spanish soldiers and native women) was a violent one, the 'meztizo' emerged from that violence. Racially and cultural, it was an 'other' that often became disowned his or her Indian roots in order to adopt an imitation, a copy, a mockery of the Spanish culture. Therefore, the mixed population increased in direct relationship to the decrease of the native peoples.⁴⁴⁵ This pattern was similar in Chile the rest of the Hispanic countries.

IV.5.1. PEOPLES OF CENTRAL CHILE

From evidence based on contemporary sources, mainly from the 'Archivo de Indias' in Seville, Leonardo León claims that the tribes living in central Chile were not the docile and tame type of people that Chileans have been led to believe. Moreover, he argues that the

Government of Chile, full and total sovereignty over the above mentioned island keeping at the same time the titles that have been conferred to us')

⁴⁴⁴ Sierra, p. 63-99.

⁴⁴⁵ Salazar, p. 159.

early extinction of Picunches and Promaucaes of central Chile was the consequence of one of the bloodiest wars of conquest of the Spanish Empire. Its most visible outcome was the extermination of the indigenous peoples leaving no traces of one of the most indomitable of the tribal peoples of the continent, who not only were they deprived of their lands but also of their identity and culture.⁴⁴⁶

The Picunches had powerful enclaves in the Aconcagua valley, while the Promaucaes lived south of the Maipo river. León's point is that the history of the Promaucae people (mountain wolves) has remained unwritten for 450 years, since the events that brought about their extinction. The vanquished paid with their freedom and then with the memory of their deeds and they are still mere shadows on the epic canvas painted by the conquerors and their descendants. That is why León calls them the 'forgotten Indians'.⁴⁴⁷ What is known of their remote past is the result of patient archaeological work.

Clearly there were three stages in the war of the Promaucaes and Picunches against the invaders, which was violent and total. These were fourteen years of Indian military effort (1541-1555) which were accompanied by economic and social resistance that included economic sabotage, flight to the mountains and finally, collective suicide.

The first stage was the 'war of the Pukaraes' or Indian forts of formidable architecture: defended by concentric stone walls and surrounded by swamps and ditches. But in the end the 'pukaraes' became death traps for the Indians because they lacked what gave the Spaniards mobility and the final victory: horses and firearms.

Then came the economic war when the Indians ceased to sow the land and used the threat of starvation as a weapon in their war of resistance, a drastic stoppage of all economic activities that was a dramatic gesture of defiance. But in a final stage, the impact of the war and the increasing scarcity of resources forced the Picunches and Promaucaes to abandon their lands in a final collapse of tribal society in Central Chile. Even though a few

⁴⁴⁶ Leonardo León, *Lonkos Curakas and Zupais, The Collapse and Re-Making of Tribal Society in Central Chile, 1536-1560* (London: Institute of Latin American Studies, University of London), 1989.

⁴⁴⁷ *Ibid*, p. 1

thousands found refuge on the southern bank of the Maule river, those who could not manage to do so, simply accepted their fate and committed suicide. Soon their valleys became a wasteland.

The disintegration was not only social but also moral. They had not chosen their fate. It was imposed upon them. Moreover, the end of the war did not mark the end of sufferings and sacrifices. León speaks of a 'policy of abuse and theft'⁴⁴⁸. The war was followed by the introduction of imperial control over the conquered peoples, who were given in 'encomienda' to the new owners of their lands, whom they had to serve. But the Spaniards needed their old enemies. A dead Indian had no value. To establish a profitable system of exploitation, the Spaniards in central Chile had first, to help their future servants to survive.⁴⁴⁹ They did not ignore the magnitude of the crisis affecting the natives and fully realised that mere repression would not achieve the desired results so the old spirit of confrontation was replaced by pragmatism. Nevertheless, it was difficult for the Spaniards to accept that they were the real cause of so much terror and so many premature deaths. In their minds, the Indians themselves were responsible for their fate either because they had resisted or simply because they were inherently wicked.⁴⁵⁰

The disappearance of the original inhabitants caused alarm among the conquistadors at the hour of creating the first 'encomiendas'. Then the Spaniards could fully appreciate the devastating effect and the scale of the demographic collapse. According to modern calculations, the original population of the Central Valley in 1540 was 130,000. In 1594, almost half a century later, the Indian population has been calculated at 20,000.⁴⁵¹

León's thesis is that one of the most widespread distortions of history is that the Indians of central Chile did not mount a violent and ferocious resistance against the invaders, and that they surrendered without much resistance.⁴⁵² He argues that the available records are biased

⁴⁴⁸ León, p.20.

⁴⁴⁹ Pedro Mariño de Lobera, *Crónica del Reyno de Chile, (1595)*, (Madrid: Biblioteca de Autores Españoles, 1967), p. 275.

⁴⁵⁰ *Ibid*, p. 24.

⁴⁵¹ Sergio Villalobos, *Historia del Pueblo Chileno* (Santiago: Universitaria, 1981), vol. 2, p. 107.

⁴⁵² León, p. 2.

because the conquerors emphasised that the occupation had been easy, and manipulated the facts to persuade the crown to support their endeavours. Later historians repeated these assertions and perpetuated the myth of an easy conquest. He mentions well known historians that have contributed to sustain these beliefs, such as Benjamín Vicuña Mackenna (1876) and René León Echaiz who as recently as 1971, stated that 'the Picunche Indian was not bellicose but peaceful'.⁴⁵³ Besides, Francisco Antonio Encina (1955) wrote that 'the military energy of the Picunches was inferior to that of the Araucanians'.⁴⁵⁴

By the end of the 1540's the efforts made by the Spaniards to reconstruct tribal society in central Chile had not achieved the desired results. The Promaucaes still lived in disorder and anarchy. Social disintegration, undiscipline and generalised anomie disrupted the productivity of the encomiendas and prevented the better use of the scarce material and human resources available. Despite some recovery in the 1540's in the end they were military defeated, economically ruined and their social identity broken.⁴⁵⁵ In servitude few survive hardship and humiliation so the 'pukaraes', symbols of past power and freedom were left on the mountaintops as mute witnesses of an era of epic wars.

IV.5.2 . PEOPLES OF PATAGONIA

While the peoples of the north resisted the conquest, the peoples of the south continued to lead a peaceful life in their canoes and vast spaces, totally ignorant of what awaited them.

'Habría que ser poeta para describir la inquietante soledad de las praderas magallánicas; Habría que ser historiador, para dar cuenta de las transformaciones que se operaron en la región con la introducción de la economía minera y ganadera; pero basta ser humano, para conmoverse ante el genocidio de etnias enteras, de culturas silenciadas en los llanos australes.'⁴⁵⁶

⁴⁵³ León, p. 2.

⁴⁵⁴ Encina, *Historia de Chile*, vol. 1, p. 75.

⁴⁵⁵ León pp. 39-41.

⁴⁵⁶ Salazar, p. 160. ('It would be necessary to be a poet to describe the frightful loneliness of the southern spaces; it would be necessary to be a historian to be aware of the changes that took place in the region with the introduction of modern economy; but it is only necessary to be a human being to be moved by the

Legends about the inhabitants of the region that some saw them as a race of giants, the 'Patagons', were passed on from generation to generation, although in the popular imaginary it was always the land of 'the Caesars'. They were in fact the Aónikenk, Tehuelches or Patagones tribe. Rather taller than other native peoples of the region (between 1.75 and even 2m high), their main social activity was hunting. They seem to have been dualists, that is the double principle of good and evil explained to them everything they could not understand.⁴⁵⁷

The foundation of Punta Arenas (1848) marks the beginning of the colonising process of the Aónikenk. Initially there were friendly relations between them and the Chilean State. But the economic potential of the region attracted hostile settlers who needed the Aónikenk unlimited Patagonic ancestral lands for the cattle industry. They were cornered in small spaces and a demographic collapse, that was the consequence of the encounter and the new illnesses the settlers had introduced, followed. The last survivors were seen in 1927, though some migrated to Argentina.⁴⁵⁸ Today remains of their culture can be found in museums., especially in Punta Arenas.

The term 'Ona' is a Yámana word that means 'immediately to the north', although they referred to themselves as 'Selk'nam'. They were nomads, hunters and gatherers, who lived on the island of Tierra del Fuego, south of the Strait of Magellan. Their first vision of the European world was probably in 1530 when Magellan's expedition crossed the Strait. Their first encounter in 1580, was a violent one, when Pedro Sarmiento de Gamboa made one of them prisoner.

genocide of the complete ethnic communities, of cultures silenced for ever in the southern plains'. (My own translation).

⁴⁵⁷ Kuzmanich, p. 42.

⁴⁵⁸ Mateo Martinic, *Crónicas de las Tierras del Sur del Canal de Beagle* (Buenos Aires: Editorial Francisco de Aguirre), 1973.

Mateo Martinic, *Historia de la Región Magallánica* (Punta Arenas: Universidad de Magallanes), 1992.
José Aylwin, *Comunidades Indígenas de los Canales Australes* (Temuco: Corporación Nacional de Desarrollo Indígena), 1995.

They lived relatively isolated until the end of the 18th century when the magic was gone. Some of the communities used a space that became attractive for geo-political interests. In view of the strategic importance of the area and the high probability that the Spanish Empire's enemies might settle there, the central government decided to incorporate the area. And so, the southern landscapes started to change and the economic and political spaces began to conquer the mythical ones, with disastrous consequences for the indigenous cultures.

The killing of the Selk'nam started when, in 1879, when Ramón Serrano, an officer of the Chilean Navy found gold in the northern part of the island of Tierra del Fuego. There are records that in 1886 Ramón Lista, an Argentinean disembarked in Bahía Sebastián and killed 28 Selk'nam. The killings became more intense as from 1885 when societies started to develop the sheep and cattle raising industry. They occupied – with the Chilean government agreement – the lands that had traditionally belonged to the Selk'nam, restricting the access of the native people and imposing a war policy against them.

One of the shareholders of the 'Sociedad Explotadora de Tierra del Fuego, Mauricio Braun, wrote: 'The Indians is a very unpleasant matter, but there is no other way that transporting them all to Dawson Island.'⁴⁵⁹ There, inactivity, eradication and the illnesses they caught there – pneumonia, tuberculosis, syphilis killed the great majority.⁴⁶⁰ At the same time other existing societies had started to hire hunters to 'clean' the area, who, in order to be paid they had to show a pair of ears. To eliminate the Indians methods like castration, poisoning and ear cutting were also acceptable and the governor of the province estimated that the total population was then (1894-1898) 1,500.⁴⁶¹

Towards the end of the 19th century new factors that contributed to the extermination, one of which was the British market's demand for wool. The wool industry attracted settlers that needed the natives' spaces. Conflicts were unavoidable with native peoples who had

⁴⁵⁹ Mauricio Massone, 'Matanza de Selk'nam, [Lat.33], N° 13, (Marzo 2001), 58-63, (p.59).

⁴⁶⁰ Joseph Empeaire, *Los nómades del Mar* (Santiago: LOM), 2002.

⁴⁶¹ Kuzmanich, p. 115.

never had the concept of private property. The former nomadic hunters became once more the prey of 'hunting parties' of terrifying efficiency.

Eventually, the 'hunger for lands' sent the whole surviving Selk'nam population to reservations run by Catholic and Anglican missionaries who tried to 'civilise' them but they were soon victims of diseases and started to die. Their protectors could do nothing and by 1898 their total number had dropped to 600.⁴⁶² Besides, towards the end of the 19th century the European world developed an ethnographic interest in primitive cultures and the Anthropological Museum in London paid up to eight pounds for a Selk'nam skull.⁴⁶³ Finally by the turn of the century things started to change. But it was late already because a decade afterwards the total Selk'nam population was 350 and after another decade, that is by 1920, there were only 20 Selk'nam in Chile and about 250 in Argentina. Ten years afterwards in both countries there were about 100 Selk'nam.⁴⁶⁴

In the twentieth century nomadic life disappeared from the southern spaces, and the responsibility lies with inhuman and blind commercial interests. For the few left transculturation and mixed breeding were unavoidable. In 1973 the last pure blood Selk'nam woman, Angela Loij, died in Chile. Of the remaining nine, most of them of mixed blood, only four could speak the language of their ancestors, a number that soon went down to one. Before the end of the century, on 2nd June 1999, Virginia, the only person of Selk'nam blood died in Argentina at the age of 56.⁴⁶⁵ The Selk'nam identity was tied to their open spaces, and now at the start of a new millennium, almost nothing, except legends perhaps, survives of them. It was a long and slow cultural death, and now neither their languages nor their voices can be heard.

The fate of these peoples from north to south was to 'disappear'. They will only remain in history. Their 'disappearance', in fact an unmerciful and inhuman hunting, can only be genocide. Late, very late, the rule of law and mercy of religion arrived. What is left of

⁴⁶² Massone, p. 61.

⁴⁶³ Ibid., p. 60.

⁴⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁶⁵ Mauricio Massone, *Cultura Selk'nam. (Ona)*, (Santiago: Ministerio de Educación, 1982).

them? A few place names, a few their herds of guanacos also in danger of extinction... perhaps a few legends and a few museums to satisfy the curiosity of 'civilised' people... and a statue to the 'unknown indian' in the cemetery in Punta Arenas. But both the Chilean people and the Chilean State ought to acknowledge their responsibility in the ethnicides, that during the republican period exterminated two peoples in Patagonia. But that would not be sufficient. Both the Chilean States and the Chileans must recognise that the backward position and the nearly irremediable extinction of the culture of the two surviving peoples are also their responsibility.

CONCLUSIONS

The object of this research has been to explore the Chilean identity in order to deconstruct its myth of homogeneity. It was an attempt to go beyond the view of identity and of nation – as a natural, bounded, essential facet with cross-cultural references. It was then imperative to consider a number of juxtaposing projections and imaginations of communities/places and people's self-conscious distancing and/or affiliations with them. For this it was necessary to analyse components that could be applied to any identity. These are, in the first place, certain shared loyalties, such as nationality, ethnic identity, class, etc., that the individuals identify with. Secondly, something that can not be forgotten is an element that in an analysis of personal identity includes the body and other possessions that can give the subject vital self awareness, which in the Chilean case can be identified with its geography. Besides, it is necessary to mention a crucial point: the existence of 'Others' in a double sense: those who the nationals want to imitate, resemble or identify with, and those from whom they want to differentiate.

The constitution of a single 'Other' through which to define identity is a problematic one, due to the variety of 'Others' through which national identity can be expressed. For example, for the Chilean nation the western world is an 'Other' that many Chileans are eager to identify with. At the same time, Chile is a country with indigenous populations and it is here that contradictions arise. From the moment that in the 16th century, the West represented by Spain, defined the Latin America colonised regions as their racialised 'Other', the country was caught in the dilemma of rejecting such Otherisation or coming to terms with the fact that it was a mestizo country. This is the ambivalent and contradictory position the national community is faced with - whether to create a nation through mestizaje or whitening. The embarrassed and self-knowing response of the elite to questions of national identity and 'race' attest to this ambivalence because Chileans, in general, do not want to be the 'same' as their internal 'Others'. They want to be different from those darker 'Others' they have traditionally looked down on.

For three colonial centuries Chile was part of the Spanish Empire and shared with other nations of the continent loyalty to the monarch. During that time the country was also part of the universal Catholic Church and both aspects were linked in the Chilean minds because in a centralised Christian state there was no clear distinction between the political and the religious aspects - after all, the Pope had granted the King rights to America. With Independence Chile left the 'imperial imagined community' and became part of South America, or a new 'imagined community of independent nations' that share some basic elements of identity, such as origin, language, religion and a more or less similar situation with respect to the world economy. However, the republican foundation did not give a satisfactory answer to the role of the native peoples in the Chilean society.

After the Second World War development became more and more important and another category albeit of a secondary character was added to the Chilean identity: that of a country of an underdeveloped Third World, a belonging that was conditional to external recognition by international organisations. By the mid 1980's the country became part of a smaller, more distinguished imagined community, that of more or less successful developing group of nations, although Chile is not an industrialised country but depends on its exports, mainly copper ('export-led-development'). This is sort of diffuse community as far as number and quality of its members, but Chileans have a clear awareness of their belonging to a more select group of developing countries. Moreover, since the 1990's the country has aspired to become one of the most developed ones in the continent. Furthermore, the third post-Pinochet government has openly set this objective for the second centenary of Independence in 2010. Identity is not a legacy from the past but it also looks into the future to construct a national project. Undoubtedly, Chile's project in this sense is to continue along the road to development and become a society where poverty, that still affects nearly 20% of its population, disappears. It is interesting to note that in the Chilean imaginary of the beginning of the 21st century, development is not conceived so much as generalised wealth but as leaving deep poverty behind. From the moment that identity is conceived, not as a fixed ethos formed in a remote past, but as a future project, there may be different projects, alternative proposals, and different versions of identity that will lead on to different roads. However, nowhere in the Chilean case are the native peoples mentioned in

future projects, because they have been mentally assimilated to Chileans, and normally poor ones.

Currently, in Chile many think that cultural globalisation is a threat to the national identity or Chileanness. Symptoms of globalisation are everywhere: the rural world is in a process of accelerated modernisation and it is no longer the provider of work and culture it used to be. The typical 'roto Chileno', always ready to fight for and even offer his life for his flag or territory, which were part of his identity, has today transferred his effort to other levels. Rural life and values are being lost and this is evident in September – 'el mes de la patria' – when it is usual to see in the city mall displays of 'rural symbols' such as carts, hay and people dressed up as 'huasos' (rural traditional costume in central Chile). The paradox is that the main objective of such a display of Chileanness has marketing purposes. This seems to be an alternative future identity project that reinforces the end of the rural source of identity. It can also be discussed that patriotic symbols have become clearly less strong, also making traditional identity less strong. This means that the old identity has suffered a process of erosion where the memory of ancient bonds has been blocked. Therefore, the Chilean national identity has now a different configuration and is being reconstructed in a different way. This, because identity is not a fixed 'soul' constructed in a remote past, once and for all, in which every subsequent change or alteration of its basic components might not only mean a loss of identity, but also treason to the self. Besides, nothing can guarantee that what a country considers its own is the best and should be preserved only for that sake. Besides, in the construction of the future, not all the historical traditions have to have the same weight. Identity looks into the future, and not necessarily something that has been part of the national identity is desirable for the future. If identity is conceived not as an essence but as a historic process of permanent construction and reconstruction of the national community, then all the changes that are taking place in its constitutive elements do not mean a loss of identity but are part of a normal identity reconstruction process. Chileanness, obviously, has never been something static but has been modified and transformed. In fact, a project of national identity that sought to 'save' the national identity from foreign influences by adding cultural isolation to geographical isolation, would be mere utopia because globalisation is now a worldwide phenomenon. Everyday there is more inter-

cultural communication and since national identity is always being reconstructed with new contributions, these will in turn, be transformed and adapted by the receiving culture, thus making new synthesis.

It cannot be forgotten that in the field of culture, rarely are cultural features 'pure' or original, but have become what they are by complex process of adaptation. Many constitutive elements may be of foreign origin and have been reconstituted and incorporated in certain historical contexts. The Spanish language and the Catholic religion, both of European origin, but which cannot be separated from the identity of the majority of those born in Chile and in the continent, are good examples. Also, Chilean symbols of identity like wine, food like 'empanadas', the guitar, kites and football, all of which have come to represent important aspects of Chileanness in different moments, are all of them European in origin. In fact if Chileans wanted to go back to their origins they would perhaps have to revive Mapudungum. But this would not suffice. If Chileans wanted to go back to their origins they would have to acknowledge their mestizo origin. But even this would not be enough. Chileans need to be proud of their origins. Only in this way will their identity become a real identity and not a fictitious one, because what for Chileans has traditionally been a shameful, dark origin, and has therefore, been kept hidden, would come to light. And only in this way will Chileans be able to come to terms with the fact that theirs is a multi ethnic and multi cultural society. Even that would not be sufficient. Both the Chilean people and the Chilean State should acknowledged their responsibility in the ethnocides that have taken place during the republican period. Moreover, the Chilean nation ought also to acknowledge its responsibility in the condition of its native peoples, who in general terms tend to be lower in the social ladder than migrants from other places of the country and are often discriminated against, and find the way and means to compensate them socially and psychologically, not only with the aim of re-vitalising their culture but simply to help them recover their individual and collective dignity.

The Chilean nation has, for a long time tended to disregard the original cultures. It has been relegated to a 'before' or 'pre', that is a pre-history, the pre-Colombian history, in the same way that it has kept the colonial nomenclature of 'discovery', rather than 'invasion'.

Besides, the new narratives have not given a totally satisfactory solution of continuity in a country where the state and territory are the axis of sovereignty in the national identity. Now the time has come for the republican and democratic conscience to solve the problem of its Indian past: it is the moment to incorporate mestizaje into its cultural identity. It is an aspect of the past that cannot be relegated to a mute 'pre-history' or remain a prescript element in a shameful hidden corner. In order to rescue it and give it its due depth, a notional change is necessary: the Indian past must not continue to be reproduced and perpetuated as an outlaw, but it must be let to speak in its own language and reproduced itself.

It is impossible to identify all the consequences of a forced assimilation of the country's native peoples by the larger and more powerful Chilean society. In this aspect sociologists ought to try to identify the processes that operate in the loss of the indigenous peoples' ethnic identities and self-confidence, and the construction of new ones, especially now that some of their young people are part of a socially precarious urban culture. In cases like this it may be difficult to define clearly the cultural identity of the descendants of the native peoples, due to the intense acculturation processes they have been through.

If in Chile there are a number of cultures this is the result of a superposition rather than one of an interweaving of cultures and it is also the result of successive negations of a true national identity because Chileans have sought to project an image of a non-existent homogeneity. From the moment that identity is conceived, not as a fixed ethos formed in a remote past, but as a future project, there may be different projects, alternative proposals, and different versions of identity that will lead on to roads. Now, Chileans' great challenge is to define what they want to be and one strategy to reassert their identity is to look back into the past, to the country's origins, to both the Spanish and the Indian traditions. To integrate the Indian legacy to the national tradition would mean to unearth the myth and face the truth, so that the inhabitants of the country can find new collective meanings. This would entail incorporating a notion of collective identity that is open to alterity, invention

and transgression and also it would also imply that Chileans would have to learn to accept diversity, something that they have so far refused to accept.ⁱⁱ

^{ii 466 466} It is interesting to mention some of the most representative or best known names that appear in the Chilean common family tree (Julio Retamal Favereau, Las Familias Fundadoras de Chile):

- Presidents of the republic: + Jorge Alessandri (1958-1964), + Eduardo Frei Montalva (1967-1970), +Salvador Allende (1970-1973), Eduardo Frei Ruiz-Tagle (1994-2000), Augusto Pinochet (1974-1990), Patricio Alwyn (1990-1994), Ricardo Lagos (2001-). Besides, Marta Larraechea and Luisa Durán, Eduardo Frei R-T., and Ricardo Lagos' wives respectively, appear in their own right.
- Ministers, or former ministers in the last 10 years: Jorge Arrate, Jorge Jiménez, Sergio Molina, José Miguel Insulza, Enrique Krauss, Eduardo Aninat, Alvaro García, José Antonio Gómez, Carlos Cruz, Nicolás Guzmán.
- Politicians: Sergio Onofre Jarpa, Sebastián Piñera, Carlos Altamirano, Jaime Ravinet. Joaquín Lavín.
- Senators: Beltrán Urenda, Gabriel Valdés, Andrés Zaldívar, Hernán Larraín Andrés Chadwick, William Thayer, Juan Antonio Coloma, María Pía Guzmán.
- Deputies: José Antonio Viera Gallo, M. Angélica Cristi, Andrés Alamand, Tomás Jocelyn-Holt, Nicolás Monckeberg, Hugo Zepeda, Marcela Cubillos.
- Cardinals: +Raúl Silva Henríquez, +Carlos Oviedo, Juan Francisco Fresno, Jorge Medina, Francisco Javier Errázuriz.
- Bishops: Eladio Vicuña, Javier Prado, Juan Barros, Alfonso Baeza, Sergio Valech, Cristián Precht, Cristián Caro, Carlos Camus, Rodrigo Tupper, Manuel Camilo Vial, Manuel Donoso.
- Theologians: +Osvaldo Lira, Beltrán Villegas.
- Saints: Juanita Fernández (Teresita de los Andes, Carmelite nun), Alberto Hurtado (Jesuit priest, process of sanctification in final stages).
- Diplomats: Juan Gabriel Valdés, Héctor Riesle.
- Writers: Isabel Allende, Pablo Huneus, Jorge Edwards, +José Donoso, Marcela Serrano, Arturo Fontaine, Ana María del Río, Marta Blanco.
- Historians: +Francisco Antonio Encina, +Jaime Eyzaguirre, Fernando Campos, Gonzalo Vial, Sol Serrano, Luis Valencia, Javier González, Alfredo Jocelyn-Holt, Lucía Santa Cruz, Julio Retamal Favereau.
- Poets: Lucila Godoy Alcayaga (Gabriela Mistral, 1945 Nobel Prize for Literature), Nefthalí Reyes Basoalto (Pablo Neruda, 1971 Nobel Prize for Literature).
- Painters: Benito Rojo, +Roberto Matta, Rodolfo Opazo, Irene Domínguez, Carmen Aldunate, Gonzalo Cienfuegos, Matías Pinto d'Aguiar, Claudio Bravo.
- Musicians: Max Valdés (conductor), +Claudio Arrau (pianist).
- Sculptors: Matías Vial, Francisco Gacitúa.
- Architects: Gabriel Guarda, Borja García Huidobro.

Actors and actresses: Emilio Gaete, Héctor Noguera, Paz Yrarrázabal, Jaime Celedón, Carmen Barros, Luciano Cruz-Coke, Francisco Reyes, Delfina Guzmán, Malucha Pinto, Claudia Di Girólamo, Cristián García Huidobro, Cristián Campos, Felipe Camiroaga.

- Journalists: José Alfredo Fuentes, Raquel Argandoña, Francisco Morandé, Mercedes Ducci.
- Models: Josefa Isensee (Miss Chile), Cecilia Bolocco (1987 Miss Universe, married former Argentinian President Carlos Menem).
- Sports:

Football:	Manuel, Peregrini, Sebastián Rozental
Athletics:	Sebastián Keitel.
Climbing:	Ricardo Jordán (Himalayas K2).
Tennis:	Marcelo (Chino) Ríos.

⁴⁶⁶ From the start of the colonising enterprise the Spaniards who crossed the Atlantic to settle in the South American continent, could not do it freely; on the contrary they had to go through all the procedures, regulations and controls designed by the Royal authority. The licences granted in the first fifty years of the 16th century were only 15,480, while in the next twenty years, that is by 1570, the European population – Spaniards – was around 118,000 individuals. These are official figures, which naturally do not include illegal migrants, deserters or holders of forged licences and permits to settle. If it was not easy for Spaniards to settle in the Indies, it was almost an impossible dream for foreigners, who were not allowed to visit or trade with the colonies. This restrictive policy was reinforced after the French Revolution, as its followers could spread noxious ideas.

-Guillermo Bravo, 'Organización de las Indias Occidentales', in Historia Universal, Carl Grinberg, ed. Vol. 16 (Santiago: Editorial Ercilla, 1985), p. 159.

On 13th July 1808, the Governor of the Kingdom of Chile, don Francisco Antonio García Carrasco, issued the document Expediente Formado sobre Averiguar los Extranjeros que Reciden en el Reyno, where, based on the Royal Ordinance that forbade foreigners to go to the Indies unless they held a Royal licence, in which case they had to live inland, he ordered a survey to be carried out. He stated that the land was to be 'cleaned' of foreigners and suspects in matters of faith. He insisted that no trade with them was allowed and that books brought into the Kingdom by foreigners, heretics and pirates had to be confiscated. Besides, he warned that the English, with their 'doctrines and bad habits' constituted a danger and a threat, because they perverted the natives, and smuggled and spied for the kingdom's enemies.

- Guillermo Bravo, ed., Expediente Extranjeros en el Reyno (Santiago: Instituto O'Higiniano de Chile, Serie Fuentes de la Emancipación, 1990), pp. 9-30.

All foreigners, therefore, had to answer the following questionnaire that is in fact considered a census:

- Name and surname
- Country of origin
- Age
- Religion: 'Old Roman Catholic' or 'reconciled Catholic'
- How, when and in what circumstances he arrived in the Kingdom, (ex. prisoner of war, deserter, holder of a Royal license).
- Activity and possessions in Chile and in his native country
- Marital status and number of children
- Languages
- Physical characteristics and 'vices'.

The survey gave a total of 77 foreign residents, twelve of whom came from the British Isles, and out of which, six were from England, one from Scotland and five Irishmen, who as Old Catholics were most welcome. Of the Englishmen, one lived in the northern desert, two in the port of Valparaíso, one in Santiago and two in the town of Rancagua, 96 kms. south of Santiago. The Scotsman lived in the river port of Valdivia in the south of the country. It is easy to understand that in a time when the Inquisition was active, they all sign as 'reconciled Roman Catholics'. Besides, it is interesting to note that they provided all the information in the survey,

although we may, never know their real names because in the survey they appear with the new names they adopted or were given when they 'reconciled' with the Catholic Church:

1. Juan de Dios, (nickname: 'piguiniri'), was 18 and reconciled. He had arrived on HMS Spitfire and worked as a miner in Copiapó in the north. He was short, blond, hard working and a heavy drinker.
2. Jorque Banques, 38, reconciled and married with one child, had arrived in Valparaiso on board the Ymia in 1801 and continued there working for the new owner of the boat don Vicente Ovalle. At home he had been a carpenter and could speak English, Spanish and French. He was 5'8", and his hair was brown.
3. Juan Arias, was also a reconciled Catholic and lived in Valparaiso. He was 32 and married with two children. He had arrived on board the whaleboat 'Pormonia' fourteen years before. He was 5'5", had a protruding nose and had had smallpox.
4. Francisco de Borja Santa Maria, was the one who lived in Santiago. 28, single and reconciled, he had arrived two years before on board the privateer 'The Prince'. Tall and with brown hair, he worked as a country labourer for don Antonio de Hermida, on his farm in the outskirts of the city.
5. Juan Eduardo Carton, also a reconciled RC, 23 and single, had arrived in Chile on board 'El Buitre' (the Vulture), and worked as a butler at don Francisco de Sotomayor's country house near Rancagua. He was tall, had brown hair and could read and write English and Spanish.
6. Honofre Bunster, also reconciled, 23 and single, he had been an officer on HMS 'Catalina', until he had been made a prisoner of the Kingdom a year before. Tall and blond, he had been sent to live in the town of Rancagua at the house of Francisco Ortiz and under his care. A well-educated young man, he could read and write in English, Spanish and French.

The Scot was the only one who had been able to make an independent living. Shortly before the survey was carried out, he had been about to get some land to farm but he did not qualify because he did not have any children.

APPENDIX

Entrevista a Sra. Ministra Alejandra Krauss –

Entrevistador: Rodrigo Barría Reyes

Transcripción: El Mercurio, 4.03.2004, pp. D14-D15.

- **¿Qué es lo que más le ha sorprendido de los mapuches en estos meses que lleva enfrentando el conflicto indígena?**

La riqueza y la profundidad de su cultura y tradiciones. Constatar que existen varios países dentro de nuestro propio país y que no hemos sido capaces de establecer lazos comunes. Me ha sorprendido la necesidad que tienen de ser reconocidos y su identidad con la naturaleza. Sorprende la preparación y capacidad de muchos de sus dirigentes. Y también sorprende la desconfianza y tozudez que demuestran en algunas oportunidades.

- **¿Son muy ‘cabezaduras’?**

No, no diría que cabezaduras...

- **¿Cómo lo diría?**

... Tozudez. Ser incapaces de colocarse en la posición del otro. Para obtener beneficios también se deben pagar costos y a veces no están dispuestos a ello.

- **Ministra, ¿qué tan serio es para el gobierno el problema indígena?**

No me gusta utilizar la palabra ‘serio’. Es un tema absolutamente prioritario para la autoridad, pero no por una situación de conflicto contingente, sino que por una realidad de desmedro en que se encontraba un porcentaje bastante significativo de nuestra población.

- **¿Quiere decir que si no hubiese conflicto sería un tema igualmente prioritario para el gobierno?**

Absolutamente. Hemos avanzado en distintas políticas sociales, por lo que ahora debemos concentrarnos en temas emergentes. Y la causa indígena requería hoy de una atención especial.

- **A propósito del conflicto que se vive en el sur, ¿no creen bajo ningún punto de vista que el asunto llegue a convertirse en una situación de violencia de verdad peligrosa?**

Tengo el convencimiento de que no es así...

- **¿y que tampoco va a ser así?**

Como gobierno, y con las políticas que estamos garantizando, ello no debiera ser así. Si se hace un análisis objetivo es un hecho de que los problemas han disminuido. Apenas de 30 a 60 comunidades, de un total de tres mil, han preferido una opción distinta del diálogo.

- **Y por eso el gobierno se molesta en extremo cuando se hacen analogías con Chiapas...**

Es que hacer similitudes con México no tiene nada que ver con nuestro país. Fíjese que allá ni siquiera tienen una Ley Indígena, normativa que nosotros creamos hace años. El problema en Chiapas surge por un incumplimiento de la autoridad, cosa distinta de lo que sucede en Chile. Acá se trata de enfrentar nuevos desafíos, pero no es que estemos incumpliendo promesas. Son absolutamente incomparables las dos realidades.

- **Y si el gobierno repite una y otra vez que ambos conflictos no se parecen en nada, ¿por qué se envía entonces a un alto personero de gobierno como Camilo Escalona**

precisamente a Chiapas para analizar y estudiar ese conflicto y aplicar métodos útiles a lo que sucede en el sur de Chile?

Es que no fue enviado por el gobierno. Él viajó, a título personal, por una invitación del embajador.

- **¿ No me diga que no comentó nada respecto de la experiencia que observó en Chiapas?**

Le aseguro que nunca, nunca, tuvimos una reunión para hacer una evaluación o estrategia respecto del tema.

- **¿Qué instrucciones precisas ha entregado el gobierno a Carabineros respecto de la manera en que debe enfrentar las tomas de terrenos?**

Bueno, utilizar procedimientos adecuados a la situación que se esté viviendo en terreno. Eso, y dar fiel cumplimiento a las normativas vigentes.

- **Pero es evidente que la autoridad intenta evitar a toda costa la imagen de aparecer como 'gobierno represor'...**

No es así. A Carabineros no le corresponde ejercer tareas de prevención. Esa es función del gobierno. Por eso le señalo que no se ha entregado ninguna instrucción especial respecto de que actúen con mayor o menor precaución.

- **¿Por qué, ante un delito flagrante como una situación de toma de predios el gobierno insiste en el diálogo y no en la restitución inmediata del Estado de Derecho?**

No concuerdo con esa apreciación. Nuestra política es dialogar, Y jamás lo hemos hecho con personeros que hayan procedido a tomarse predios. Sólo deponiendo las tomas nos sentamos a conversar.

- **Perdón, pero precisamente varios grupos indígenas recurren a las tomas como medida de presión para comenzar a negociar sus demandas...**

No necesariamente. Lo que suelo suceder es que las tomas son resultado de largar negociaciones previas y falta de solución a sus demandas.

- **Los agricultores afectados no se cansan de acusar al gobierno de actuar débilmente ante los indígenas y la autoridad, por su parte, señala que el no desalojo de los mapuches es porque los mismos propietarios no hacen nada para que se les saque. ¿A quién creerle?**

No me gusta decir a quién o no se le debe creer. Lo que ocurre es que se presentan denuncias contra cualquier persona que resulte responsable de los hechos. Pero muchas veces no se sabe efectivamente quién fue el que cometió el delito. Por eso los tribunales, ante la falta de pruebas no pueden someter a nadie a proceso. Nosotros sólo podemos garantizar a los particulares que contarán con todos los instrumentos para que se cumplan las resoluciones judiciales.

- **A propósito de privados, ¿qué responsabilidad asigna a los agricultores en el conflicto mapuche?**

Creo que el tema indígena no supone responsabilidades individuales. El asunto es más profundo. El tema es un asunto que debe afrontar el país en su conjunto. Nosotros

asumimos nuestra cuota de responsabilidad. Pero está claro que el problema indígena debe ser asumido por el conjunto de la sociedad.

- **Entonces tampoco ve responsabilidad de las madereras?**

Le insisto: es el país el que debe afrontar el tema. Por lo demás, agricultores y empresas madereras han llevado adelante varias obras y proyectos a favor de los indígenas.

- **Desde hace tiempo que en la Conadi existe molestia frente al protagonismo que han ido adquiriendo gobernadores e intendentes en la intervención directa que tienen frente a situaciones problemáticas con los indígenas. ¿Es o no la Conadi el organismo central a través del cual se deben canalizar las peticiones mapuches?**

Sin duda. Y eso quedó aclarado en una reunión efectuada la semana pasada, en donde se reafirmó el papel central de la Conadi para enfrentar las demandas mapuches. Pero también ahí se aclaró que el diálogo podía ser efectuado por intendentes y gobernadores, pero siempre en conjunto con la Conadi.

- **Volvió a reafirmarse el papel protagónico de la Conadi, pero sin embargo usted señaló en algún momento que la entidad no era fundamental en la política del gobierno hacia los pueblos originarios...**

No, jamás lo he señalado.

- **Usted reafirma la relevancia de la Conadi, pero el hecho es que desde el propio Mideplan (Ministerio de Planificación Nacional) se han enviado negociadores cercanos a usted para que intenten llegar a acuerdo con algunas comunidades en conflicto, saltándose la instancia especialmente creada para ello...**

Pero siempre en conjunto con la Conadi. Nunca se ha negociado por parte de Mideplan si es que no se está acompañado por la Conadi. No se negocia sin ellos.

- **¿Nunca se ha hecho?**

Jamás.

- **En la década del '90 se entregaron cerca de 140 mil hectáreas a los indígenas. Sin embargo, ni siquiera el 20 por ciento de esas tierras tiene actualmente alguna fuente de apoyo productivo. La pregunta es, por qué se sigue privilegiando la compra de tierras y no el desarrollo integral de las comunidades mapuches?**

Efectivamente es así. Pero una vez constatado ese hecho, hemos establecido un sistema de desarrollo integral. La entrega de tierras supone ahora diversas formas de apoyo productivo. Lo tenemos claro como gobierno y en esa dirección apunta la entrega de un préstamo internacional.

- **Efectivamente, el gobierno acaba de conseguir un préstamo de 80 millones de dólares por parte del BID, pero en la práctica casi dos tercios del presupuesto anual de la Conadi sigue destinándose a la adquisición de tierras y no a la implementación de sistemas de apoyo productivo...**

Es que existe un compromiso de compra de tierras por parte del gobierno. Y como compromiso, es una cuestión que no podemos eludir.

- **Ministra, ¿por qué la autoridad ha optado por considerar a los mapuches como 'incapaces'? Se lo pregunto por la imposibilidad que tienen de vender o hipotecar sus tierras...**

No. No son incapaces...

- **¿Cómo que no? Son incapaces jurídicamente de vender o hipotecar sus predios...**

Lo que sucede es que para los mapuches el tema de la comunidad es absolutamente esencial. Y para ello es necesario que las tierras y las comunidades se mantengan vigentes en el tiempo. Esa es la explicación, pero no se trata de que se les considere incapaces.

- **Pero usted sabrá que, en la práctica, son varios los indígenas a los cuales se le han entregado tierras y que han preferido arrendar sus predios con tal de obtener algún tipo de ingreso...**

Y es algo que sucede porque la entrega de tierras no iba acompañada de políticas de apoyo productivo y de desarrollo de sus predios.

- **A propósito del tema de la compra de tierras, una de las críticas que plantean los propios mapuches es que la autoridad suele priorizar a las comunidades más conflictivas en vez de los grupos que han optado por negociar sus demandas...**

No es efectivo. El año pasado entregamos 48 mil hectáreas y ninguna está relacionada con comunidades en conflicto.

- **¿Puede asegurar entonces que a ningún grupo violento se le han acelerado soluciones con tal de evitar problemas mayores?**

Le aseguro que no. Nunca favorecemos a los grupos mapuches violentos.

- **El gobierno acaba de establecer una 'Comisión de Verdad Histórica y Nuevo Trato'. ¿Qué representatividad puede tener una instancia en donde faltan los grupos mapuches más involucrados en el actual conflicto y en donde no están sentadas ni las empresas forestales ni representantes de los agricultores?**

Que no estén madereros y agricultores es una decisión política. Lo que pasa es que esta comisión no tiene por objeto el análisis del tema de la tierra. Si ellos hubiesen estado, el trabajo se habría centrado en la cuestión de entrega de más tierras. Y no pasa por eso el tema central de la comisión.

- **Pero resulta obvia la conclusión a la que va a llegar la comisión: que a los mapuches se les ha tratado de manera injusta y que el Estado y la sociedad chilena en su conjunto deben contemplar una serie de medidas con tal de reparar el daño histórico que se les ha causado. ¿Qué es lo novedoso que puede aportar?**

Que por primera vez se está dispuesto a analizar los hechos pasados y proponer alternativas de nuevo trato a futuro. Y esas serán las bases de la nueva relación de la sociedad con nuestros pueblos originarios. Jamás en Chile se había conformado una instancia de este nivel para tratar el tema indígena. Pero es una comisión que no tiene nada que ver con el gobierno sino que con la sociedad civil. Por supuesto que me habría gustado que se hubiesen incorporado dirigentes mapuches. ¿Pero sabe? Siento que los que más pierden son los propios indígenas. Nosotros recogimos una demanda que proviene de ellos y no nos parece que ahora hayan decidido marginarse de esta instancia.

- **¿Tiene igual relevancia pese a que no participen los mapuches?**

Soy una mujer positiva y no pierdo las esperanzas de que se integren a futuro.

- **El Presidente ha prometido, en los seis años de administración, adquirir 150 mil hectáreas para los indígenas. Para aclarar, ¿esas 15 mil hectáreas serán destinas**

completamente a las demandas mapuches o también están contempladas otras etnias en esos terrenos?

Dicen relación fundamentalmente con el pueblo mapuche.

- **Varias etnias ya han expresado su malestar por la atención preferencial que acaparan los mapuches. ¿Qué pasará, por ejemplo, cuando los atacameños o los rapa-nui también exijan que se les devuelvan sus tierra?**

Creemos que sus aspiraciones son completamente legítimas. Y por eso es que seguimos preocupados de llevar a cabo distintos programas de desarrollo para otros grupos étnicos. Pero debe quedar claro que el tema de la tierra no es prioritario para los aymará y atacameños.

- **Y no se les abrirá el apetito al ver lo que consiguen sus hermanos mapuches?**

No creo. Son realidades y demandas muy distintas.

- **Está claro para ciertos grupos mapuches que la idea de un territorio autónomo propio es una aspiración a la cual no están dispuestos a renunciar. ¿Ha evaluado el gobierno la posibilidad de entregar alguna zona en que puedan ejercer algún nivel de autodeterminación los indígenas?**

Nunca. Pero es un asunto que viene a futuro en el sentido de comenzar a discutir los derechos del tema indígenas.

- **La idea de una 'nación mapuche' es completamente inviable para el gobierno?**

Absolutamente inviable.

- **¿Y la ratificación gubernamental que pretenden los mapuches del Convenio 169 de la OIT no servirá acaso de sustento para una demanda de autonomía a futuro?**

Pero no en el concepto de nación o pueblo. Son discusiones más intelectuales respecto de algunas normativas legales que tienden a interpretarse más allá de lo que efectivamente señalan. Por lo demás, el mismo Convenio 169 señala expresamente que las normas deben aplicarse de manera flexible y adecuarse a la realidad de cada país. Pediría que confiemos en nuestras instituciones y en la forma en que podemos nosotros mismos proteger nuestra identidad. No tengamos temor.

- **Pero usted sabe que esas normas, además del reconocimiento constitucional, son elementos que en la experiencia internacional contribuyen a la conformación de los llamados 'territorios indígenas', zonas con crecientes niveles de autodeterminación por parte de los autóctonos...**

Creo que son otras normativas, y no las que usted señala, las que han generado ese tipo de autonomía. Por lo demás, es bueno aclarar que varias de las disposiciones contempladas en el Convenio 169 ya están incorporadas en la Ley Indígena. ¿Por qué seguimos entonces con temor frente a este tipo de normativas?

- **Lo que pasa es que la autoridad ya tiene mala experiencia con resoluciones internacionales en favor de los mapuches. De hecho, una resolución de la Comisión de Derechos Humanos de la OEA estableció que el Estado chileno debía compensar a 144 indígenas condenados a raíz de una serie de tomas en el año '92...**

A ver... Se trata meramente de un pre-acuerdo que debemos ahora operativizar según nuestra propia legislación.

- **¿Puede aclarar si a estos mapuches se les entregarán tierras o algún tipo de pago monetario?**

No hay solución específica para ellos, sino que se enmarcan dentro de las soluciones globales que contempla la Ley Indígena.

- **El hecho concreto es que a nivel internacional el gobierno no tiene una buena presencia frente a los dirigentes mapuches...**

Es verdad. Pero fíjese que nunca en la CNN ha aparecido el conflicto mapuche como tema. Pero es un desafío importante que presentemos como gobierno cuál es nuestra postura y qué es lo que hemos estado haciendo a favor de los indígenas.

- **Ministra, ¿sueña con que se acabe de una buena vez el conflicto mapuche?**

Son sueños diarios.

- **¿Sueños o pesadillas?**

Nooo, sueños. Pero es un tema demasiado profundo que es imposible pretender solucionarlo en seis años. Lo que estamos haciendo es sentar las bases para que el país asuma una realidad que no había enfrentado durante años.

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