THE POLITICAL ECOLOGY OF INDIGENOUS MOVEMENTS AND TREE PLANTATIONS IN CHILE

THE ROLE OF POLITICAL STRATEGIES OF MAPUCHE COMMUNITIES IN SHAPING THEIR SOCIAL AND NATURAL LIVELIHOODS

by

MARIA ISABEL DU MONCEAU DE BERGENDAL LABARCA

BA. Anthropology, Universidad Austral de Chile (1992)
MA. Environment, Development and Policy, University of Sussex (1996)

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

in

THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES (RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AND ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES)

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA (Vancouver)

April 2008

© Maria Isabel du Monceau de Bergendal Labarca, 2008
Abstract

In Chile’s neoliberal economy, large-scale timber plantations controlled by national and multinational forest corporations have expanded significantly on traditional indigenous territories. Chile’s forestry sector began to expand rapidly in 1974, the year following the military coup, owing to the privatization of forest lands and the passing of Decree 701. That law continues to provide large subsidies for afforestation, as well as tax exemptions for plantations established after 1974. As a consequence, conflicts have developed between indigenous communities and forestry companies, with the latter actively supported by government policies. The Mapuche people, the largest indigenous group in Chile, have been demanding the right to control their own resources. Meanwhile, they have been bearing the physical and social costs of the forestry sector’s growth.

Since democracy returned to Chile in 1990, governments have done little to strengthen the rights of indigenous peoples. Government policy in this area is ill-defined; it consists mainly of occasional land restitution and monetary compensation when conflicts with the Mapuche threaten to overheat. This, however, is coupled with heavy-handed actions by the police and the legal system against Mapuche individuals and groups.

From a political ecology perspective, this thesis examines how indigenous communities resort to various political strategies to accommodate, resist, and/or negotiate as political-economic processes change, and how these responses in turn shape natural resource management and, it follows, the local environment. My findings are that the environmental and social impacts associated with landscape transformation are shaped not only by structural changes brought about by economic and political forces but also, simultaneously, by smaller acts of political, cultural, and symbolic protest. Emerging forms of political agency are having expected and unexpected consequences that are giving rise to new processes of environmental change.

Evidence for my argument is provided by a case study that focuses on the political strategies followed by the Mapuche movement. I analyze the obstacles that are preventing the Chilean government from addressing more effectively the social, economic, and cultural needs of indigenous peoples through resource management policies. Government policies toward the Mapuche have not encompassed various approaches that might facilitate conflict resolution, such as effective participation in land use plans, natural resource management, the protection of the cultural rights of indigenous communities, and the Mapuche people’s right to their own approaches to development. Employing Foucault’s notion of governmentality, I argue that, while the Mapuche have widely contested the state’s neoliberal policies, they have nevertheless been drawn into governing strategies that are fundamentally neoliberal in character. These strategies have reconfigured their relationship with the state, NGOs, and foreign aid donors. Operating at both formal and informal levels of social and political interaction, this new mentality of government employs coercive and co-optive measures to cultivate Mapuche participation in the neoliberal modernization project, while continuing to neglect long-standing relations of inequality and injustice that underpin conflicts over land and resources.
# Table of Contents

Abstract................................................................................................................................................. ii
Table of Contents ................................................................................................................................ iii
List of Tables ....................................................................................................................................... vi
List of Figures..................................................................................................................................... vii
List of Illustrations............................................................................................................................ viii
List of Appendices............................................................................................................................... ix
List of Acronyms.................................................................................................................................. x
Acknowledgments ............................................................................................................................... xi
Dedication ........................................................................................................................................... xii
Chapter 1. Introduction....................................................................................................................... 1
Merging Theory with the Case Study through Political Ecology .......................................................... 5
Contributions towards Understanding the Political Ecology of Tree Plantations and Indigenous Movements................................................................................................................................. 11
Rationale of the Thesis......................................................................................................................... 20
Structure of the Dissertation ................................................................................................................ 31
Chapter 2. Research Design .............................................................................................................. 35
Designing the Case Study .................................................................................................................... 35
The Case Study: Comunidades en Conflicto de Collipulli .................................................................. 38
Methodological and Analytical Tools.................................................................................................. 41
  Data Collection............................................................................................................................. 42
  Data Analysis Procedures............................................................................................................. 45
  Outcomes of the Research ............................................................................................................ 46
Chapter 3. Background .................................................................................................................... 48
The Mapuche People............................................................................................................................ 48
Historical Context: Land Exclusion and Cultural Denial ................................................................ 50
  The Republican Period ................................................................................................................ 50
  Allende’s Agrarian Reforms (1970–1973) ................................................................................... 53
  The Military Regime and the Counter-Reform (1973–1989)....................................................... 54
  Indigenous Rights under Succeeding Neoliberal Regimes........................................................... 56
The Overlaps between Indigenous Land Seizure and the Forest Development Model in Chile ...... 59
The Renaissance of a New Indigenous Movement............................................................................ 64
Chapter 4. The Significance of Temperate Forests: From Forest Ecosystems to Industrial Plantations ................................................................................................................................. 66
Local and Global Perceptions of Temperate Forests: A Comparison between Chile and British Columbia ................................................................. 67
How Temperate Forests Are Valued. State, Assessment and Trends ................................................................. 70
Forest Policy and Management Practices ................................................................................................. 74
Forest Endowments and Land Tenure Systems .......................................................................................... 75
Industrial Forestry in Temperate Forests: The Chilean Case ......................................................................... 76
The role of Chile’s Forest Industry in the Global Economy: Forests for Pulp ......................................... 80
Patterns of Consumption and Demand .................................................................................................. 82
Controversy: Tree Plantations and Native Forests in Chile ........................................................................ 86
Actors’ Positions, Their Values, and Discursive Frames ........................................................................... 88
The Industry ................................................................................................................................. 88
The Government ............................................................................................................................. 90
Environmentalists ............................................................................................................................ 91
Indigenous People ............................................................................................................................... 92
Small-Scale Foresters and Peasant Farmers ......................................................................................... 93
The Legal and Conceptual Battles: Reading Between the Lines ............................................................ 94
On the Way to Sustainable Forest Management … Whose Knowledge and Values Count? .......... 96
Conclusion ........................................................................................................................................... 99
Chapter 5. Ecological and Social Transformations in Indigenous Territories: An Environmental Racism Perspective .............................................................................. 102
The Social Construction of Race and Forms of Racism .............................................................................. 104
Commonsense Privileges: Making Power Systems Invisible ..................................................................... 106
The Environmental Racism Framework ................................................................................................. 107
Dismantling Environmental Racism in Chile ........................................................................................... 111
Loss of Territory and Neoliberal Expansion ............................................................................................. 115
The Gaps Between Indigenous and Non-Indigenous Populations: Beyond Statistics on Poverty .... 117
Social and Environmental Impacts Associated with Tree Plantations ...................................................... 122
1. Conversion of the Agricultural Sector and the Impacts of Plantations on Small Farms .................. 122
2. Displacement of the Rural Sector and Indigenous People ................................................................. 126
3. Labour Problems and Working Conditions on the Plantations ....................................................... 127
4. Landscape Transformations ........................................................................................................... 128
5. Loss of Capital as a Result of Export-Oriented Subsidies and Incentives ........................................ 130
6. Water Scarcity and Water Pollution .............................................................................................. 130
7. Changes in Soil Quality ................................................................................................................ 134
8. Loss of Biodiversity ........................................................................................................................ 135
9. Human and Ecosystem Health Risks Associated with Excessive Use of Pesticides, Fertilizers, and Herbicides ........................................................................................................ 136
10. Uncertainty and Risk Associated with the Use of Genetically Modified Trees ............................ 137
Institutionalized and Systemic Forms of Environmental Racism .......................................................... 139
List of Tables

Table 3.1. Process of Mapuche’s forced settlement (1884-1929).......................... 64
Table 3.2. Total of land of indigenous reserves seized during the military regime… 67
Table 3.3. Law 701 payment summary.............................................................. 73
Table 4.1. Total Chilean radiata pine and eucalyptus planting............................... 91
Table 4.2. Chile’s forest product export by major commodity.............................. 92
Table 4.3. Annual growth rate for radiate pine................................................... 94
Table 4.4. Chile’s forestry export by destination................................................ 96
Table 5.1. Poverty levels, indigenous and non-indigenous population...................... 130
Table 5.2. Levels of poverty by region.............................................................. 130
Table 5.3. Employment rates in Colipulli.......................................................... 136
Table 5.4. Migration rates in the IX and VIII regions........................................ 137
List of Figures

Figure 1.1. Conceptual model................................................................. 33
Figure 1.2. Underlying and direct causes of deforestation and degradation of native forests in Indigenous territories............................................................... 34
Figure 1.3. Multilevel analysis................................................................. 35
Figure 4.1. Evolution of pine plantations in Chile........................................ 88
Figure 4.2. Cumulative plantation area in Chile 1978-2000.......................... 90
Figure 7.1. The relationship between objectives and political strategies............ 190
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Illustration</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>Map with current properties of Indigenous communities in Collipulli</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>Front page of a local newspaper depicting Mapuche as terrorists</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>Mapuche ancestral territory</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>Chile’s pulp production by type 1990-2010</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>Comparative advantages of pulp production</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>Concentration of plantations and Mapuche property</td>
<td>131</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>Mapuche property surrounded by plantations</td>
<td>132</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>Mapuche farmer harvesting eucalyptus</td>
<td>134</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>Radiata pine plantations</td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>Mininco plant in Collipulli</td>
<td>142</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>Water reservoir in Collipulli</td>
<td>143</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>Soil erosion in Lonco Mahuida (Collipulli)</td>
<td>144</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>High density eucalyptus plantations</td>
<td>145</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>Formerly planted areas</td>
<td>146</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>Forest operations under police protection</td>
<td>219</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
List of Appendices

Appendix A. Research Objectives and Guiding Questions.............................. 263
Appendix B. Definitions of the Cadastre and Evaluation of Chile’s Native
Vegetation Resources................................................................. 266
Appendix C. Legal Definitions of Decree Law 701 (DL 701)............................. 267
Appendix D. Forest Stewardship Council - Principle 10: Plantations............... 268
# List of Acronyms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ADI</td>
<td>Areas de Desarrollo Indígena, “Indigenous Development Areas”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONADI</td>
<td>Comisión Nacional de Desarrollo Indígena, “National Corporation for Indigenous Development”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONAF</td>
<td>Corporación Nacional Forestal, “National Forestry Corporation”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONAMA</td>
<td>Comisión Nacional para el Medioambiente, “National Commission for the Environment”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CORMA</td>
<td>Corporación Nacional de la Madera, “National Timber Corporation”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INDAP</td>
<td>Instituto Nacional de Desarrollo Agropecuario, “National Institute for Agricultural Development”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FAO</td>
<td>Food and Agricultural Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FTAI</td>
<td>Fondo de Tierras y Aguas Indígenas, “Indigenous Land and Water Fund”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ODEPA</td>
<td>Oficina de estudios y políticas agrarias, “Office of Studies and Agrarian Policy”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SNA</td>
<td>Sociedad Nacional de Agricultura, “National Agricultural Society”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Acknowledgments

This thesis would not have been possible without the support of many people. I would like to offer special thanks to my supervisor, Terre Satterfield, for her kind support, advice, and endless patience in improving my writing and ensuring my continuous funding. Also thanks to my committee members, Juanita Sundberg, Alex Clapp, and Les Lavkulich, who read my numerous revisions and constantly offered their guidance and support.

A large number of students and members of the RMES Program and the University of British Columbia helped me complete this work. Among them, I would like especially to mention my friends Patricia Keen, Bhaskar Chakrabarti, David Brownstein, and Dorothy Schreiber, who read parts of my thesis and gave me their brilliant ideas and suggestions.

Thanks to the many institutions that provided me with the financial means to complete my research: the Government of Canada Award (ICCS), the University of British Columbia Fellowship, and the Keizo Obushi Scholarship from UNESCO.

I would like to give special thanks to the people in Chile who helped and facilitated my fieldwork: the Communities in Conflict of Collipulli, and the Insituto de Estudios Indigenas (Universidad de la Frontera). My special thanks to Jose Aylwin, Karina Prado, Victor Ancalaf, Alfredo Seguel, and Alejandra Malian, who provided me with priceless suggestions and hospitality throughout my fieldwork. I would also like to mention Dr. Antonio Viviani, my friend and colleague, who has inspired me in too many ways to mention here.

And finally but not least, thanks to my husband, daughter, parents, sisters, and numerous friends who endured this long process with me. Though they did not and still do not understand completely what I was doing, their love and support were essential for the completion of my work. It is to them I dedicate this thesis.
Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to three wonderful women: my grandmother Laura, my mother Carmen, and my daughter Belen, who taught me to enjoy life the most...
Chapter 1. Introduction

In this thesis I examine the political ecology of the resource conflict between the Mapuche, the largest indigenous group in Chile, and the expanding tree plantation industry in southern Chile. My objective is to explain how indigenous communities—in this case, the Mapuche—use various political strategies to accommodate, resist, and/or negotiate access to and use of resources in changing political-economic landscapes (local, national, and global) and how, in turn, those responses shape natural resource management and, it follows, the local environment. I begin this chapter by outlining the present-day context of this study.

Under Chile’s economic liberalization program, large-scale timber plantations controlled by national and multinational forestry companies have gained access to traditional indigenous territories within the Chilean nation-state. As a consequence, conflicts have arisen between indigenous communities and forestry companies, with the latter actively supported by government policies. International economists view Chile’s forest development program as a success, yet that program has also generated considerable controversy regarding its costs and benefits (Newbold 2004). As a result of the rapid expansion of tree plantations, land and resources are now concentrated in the hands of a few powerful economic groups; at the same time, most of the environmental and social costs associated with the forestry industry are being borne by other sectors of society, especially indigenous communities (McFall and MacKinnon 2001). As one result, concepts such as environmental protection, conservation, and biodiversity have become popularized and people are beginning to question how plantations are being managed, by whom, and for what. From my field observations in Chile, I well realize that tree plantations have become a highly charged political issue. Environmentalists are raising concerns about the future of Chile’s native forests, and indigenous people have long been battling the forestry companies to recover their ancestral lands. The Mapuche have organized themselves into a loosely structured movement and have adopted various political tactics to confront the government’s systematic denial of Mapuche land and resource rights.

The Mapuche comprise almost 10 percent of Chile’s population. At one time they occupied vast territories in central and southern Chile, but their rights to those lands have been sharply curtailed since the early 1900s (Bengoa 1985). They began to lose those territories during
colonial times; the process then accelerated with the advent of industrial capitalism, which privileged the interests of foreign investors. As a result of ongoing wars in the second half of the nineteenth century, more than half the Mapuche had been exterminated by the early 1880s (Sznajder 2003). Soon after, they lost almost 95 percent of their territory to land grabs, during which their cattle were stolen and their crops were burned. In later years, many Mapuche died from hunger and disease (Aylwin 1999). Others died during skirmishes with the colonial occupiers, including the police and the army. When the conflict began—a conflict recorded in Chilean history as the “Pacification of Araucania”—Mapuche territories comprised 10 million hectares; by the time it ended, 500,000.1 By 1970 the Mapuche were left with less than 300,000 hectares (Gonzalez 1986).

Between 1970 and 1973, during the presidency of Salvador Allende, the government allocated roughly 500,000 hectares to Mapuche communities. But those years were followed by the military dictatorship of Agusto Pinochet, during which Mapuche territories were again reduced to less than 300,000 hectares. This was the result of two decrees, which together dismantled community properties and assigned individual title to each community member (DASIN INDAP 1990, in Aylwin and Castillo 1990). The expropriation of indigenous lands was part of Pinochet’s strategy to “neoliberalize” the economy. In part this meant reorienting the economy towards exports, privatising public industries and splitting up common property or communal regimes. New forestry policies based on subsidies and incentives encouraged a strong expansion of monocrop tree plantations and the planting of radiata pine in place of native forests. This transformed the rich temperate rainforests of south-central Chile so profoundly that the Mapuche people began referring to those plantings as the “new green army”—an ironic allusion to the link between the dictatorship’s oppressive policies and the invasion of the radiata pine plantations.

The expansion of pine monoculture has been greatly enabled by Chile’s neoliberal economic model, which the dictatorship imposed during the early 1970s (see also Aylwin 1999; McFall and MacKinnon 2001). As a result of that model, Mapuche communities have been impoverished, their residents reduced to a marginal existence on degraded lands in a

---

1 Following its victory against Peru and Bolivia in the Pacific War in 1883, the Chilean army swept southwards, thus incorporating the Mapuche territories into the Chilean state. Chilean history refers to this as the “pacification of Araucania.”
geographically reduced territory. When one walks through their fields, one quickly sees that Mapuche communities are now surrounded by tree plantations owned by the forestry companies. Those companies have been expanding rapidly; and that expansion, combined with a depressed agricultural sector, has forced the Mapuche to bear the social, economic, and environmental impacts associated with plantations. Those who have remained on their lands have been excluded from local “economic development.” Some Mapuche families have been forced onto more fragile and unproductive lands; most, though, have migrated to urban centres, where they tend to live in peripheral areas and to work in the low-wage sector. At the time of the 1992 census, most Mapuche were urban dwellers: of the 906,000 remaining Mapuche, 44 percent lived in Santiago, the national capital, and only 16 percent in the IX Region (INE 1993), their traditional rural homeland.

Since the fall of the military regime in 1989, successive democratic governments have failed to make progress in respecting and promoting the rights of indigenous peoples, especially the rights of the Mapuche. The parties of the Concertación have been in power since the return to democracy in 1990. Under the Indigenous Pact (adopted in 1989), they have committed themselves to recognizing indigenous peoples in the Constitution and to undertaking affirmative action in favour of ethnic minorities. But that is all on paper. In practice, as I will explain, the government’s core policy has amounted to an ill-defined land restitution plan, combined with development programs and monetary compensation, the overall goal being to prevent an indigenous insurgency. This has been coupled with an aggressive police and judicial campaign against those Mapuche leaders and communities that oppose the occupation of their ancestral lands by large farm and forest owners.

In 1999, local people witnessed the militarization of the contested areas, the stated aim of which was to protect the Mapuche and businessmen from further conflict. Protests have been classified

---

2 According to the 2002 census conducted by the Institute of National Statistics (INE), Mapuche account for 15.5 percent of the population of the IX Region, 3 percent of the population of Santiago, 4 percent of the national population, and 87 percent of the total national indigenous population. However, 2002’s census question asked respondents to declare their own ethnic origin; the 1992 census question had been based on “belonging.” The sharp difference in results between 1992 (928,000 Mapuche) and 2002 (692,192 Mapuche) has been attributed to changes in the question as well as to factors associated with discrimination.

3 Also known as the Coalition of Parties for Democracy, the Concertación is an alliance of centre-left political parties, founded in 1988.
as a “threat to the state,” and on that pretext the police have invoked state security laws and carried out antiterrorism measures (both promulgated during the military regime)\(^4\) against protesters. As a result, hundreds of Mapuche have been charged by civil and military courts for actions relating to land conflicts. In addition to a new procedural reform in the IX Region, the Chilean courts have allowed for the selective application of state security and antiterrorism laws, thus denying those detained a fair and timely trial. Mella (2007) has researched this issue thoroughly. He has found that hundreds of Mapuche have been jailed in recent years for activities relating to land disputes. Typically, the charges include criminal conspiracy, contempt of authority, arson, squatting, aggravated kidnapping, rioting and disturbing the peace, robbery, and extortion. These people face jail, house arrest, and various probation orders.

The strong growth of the forestry sector has been supported by government policies whose purpose is to protect the investments of the timber companies. At the same time, following current trends in other countries, the Chilean government has launched new policies aimed at combating discrimination against indigenous people, along with programs to raise the Mapuche out of poverty. In March 2001 the Inter-American Development Bank (IADB) loaned Chile US$80 million to fund programs in education, health, and economic development (personal interview with former director of CONADI). This was supplemented with a $53 million contribution from the Chilean government. In September of that same year, The Ministry of Planning (MIDEPLAN) established the Orígenes (Origins) Program, whose aim was to foster an intersectorial, intercultural, decentralized, and participatory approach to assisting indigenous development areas (ADIs)\(^5\). All of this was intended to complement the Indigenous Water and Land Fund (FTAI), whose specific purpose was to purchase lands for indigenous people. That

---

\(^4\) The Anti-Terrorist Law is a legacy of the military government (1973–1990). Pinochet introduced it in 1984 to deal with the actions of armed political groups that opposed the military regime. It doubles the normal sentences for some offences, makes pretrial release more difficult, enables the prosecution to withhold evidence from the defence for up to six months, and makes it possible to convict defendants on testimony given by anonymous witnesses. These witnesses appear in court behind screens so that the defendants and the public cannot see them.

\(^5\) [http://www.origenes.cl](http://www.origenes.cl)
same year the government convened the Historical Truth and New Deal Commission, on which the state, the Chilean people, and the indigenous communities of Chile were all represented.\textsuperscript{6}

Since 1994, MIDEPLAN, through the National Indigenous Development Corporation (CONADI), has purchased more than 250,000 hectares of land and transferred it to indigenous people.\textsuperscript{7} Nonetheless, as the media often report, conflict has continued in Mapuche areas of the south. Land disputes between forestry companies and the Mapuche have not ceased, given that the government’s concomitant aim is to support the resource extraction industry. Many authors have analyzed recent public policies towards the Mapuche, especially as those policies relate to their exclusion from Chile’s democratization process (Contesse 2006; Castro 2005; Flores-Borquez and Grover 2005; Bengoa 2000). Yet little attention has been paid to the impact of land acquisitions on indigenous communities or to the long-term sustainability of land transfers.

It is in this context that I became interested in the relationship between social movements and the environment—in particular, the social and cultural dynamics of resource management. More traditional analyses of environmental degradation examine the impact of policies on people and their land; by contrast, I will be emphasizing the role played by indigenous political mobilization (i.e., social movements) regarding access to lands and resources, and the environmental transformation that results.

**Merging Theory with the Case Study through Political Ecology**

In this section I review the various literatures that are pertinent to this case study. My research has been guided by premises derived from multiple theoretical sources. Having examined recent studies on political ecology, I considered various theories for explaining particular phenomena and how they might relate to field observations.

As an anthropologist working on environmental issues, my research is a fusion—it does not derive from any single discipline. However, given that I view environmental

---

\textsuperscript{6} The Report of the Commission of Historical Truth and a New Deal for Indigenous Peoples was finally released in 2004.

\textsuperscript{7} \url{http://www.conadi.cl}
degradation/rehabilitation as both a material process and a socially constructed one, I have adopted a political ecological approach as an overarching framework—as one, moreover, in which power and discourses play a key role. In other words, I am embracing not a theory but rather a theoretical framework that is inherently eclectic. One of the great contributions of political ecology “stems from its hybridity and its capacity to break down boundaries among multiple paradigms and disciplines” (Belsky 2002, 276). I view political ecology as a bundle of linked concepts and theories. In this regard, each of the following chapters will have its own particular emphasis. I will be expanding on and integrating into political ecology theories relating to social movements, environmental justice, and cultural politics.

This theoretical framework is useful when it comes to examining the politics of the environment. When disparate groups negotiate access to resources, unequal power relations come to the fore. As a field of study, political ecology has always linked the actions of resource users in specific settings with the politics, institutions, and social relations that constitute those settings (Bryant and Bailey 1997). Political ecologists attempt to show that the environment is framed by relations of political economy and simultaneously contested in political, cultural, and symbolic ways. According to authors such as Vayda and Walters (1999, 167), this framework has focused excessively on the politics of natural resources “and has missed or scanted the complex and contingent interactions of factors whereby actual environmental changes often are produced.” However as Paulson, Gezon, and Watts (2003, 206) argue, “the politics of the environment should be understood as a contested and negotiated domain in continual dialectic relationships with biophysical environments.” Political ecology links local and global political economies with issues of ethnicity, gender, class, and land and property rights, as well as with the politics of control and resistance as they pertain to control over resources and to biophysical processes.

My theoretical framework has been inspired by ongoing debates within political ecology—a field that is well aware of its critics and that has stimulated fresh thinking in environmental studies. In the present day, two questions preoccupy political ecologists: First, how can we better link the biophysical and social/political-economic dimensions of environmental issues—that is, how can we be political and ecological both in practice and in our insights? And second, how are local ecologies tied to global processes? Both environmental and political theories have been developed from the perspective of individual fields such as anthropology, sociology,
history, geography, political science, and ecology. Each of these fields has its own methods (often multiscale), which can be both qualitative and quantitative: participant observation, surveys, discourse analysis, narrative approaches, modelling, examination of secondary data, focus groups, participative rural appraisals (PRAs), interviews, and spatial and temporal analyses (including those made possible by geographical information systems [GISs]).

The political ecology approach was first taken by geographers and anthropologists, some of whom set out to link cultural ecology (the relationship between a given social system and its niche natural environment) to political economy (the relationship between production and consumption). However different their understandings of environmental change, both geographers and anthropologists have distanced themselves from the deterministic theories of the past, which are based on cultural materialism and bounded physical and cultural systems (Steward 1955; White and Dillingham 1973; Rappaport 1984) as well as on Malthusian explanations of environmental degradation, food scarcity, and famine. In this regard, several trends in anthropology have confronted cultural ecology by going beyond the study of isolated communities living in harmony with their physical environment.

The earliest writings on political ecology were a response to the need to integrate environmental theories with political ones. The term political ecology has been often attributed to Eric Wolf, author of “Ownership and Political Ecology” (1972), and its origins are described well by Paulson and her colleagues (2003; see also Peet and Watts 1996). As these authors note, peasant and postcolonial studies generated questions about social differentiation, exploitation, and the impact of global markets on the Third World’s rural poor. The earliest studies looked mainly at land use practices within local political economies as well as the global economy. However, unlike traditional peasant studies—such as those by Chayanov (1986) and Sahlins (1972), which emphasized the household level and local economies—recent analyses on contract farming and agrarian change have examined the “interaction among local and global forces, political economy, and the environment" (Grossman 1998, 211), as well as the capacity of peasants to respond to ecological and political change (Sheridan 1988). Paulson and her colleagues (2003, 207) have observed a growth in neo-Marxist analysis in the social sciences and development studies (Bryant and Bailey 1997), including “world-systems theory, dependency theory, and Marxist-inspired structural approaches advanced concepts of control over and access to
resources, marginalization, surplus appropriation, and relations of production and power” (Paulson et al, 2003)

A number of influential studies were carried out between the 1930s and the 1960s, but it was not until the 1980s that political ecology was recognized as a field in its own right, in the aftermath of publications by Watts (1983) and most notably by Blaikie and Brookfield (1987). According to the latter authors, “political ecology combines the concerns of ecology and a broadly defined political economy. Together, this encompasses the constantly shifting dialectic between society and land-based resources and also within classes and groups within society itself” (Blaikie and Brookfield, in Paulsen et al. 2003, 2005).

Early works in political ecology focused on the relationship between humans and their biophysical environment. Applying methods from various disciplines, scholars brought together concepts from cultural ecology and political economy. On a more regional scale, political ecologists rejected the conventional wisdom of the time: that environmental degradation results from ecological factors, technology deficits, or population growth. They pointed instead to processes operating on different scales and at different times that combined to create the conditions for land degradation. Blaikie and Brookfield’s (1987) *Land Degradation and Society* has provided explanations for land degradation besides the one that links it to population pressure on resources. Their book includes examples of soil fertility improving with the intensification of land use, and of erosion increasing as population declines.

During the 1990s, however, instead of focusing on deterministic analyses and the biophysical aspects of environmental change, political ecologists began taking a post-structuralist approach. The field now focused mainly on local-level social movements (including environmental movements), symbolic contestations, and power/knowledge relations as articulated through discourses and practice (Peet and Watts 1996; Escobar 1999). New studies have broadened political ecology’s explanatory powers by assigning greater weight to the effects of positionality—in terms of gender relations (Schroeder 1999; Rocheleau, Thomas-Slayter, and Wangari 1996), race, culture, ethnicity, class, and other social relations—on ecological change and access to resources. In this vein, important contributions include Schroeder’s research on how gender relations affect land stabilization and tree planting in Gambia. He shows how men
have used a tree-planting program to reclaim land that had been given to women, who had been using it for high-value horticulture (Schroeder 1999).

Other studies have drawn from constructivist, post-structural, and postmodern theories to challenge prevailing notions of environmental degradation. Here, one of the most interesting studies was conducted by Fairhead and Leach (1998) along the border between the Sahelian savannah and the tropical rainforests in West Africa. The authors challenged conventional associations between population pressure and environmental degradation in Africa by showing how the area in question was in fact natural savannah and that forest patches on the grasslands were in fact human artefacts. It had long been contended that human activity had destroyed large areas of forest, which had been turned into savannah through indiscriminate burning and overgrazing. At the time of the study, government and development agencies were restricting access to and use of the remaining forests in order to preserve them. Yet having analyzed historical sources and overlapping maps, Fairhead and Leach came to the opposite conclusion: the areas in question were in fact natural savannah, which the people had enriched by planting trees. In this case, people had actually increased the region’s forest cover; far from degrading the ecosystem, human intervention had created a new one. This sort of research is challenging the more simplistic neo-Malthusian narratives about population pressure as well as homogeneous characterizations of “culture.”

To address equity and social justice issues, political ecology has generated its own critical perspective on Third World environmental studies (Peet and Watts 1996; Martinez-Alier 2002). The field has also critically analyzed those institutional and developmental processes that are informed by movements for social and environmental justice (Bryant 1995; Guha and Martinez-Alier 1997; Zimmerer 2000). These studies have examined the ecological and cultural dimensions of distribution and equality and have found that “the spatial distribution of environmental degradation and resource access is unequal both within localities and globally” (Gray and Moseley 2005, 15). At the same time, the proliferation of social movements and ecological populism is playing a key role in countering environmental injustices. As Martinez-Alier (2002) has observed, ecological populism pivots more around social justice than around conservation and biodiversity per se. Nonetheless, this kind of environmentalism is not just about poverty; it is also about the need for marginalized groups to control their own resources and to protect their survival rights.
Political ecologists also realize that in both theory and practice, analyses of environmental change and representations of such change have to incorporate multiscale analyses, both temporal and spatial, including locally and globally scaled studies of the following: landscape transformations, impacts or reactions to “globalization,” North–South issues, transnational livelihoods, commodities, and alternatives to free trade. As Blaikie and Brookfield (1987, 79) point out, “one of the major problems of building a theory of soil erosion is the high degree of contingency which always accompanies any explanation of soil erosion at a particular place.” Viewed locally, environmental degradation seems to be tied to local environmental and social conditions. Yet at the same time, “land-use conflicts are largely conjunctural and thus difficult to theorize” (Bassett 1988, 472). Bridging the gap between what goes on at the local level and the broader political-economic processes that shape events has been one of the principal challenges facing political ecologists.

The North–South dichotomy—relating especially to inequalities of resource distribution, but also to environmental inequalities between industrialized countries and developing ones—has also been an important focus for political ecologists. Specifically, this issue includes the North’s disproportionate consumption of resources (Grossman 1998), as well as the political ecology of war—an ecology that brings to light the otherwise obscure relationship between natural resources and armed conflicts (Le Billon 2001). Recent studies have also examined transnational and North–South environmental histories in order to analyze flows of trade and knowledge and to question discourses of a pristine, edenic nature versus the very different conceptions of nature and conservation that apply in situ (Zimmerer and Bassett 2003; Guha 2000). A focus on North–South relations has “allowed political ecologists to assess a considerable set of representational practices in relation to ‘alternative’ forms of consumption in the North that seem notably to have direct and substantial effects on people and environments in the South” (Bryant and Goodman 2004, 345). These cross-spatial analyses have been conducted for development programs (Ferguson 1994; Escobar 1995), conservation agendas (Brosius 1999), and even concepts such as “community” (Agrawal and Gibson 1999) and identity and difference (de la Cadena 2000; Sundberg 2004, 2006).

The contributions and successes of political ecology show just how complex and dynamic environmental issues are. This in turn suggests why a new generation of political ecologists is developing new areas of research. These new areas include the political ecology of genetically
modified organisms and intellectual property rights, as well as the impact of genetically modified organisms, nanotechnology, urban expansion, resource wars, waste management, and the drug trade (Robbins 2004).

How to do political ecology is not the only question that many researchers face today. Other, more specific questions are constantly being debated—for example, How can political ecology be made more relevant to policy? As a theoretical and methodological approach, political ecology is still “in development” through research, analysis, and practice across a wide variety of disciplines. It is inherently hybrid and amorphous. Possibly its only distinctive and thus characterizing feature is that it consistently analyzes power relations and examines politicized environments. To paraphrase Paulson and her colleagues (2003, 205), the analysis of factors that shape power relations among human groups, and the influences of those relations on the environment, “has led to results that have challenged dominant interpretations of the causes of environmental degradation and has contested the prevailing prescriptions for solving such problems.”

Contributions towards Understanding the Political Ecology of Tree Plantations and Indigenous Movements

This study contributes to theoretical work on nature–society relations by studying those relations in the context of daily livelihood struggles that arise as part of competing claims over resources. Those struggles are embedded in the broader socio-political context—that is, in the context of national and international neoliberal political and economic interventions. At first glance, tree plantations and the Mapuche movement might be seen as two completely unrelated topics. But when we view forests as a contested resource for which there are conflicting perceptions of use, we can begin to see the links between politics and environmental change—that is, “political ecology.” Without the insights of that interdisciplinary framework, I would not have been able to explore issues of the power/knowledge nexus and the struggle for control over resources.

---

8 As shown in recent meetings/debates of the Cultural and Political Ecology (CAPE) speciality group of the American Association of Geographers and the Environment and Anthropology (A&E) section of the American Association of Anthropologists.
Similarly, it is important to understand the institutional regulations and economic practices that encompass both the cultural politics and the political economy of environmental struggles.

In this chapter and those that follow, I build on the insights offered through the political ecology lens to argue that the sustainable management of forests should not be discussed solely in technical or economic terms. The social relations of power, including human rights abuses, and their direct and underlying causes should also be addressed. Violence— including human rights abuses—is connected to environment and resource conflicts all over the world. When viewed in isolation, many of these conflicts seem to be little more than incidents of criminal activity in the physical space in question; but when the broader social context is considered, it becomes clear that a recurring pattern of human rights violations can be linked to natural resource loss (FERN 2001). This holistic approach can help us avoid simplistic linkages between environmental conflicts and social phenomena—for example, the claim that scarcity causes violence (Homer-Dixon 1994).

My approach is more closely related to Peluso and Watts’s (2001) understanding of violent environments—that is, the “ways that specific resource environments (such as agricultural lands, tropical forests, or oil reserves), environmental processes (deforestation, conservation, or resource abundance), and cultural politics are constituted by, and in part constitute, the political economy of access to and control over resources” (2001, 5). Conflicts over forests in Chile, for instance, are not the result of overpopulation. Rather, the demand for forest resources arose in the historical context of land seizures and external demands for forest resources. Thus we need to consider the broader economic and political context in which these conflicts have arisen.

My research draws from recent works in political ecology that take a post-structuralist approach to their analyses and that in this way highlight the social construction of nature and the imposition of dominant discourses (Escobar 1999; Soper 1995; Fairhead and Leach 1998, Robbins 2004; Shroeder 1999; Gupta 1998). Following this line, I will be challenging essentialist notions linked to class and economic forces, and emphasizing culture and politics as the sites of discourse and the terrains of construction (i.e., rather than determinacy). As Thompson (1984) notes, discourse is the ideological practice that sustains and reproduces the relations of dominance. However, discourse is also an ongoing process of negotiating and contesting those relations of dominance.
In contrast to structuralist approaches, which embrace materialistic conceptions of discourse and have a class-based focus, I argue that agency does much to shape relations of domination. This is especially visible in identity politics and place-based social movements (Escobar and Alvarez 1992). Following a research need identified by Martinez-Alier (2002) as well as by Paulson and her colleagues (2003), I will be emphasizing local responses to global economic and political forces. Communities are generally viewed as “passive recipients” of development programs and state interventions; yet they can in fact be active participants in change (Guha and Martinez-Alier 1997). Globalization has led to economic and cultural uniformity; it has also engendered new opportunities for human agency in relation to governance processes. Indeed, economic, political, and cultural globalization has shaped how social movements operate, with impacts that are sometimes unexpected. We also need to analyze and understand the role played by indigenous peoples as evolving political actors (Brysk 2000; Yashar 2005; Sundberg 2004, 2006). Sometimes this role involves taking part in the government apparatus, sometimes it takes the form of protest movements, and sometimes more radical efforts are made to reinvent politics. As Agrawal (2005, 211) notes, “the relationships of subjects to the environment need to be examined in their emergence, not simply taken as part of a larger politics by pre-existing interests.”

When approaching this study, I selected three specific literatures to help me to understand how resources are perceived, accessed, and used. First, I have employed a social constructionist approach alongside the one offered by critical theory (Cavallaro 2001) to address the conflicting values and representations of nature that underpin the different ways in which resources are accessed, managed, and protected. Joining the growing number of scholars who reject both the reification of nature and society as separate entities and the view of nature as a passive thing, political ecologists are embracing critical realism; that is, they are looking at nature as an active agent in determining human–nature interaction (Zimmerer and Bassett 2003; Forsyth 2003). In this thesis I will be attempting to understand the nature of environmental changes by incorporating certain aspects of social constructivism while rejecting strong forms of relativism. Whatever the criticisms levelled at social constructionist approaches (Burningham and Cooper 1999), environmental scientists of diverse backgrounds are aware of the complexity and the heterogeneity of the spatio-temporal systems they are dealing with; thus it is increasingly
evident that some form of relativism is unavoidable, especially in reference to studies relating to biodiversity, sustainability, and conservation.

Historical changes are often visible in changing concepts of nature, because the natural/material world is permanently transformed by society and also because humans themselves change their perceptions of nature (Vogel 1996). A social constructionist view of nature emphasizes the historical transformations whereby, for instance, an ideology of nature as a resource for capitalist development becomes (at least in part) an ideology emphasizing the aesthetic and non-functional values of nature (Hannigan 1995). The (social) construction of forest as a concept goes beyond the naive assumption that such terms are merely monikers of ostensibly value-neutral natural objects. In this way, forest become a social construction that reflects the manner in which the dominant group perceives it, and attaches value to it, as part of a system of knowledge and representation (Contreras 2001, 2). As Bruce Braun (2002) noted in his work on British Columbia’s “intemperate” rainforest, industrial forestry should be “situated in a wider field of cultural and historical practices—and relationships of power—through which these forests have been invested with layers of cultural and political meaning” (2002, 3). Conflicts over forest resources are an example of how history, language, and meaning all merge in and are reflected by what we try to define as “pure nature.” Satterfield’s (2002) ethnographic account of the debate surrounding the old-growth forests of the Pacific Northwest makes a similar point, in that she shows how environmental conflicts are also cultural struggles to define the discourses through which forests will be addressed and, it follows, their uses as commodities, wilderness preserves, or biological hotspots.

When I began examining the conflict between indigenous peoples and forest plantations, I soon realized that the imposition of one discourse over others, and the historical context of inequality linked to environmental issues, could not be examined without paying heed to their intersection with concurrent events, including questions of human rights and persistent forms of racism. My research therefore draws from diverse theoretical perspectives and critical thinkers—including Bourdieu, Habermas, and Foucault—as well as from critical race theorists writing in the field of law (Delgado 1995). This literature has been especially important when it comes to examining the Mapuche from an environmental racism perspective; after all, intentionally or not, discrimination rooted in government policies and private sector practices strikes the environment, health, biodiversity, local economies, security, and standard of living of
communities. The environmental racism experienced by indigenous people in Chile, as in other countries, is visible in environmental conflicts as well as in the actions that authorities and private companies undertake in order to achieve “development” or “economic growth” (such as constructing highways, airports, hydroelectric dams, waste dumps, and monocrop plantations).

I have also drawn inspiration from the literature on the politics of resource control. Here, the works on political economy, environmental justice, and social movements address four main issues:

- The unequal power relationship between production and consumption in a global economy, within the framework of resource management policies and environmental regulation (Carrere and Lohmann 1996; Grossman 1998; Watts 1983).
- The social and cultural dynamic relating to access to natural resources (Leach 1994; Shroeder 1999; Peluso 1992).
- The unequal distribution of costs and benefits associated with resource management (Pulido 2000; Stonich 2001; Johnston 1997).
- The growth of Third World environmental-livelihood movements that merge environmental issues with those of social justice (Taylor 2000; Szas 1994; Bullard 1990; Guha and Martinez-Alier 1997).

Some critical questions in political ecology revolve today around environmental justice and its association with cultural relativism. How is it possible to accommodate multiple world views within a single shared system of values? One person’s profit may be another’s loss. Our understandings also depend on whose perspective we choose to take when determining whether something constitutes “degradation.”

New social movements are challenging concepts of democracy and development and thereby creating new forms of politics in which collective identities are reinforced. The impact of social movements on the democratization of cultural, social, economic, and political life has been especially strong in Latin America. According to identity and social movement theorists, “changes in environmental management regimes and environmental conditions have created opportunities or imperatives for local groups to secure and represent themselves politically” (Robbins 2004, 188). These movements often represent new forms of political action, in that
they emphasize collective identity and common values rather than—or in addition to—developed ideologies. This is addressed in the new literature on social movements (Alvarez, Dagnino, and Escobar 1998; Escobar and Alvarez 1992; Laraña, Johnston, and Gusfield 1994), which emphasizes the constructedness of social and political identity, in contrast to conventional social movement theories, which presuppose preconstituted categories of political actors (mainly class-based categories).

Ethnographic research has changed dramatically since the 1970s. Today’s anthropologists are reframing their field, having by and large accepted that cultures are not static, nor can they be construed as “authentic” or “spurious” (Clifford and Marcus 1986). There is now evidence that collective identities are constantly changing based on ethnicity and, in particular, on indigeneity or indigenousness. This new perspective emphasizes historical factors and cultural differences; it also acknowledges the unequal power relations characterized by “non-dominance” within a nation-state (Martinez Cobo 1986). Likewise, following Appadurai (1996), group identities constitute ethnoscapes—that is, they are deterritorialized or reterritorialized identities that transform their own spatial, cultural, environmental, and social worlds. The Mapuche have long been portrayed as homogenous, isolated, and almost extinct rural communities. These false representations are now being contested by new Mapuche identities that are as much a part of indigenous reality as land claims and rural development. There are urban Mapuche, some of them influential intellectual leaders who live today in Europe and North America. There are even the Punk Mapuche (“mapunkies” or “mapuheavies,” as they call themselves), a young Mapuche movement encountered in the cities of Argentine Patagonia, who fuse their indigenous identity with other features of the urban culture.

The local–global link is another important aspect of indigenous people’s movements, because it helps gather international support for local demands. Over the past few decades, the revitalization of indigenous movements has made those movements more visible on the world scene and helped vanquish romantic perceptions of isolated communities and “noble savages.” In addition, contemporary indigenous political organizations and the politics of identity in Latin America have forced anthropologists to change how they do fieldwork. There is no substitute for empiricism in the form of participant observation; that said, some of the key insights to be found in this study were found on the Internet.
In the course of my research, I have been especially interested in the links between indigenous movements and civil society—that is, in the interpretations and representations of culture and how they affect mobilization and movement orientation. As Ortner (1995) notes, resistance should be understood not just as opposition to domination but also as opportunities for alliances across social movements. She asserts that notions of resistance can be taken to the level of the subject and his/her relationship to resistance in terms of consciousness, identity, and intentionality. Theories about “new social movements” present an interesting approach not only in terms of organizational behaviour but also for understanding new forms of resistance and negotiation. Scott’s works, particularly *Weapons of the Weak* (1985), have been highly influential among political ecologists for their analysis of the meanings and effectiveness of social movements’ political practices and strategies. His ethnographic analysis of the Malaysian villagers in Sedaka challenges the very concept of a “revolutionary consciousness” and examines ordinary, everyday forms of resistance. He asserts that peasant disobedience need not be organized to be considered resistance, nor does its main objective need to be the undermining of the system. Rather, the need for self-help is the central point of struggle between the oppressed and the oppressor (ibid., 296).

Similarly, indigenous movements’ resistance strategies should be understood in a broader context, one in which local livelihood practices are entangled with broader political economic processes. Thus, we need to look at “problems of livelihood and production as much as problems of politics and power” and emphasize “negotiation and accommodation as much as resistance” (Bebbington 2000, 449). Indigenous peoples have developed new ways to intervene in local affairs: today they engage themselves with and against governments and corporate interests and at the same time insert themselves into exchange networks with other local, national, and transnational groups and communities. In the shifting terrain of rapidly changing structures of governance throughout the world today, indigenous resistance stimulates the development of a binary between local forms of resistance and national and global strategies. This in turn leads to complex dynamics, both between the state and indigenous peoples and within the indigenous communities themselves.

Because it has become more difficult to accommodate differences in a “legitimate” way, notions of citizenship, democracy, and authority are constantly changing. Indigenous organizations may use essentialist discourses while claiming their rights as citizens; they may even take on
governance functions. In that sense, indigenous responses are often ambivalent and adaptable. For instance, Mapuche activists in Chile may employ official discourses on democracy and justice while at the same time making it clear that negotiating these terms by no means implies acceptance of the discourse (Millaman 2000). Moreover, development, the state, and the markets are reshaping indigenous communities and movements. As Assies and Salman (2000) note, the current political mobilization of indigenous movements reflects their ability to link identity with agency by reshaping their agendas—and nurturing different alliances—in accordance with the changing political climate. In their edited volume, Blaser, Feit, and McRae (2004) offer some interesting reflections on “the agency of indigenous people” and on how many of the changes in the arenas in which indigenous peoples struggle have been reshaped by indigenous peoples themselves (albeit also by others). The changing roles of nation-states and NGOs, the expansion of transnational corporations and media networks, and the rise of the environmentalist and human rights movements have certainly, directly or indirectly, altered indigenous peoples’ strategies for achieving autonomy. Nonetheless, indigenous people’s agency and their alliances with other movements have helped transform alternative structures of governance—structures that are both inside and outside civil society and the state and markets: “Indigenous administrative structures and service organizations are, on occasion, tied to state structures for funding and legal legitimacy, which in turn makes them partly accountable to the state. Nevertheless, they may also be held accountable to other sources of authority deriving from established ‘traditional’ institutions, such as hereditary chieftaincies or elders, or in relation to locally held moral values and notions of legitimacy” (ibid., 15).

Though my emphasis is on the social and cultural dynamics of access to and control over resources, I will be including a third area of study in order to explore how forests are conceptualized and eventually managed. For this purpose, I have reviewed the literature on current debates regarding forest ecology and resource management. I have included this third thematic area not to protect myself from the main critique levelled against political ecology—9—that it overemphasizes social and political factors at the expense of ecological concerns—but rather to reveal how forests and forestry are understood in ways that cannot be explained merely through scientific endeavours (Contreras 2001). These points are further explained in chapter 4.

9 Main critiques focus on how political ecologists have scanted the complex and contingent interactions of actors whereby actual environmental changes often are produced (Vayda and Walters 1999)
Environmental changes, including forest expansion and changes in forest structure and species composition, reveal the importance of incorporating social science into biophysical studies. As Bradshaw and Bekoff (2001, 463) note, “far from being objective the development of ecological theory is connected to social movements and the personal experiences and personality of individual observers.” Foresters rely on scientific findings to manipulate and manage forest ecosystems and to avoid destroying ecological integrity; by contrast, many indigenous peoples and environmentalists contend that other forms of knowledge are crucial for a proper understanding of a forest’s ecological limits.

Most of the debate concerning forest management revolves around differing value and knowledge systems. For instance, proponents of forestry biotechnology such as Victor and Ausubel (2000) argue that in order to meet the global demand for forest products (and protect forests), we need to embark on a “great restoration project” based on genetically engineered trees grown in intensively managed plantations. They consider it possible that “efficient farmers and foresters” who grow “more food and fiber in ever-smaller areas” will add 200 million hectares of forest by 2050; if this does in fact happen, only 12 percent of the world's forests will need to be cut. However, as Charman (2005) notes, it is impossible to know in advance what sorts of impacts transgenic trees will have on native forests. Given the complexity of forest ecosystems, it is difficult to predict the impact of disturbances—be they natural or induced—on the structure, function, and diversity of forests. Yet forest policies and regulations tend to take generalized approaches as they relate to the structural, functional, spatial, and temporal variability of forest landscapes. Moreover, because of their very nature, the boundaries of forest ecosystems cannot be drawn with a sharp pencil. This makes it difficult to assess accurately the quality and changing health of forests, especially in relation to factors other than economic productivity. Some aspects of forests have yet to be assessed, such as their current species mix, soil, ecological functions, and environmental and social value.

As Hull et al. (2002) argue, differing assumptions about nature constrain people’s notions of what environmental conditions can and should exist and in that way also constrain the future that can be negotiated. Beliefs and value systems lie at the core of many debates about forest management and how nature is defined. For instance, new conceptual models in forestry have been attempting to inject greater “naturalness” into stand-level management, resorting to appealing terms such as “new forestry,” “close-to-nature forestry,” “nature-oriented
silviculture,” and “diversity-oriented silviculture” (O’Hara 2001). Similarly, “ecosystem management” and “adaptive management” have become new paradigms in forest management. One of the most popular ecosystem management strategies in Canada today is the “natural disturbance paradigm.” Under this form of management, the forestry industry attempts to ensure sustainability by mimicking nature in forest harvest practices. These concepts and strategies pose a fundamental challenge to conventional resource management philosophy and practices (Cortner and Moote 1999). Ecosystem- and adaptive-based approaches are nowadays viewed as ways to improve management regimes, spread the responsibility for management decisions, and strengthen the capacity of management institutions to learn and adapt to changing environmental and social conditions. But these are relatively new approaches, and many questions remain regarding their efficacy and their relevant components. Past failures in ecosystem adaptive management (EAM) have been judged mainly institutional rather than scientific (Walters 1986; Lee 1999; Pinkerton 1999). As I will explain in Chapter 4, demands for better practices and sustainable forest management are mainly the result of socio-political developments rather than purely ecological concerns.

Rationale of the Thesis

Conventional political ecology looks at how the global affects the local. I am proposing here, instead, a more complex and iterative relationship. Moreover, I will be analyzing the case at hand in terms of non-linear casual relationships. I will be starting from the assumption that environmental change is dynamic (see Figure 1.1). This process includes natural and human-induced changes in the environment on a local scale. Little attention has been paid yet to changes (be they positive or negative) in the physical, biological, and socio-economic system, even though the impact of those changes on natural ecosystems as well as on society may be significant.

10 Refers to a system-based approach intended to promote an understanding of key interrelationships among physical, biological and human elements of a situation, and the properties and behaviours of sets of these elements acting together as a whole (See Holling 1999; Cortner and Moote 1999).

11 This approach has been used to develop policies and practices that deal with uncertainty, the unexpected, and the unknown. Approaches management as a n experiment from which we learn by trial and error (Dearden and Mitchell 1998).
The goal of this thesis is to demonstrate that the environmental and social impacts associated with landscape transformation are shaped not only by structural changes brought about by economic and political forces but also by political, cultural, and symbolic contestations. Furthermore, emerging forms of political agency have expected and unexpected consequences that give rise to new processes of environmental change. This iterative process is constantly evolving, just as social relations and our perceptions of nature evolve. I apply this model to conceptualize the process from a perspective that is different from prevailing linear analyses of environmental degradation. Environmentalists and political economists in Chile have long focused on the political economic processes that cause environmental degradation (see Figure 1.2). Large-scale plantations and forestry operations have transformed landscapes and hence access to, use of, and control over resources. Meanwhile, local communities like the Mapuche have been adapting and resisting this process through various strategies that are affecting current land policies, including resource allocation and management schemes. In this way, the social and natural livelihoods of the Mapuche are constantly being shaped by iterative processes of social and environmental change. My findings, then, lead to broader theoretical arguments about how to frame social and environmental change. I will be examining resource access and control as the key factors mediating local responses to political and economic pressures and opportunities.
Figure 1.2. Underlying and direct causes of deforestation and degradation of native forests in Indigenous territories

Underlying Causes:
- Export oriented model implemented in Chile
- Macroeconomic policies that privilege economic growth over social equity (multiculturalism) and environmental sustainability
- Free market economy and globalization
- Non sustainable patterns of consumption and production
- Weakness of policy, institutional framework and forest, environmental and Indigenous legislation
- In inequitable land tenure systems
- Inequitable land concentration in large forest
- Increase of international private capital investment in the forest sector
- Growing pulp and paper consumption in the North
- High level of domestic fuel-wood consumption
- Financial support from multilateral agencies
- Lack of technical proposals for sustainable management of native forests
- Lack of enforcement for illegal forest fires and cuts
- Land seizure in Mapuche lands
- Promotion of large scale forest development
- Optimum economic and environmental conditions to plant and grow pine and eucalyptus
- Non sustainable fuelwood and charcoal extraction
- Over-thinning of Native Forest
- Substitution of native forest by exotic plantations
- Clearing for agricultural purposes
- Native forest sales for wood-chip supply
- Over-grazing in native forests
- Forest fires
- Land concentration in large forest
- Lack of enforcement for illegal forest fires and cuts
- Land seizure in Mapuche lands
- Mapuche’s People Poverty
- Weakness of policy, institutional framework and forest, environmental and Indigenous legislation
- Financial support from multilateral agencies
- Non sustainable patterns of consumption and production
- Growing pulp and paper consumption in the North
- High level of domestic fuel-wood consumption

Source: Adapted from Catalan and Ramos 1999
Following this model, I propose and conduct a multilevel analysis that proceeds from the macro to the local level in an iterative way (see Figure 1.3). At the broadest level, this study seeks to understand how local responses to changing macro political-economic factors transform resource use patterns and the environment. Economic globalization and neoliberal state policies are affecting resource access as well as control over the remaining native forests (see Figure 1.2). According to some authors (Carrere and Lohmann 1996; Catalan and Ramos 1999; Larrain and Menotti 1998; Claude 1997; Quiroga 1996), the underlying causes of deforestation and agricultural decline can often be attributed to local-level environmental use and management, which are equally a product of macro-level political and economic structures and processes.

Certainly, any analysis of the causes of environmental degradation in Chile’s native temperate forests needs to acknowledge the role played by the political, economic, and social forces associated with neoliberalism—forces that include privatization, unequal land distribution, export-oriented policies, and so on. That said, these causal arguments have overlooked the role played by countervailing forces in the form of social movements and network actors. Bearing in mind the importance of structuralist approaches, we must also analyze internal dynamics and
their evolution. That is, we must examine how indigenous people at the local level secure their identity and livelihoods and ask what environmental consequences (if any) have ensued. New social movements, such as indigenous organizations, have emerged to secure their rights and identity, but they have done so under varying conditions, and furthermore, their political strategies are related to new processes of environmental change.

Next I explain the key assumptions that have underpinned my research objectives. My research was inspired by questions that came to mind while I was working in the field of environmental conflicts and community development. In 1996 I worked for an environmental NGO (Defensores del Bosque Chileno) concerned with the destruction of native forests in Chile. I then worked in a research centre for environmental planning (CIPMA, Centro de Investigación y Planificación del Medioambiente), analyzing environmental conflicts and the role that civil society plays in public participation mechanisms. Both organizations were trying to raise public awareness of environmental issues, but neither seemed to acknowledge the links between indigenous claims and the expansion of the forestry industry. This led me to wonder about the role of indigenous peoples in these agendas. Why were indigenous groups being mostly ignored by Chile’s environmental organizations? And what did indigenous people think about the environmental debates relating to their territories?

Concerns about environmental degradation have helped create a new political arena for indigenous movements. Often, the social imaginary of the “ecologically noble” Indian has fostered new forms of political agency (Holland 1998; Ulloa 2005). Indigenous people have succeeded in altering the political arena in such a way that their rights—specifically, their territorial rights—have been injected into broader international debates about conservation and the protection of biologically significant areas. As a consequence—here, see recent studies in the anthropology of development (Escobar 1995; Ferguson 1994)—indigenous movements have extended their demands beyond conservationist agendas by introducing discourses encompassing the right to self-determination as well as resistance to imposed development models. More and more research is being done on the politics of indigeneity; even so, many questions remain regarding the role of emerging subjectivities and the construction of collective identities (Alvarez, Dagnino, and Escobar 1998; Brosius 1999; Hodgson 2002; Li 2000). These questions intersect, in turn, with issues of representation, resource management, and recognition of indigenous rights. Some authors have examined the tensions between scholarly and political
uses of ecological essentialism and authenticity embodied in the “noble savage” stereotype (Conklin and Graham 1997; Turner 1993; Brosius 1999; Warren and Jackson 2002); others have examined the strategic alliances between indigenous and environmental rights agendas (Hodgson 2002; Zerner 2000).

These research contributions can be further enriched through an exploration of political practices and changes in subjectivity as they affect resource use and the environment. As Agrawal (2005, 217) notes, recent Foucauldian analyses on governmentality have been especially useful for understanding “how modern manifestations of power and regulation achieve their full effect not by forcing people toward state-mandated goals but by turning them into accomplices.” Moreover, “the very individuality that is supposed to be constrained by the exercise of power may actually be its effect” (ibid., 217). The concept of governmentality is particularly useful for understanding how neoliberalism shapes people’s conduct: market deregulation policies take the whole of society as their domain, thereby in effect “governing” the environment via the conduct of those population segments whose behaviour “on the ground” changes most acutely as a consequence. More broadly, the governmentality thesis repositions neoliberalism: no longer is market rationalization the natural order of things that it is purported to be; rather, it is a relentless political project with highly specific political-economic and environmental consequences.

A number of scholars are now focusing on national-level laws and policies relating to land tenure and resource management (Lynch, Talbott, and Berdan 1995; Repetto and Gillis 1988); still missing, however, are systematic examinations and clear understandings of local responses to external political and economic factors such as markets and technological innovations. To paraphrase Agrawal (2003, 251), scholars have put too much effort into “demonstrating the importance of local group users and thus have tended to ignore how the local is created in conjunction with the external and constituted in relation to its broader context.” Only recently have political ecological analyses begun to pay significant heed to processes of subject formation (Li 2000; Moore 1998; Sivaramakrishnan 1999; Sundberg 2004, 2006). These studies address people’s role in shaping the environment and themselves through a process of mutual reconfiguration. According to Agrawal (2005, 211), the relationship between subjects and their environment needs to be examined in terms of its emergence, not simply taken as part of a broader politics of pre-existing interests.
Following these intellectual influences, this research aims to incorporate analyses of recently emerging discursive practices in the context of land and resource conflicts—particularly regarding current discourses about the collective rights of minority cultures as well as citizenship rights in a liberal democracy (Kymlicka 1995). Indigenous groups have contested both citizenship discourses (i.e., the emphasis on individual or private rights over collective rights) and conservationist discourses; both types are prominent in the arena of global justice. Supplementing territorial claims and demands that national indigenous policies be modified, many indigenous leaders and indigenous rights advocates are moving towards new strategies that aim to raise awareness about other issues that are no less relevant for being tangential. My premise is that indigenous political discourse is embedded in a shifting set of essentialist discourses about culture and nature, identity and citizenship—discourses that reach beyond land claims and struggles for self-determination. Such discourses have become entangled in a multitude of liberal perspectives on individual rights, in which the state sees its role as protecting individual citizens’ rights (Yashar 2005) even while drawing from the politics of difference and recognition (Gupta and Ferguson 1997; Taylor and Gutmann 1994). This may seem contradictory, but indigenous people associate their loss of rights and of access to resources with a denial of their cultural liberty and with unequal protection of their rights as citizens of a democratic state. The Mapuche have recently been expressing this point in terms of environmental racism.

Analyses of environmental conflicts and environmental degradation have emphasized the economic substructure that supports political decisions. In particular, Marxist approaches—which have played a dominant role in political ecology—have long been influential when it comes to understanding the role of political economy and class differences as key forces in past and present-day social movements. However, this body of thought has not paid enough attention to the literature on new social movements. How those movements work has largely been ignored, and so have the consequences of various political strategies and discourses, especially for the environment. Having reviewed the literature in political ecology, I became aware that such approaches require a more balanced understanding of the relationship between human

---

12 The “newness” of the purported new social movements puts greater emphasis on group or collective identity, values and lifestyles rather than or in addition to developed ideologies and Marxian class conflict that had been the predominant model in much European social movement theory.
agency and large-scale political and economic structures. This is why I have chosen to start with an experiential stance, while citing some of the relevant literature that demonstrates the lack of attention to this topic and that calls for more research.

After ten years of advocacy work in Chile with peasants, seasonal agricultural workers, fishers, and indigenous communities, I came to realize that social justice requires structural change; a series of compartmentalized development programs is not enough. Such changes, though, need not be driven by Marxist revolutionary dogma. The groups noted earlier are not Marxist idealists; they do not have “fire in their minds”; they are not aiming to overthrow the state. Rather, they are people engaged in an everyday struggle to transform social relations. Indeed, in recent decades the neo-Marxist intellectual movement has began to pay closer attention to power relations as well as to conflict and resistance\textsuperscript{13} in all its guises. It has been argued that the early Marxist framework relied too heavily on structural determinants of inequality. Some authors have noted that economic and class reductionism has prevented conventional Marxist theorists from understanding both the emergence of contemporary social movements and the complex entanglements of political economy and cultural politics in today’s globalized world. Marxist activists often integrate indigenous groups into their causes—some even take up indigenous causes as part of their own struggles against the system. Yet however well-intended, this activism is often disempowering and even racist towards indigenous people.

New approaches to global–local issues, as well as research by political ecologists, inspired my earlier work as an anthropologist, especially regarding the impact of politics on patterns of local resource use. The social and environmental consequences of market liberalization at the global and regional levels call for new forms of societal critique. During the 1980s, social movements opposing economic globalization became important political actors in the global arena. The gradual development of civil society in Latin America and other parts of the developing world has contributed to a proliferation of new social movements as well as to an expanded role for

\textsuperscript{13} In a broad sense, resistance compromises the multiplicity of relations between hegemonic and counter-hegemonic powers and discourses (Routledge, 1996). Here I refer to the tactical, strategic and symbolic processes involved in contesting the dominant ideologies imposed by local elites. This concept embodies forces and relations of domination, subjugation, exploitation and resistance. These are endowed with varying degrees of political strategies indigenous groups use to resist, negotiate or accommodate to the particular spatial, cultural and historical contexts of a given conflict. Resistance is expressed in the daily and permanent will of the people to systematically preserve the unique aspects of the cultures with which they identify.
civil society. Many of today’s community-based, often grassroots initiatives are driven by issues such as poverty, human and political rights, and indigenous identity. International NGOs are now supporting indigenous people’s efforts to challenge national sovereignty and the power of transnational corporations. This goes back to the drafting of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. In Latin America, as in much of the world, indigenous groups and rural organizations have played a crucial role not only in accessing resources and markets but in advancing political and cultural claims, as well as in deconstructing, resisting, and at times reproducing dominant narratives of development and modernization. As Van Cott (2001) notes, the emerging Indian Rights movement has influenced and been influenced by international activism to promote democracy. International pressure is forcing nation-states to extend democratic rights to indigenous people. In turn, indigenous people are now linking their demands and goals to pre-existing mandates or concerns of the international community (Brysk 1994). Today, indigenous movements everywhere in the world are demanding not only recognition from their respective nation-states but also rights to their livelihoods. This is illustrated by intensifying contests over land and resource management.

Many authors have examined the resistance strategies followed by indigenous people and international groups (mainly North American and European) in the recent struggle to recognize indigenous land rights (Brown 1993; Varese 1996; Fisher 1994; Conklin and Graham 1997). Unlike other groups in Latin America—such as in Amazonas, where the emergence of eco-political movements has been key to achieving indigenous rights—the Mapuche have linked their claims tightly to an ethno-political strategy. That is, they are asserting their rights as a “pueblo” that originally inhabited the land in question, instead of focusing on their self-declared indigenousness (an approach that is often correlated with racial prejudice). I will be arguing that Mapuche political strategies for regaining their land are based on ancestral rights (i.e., they were the original occupiers) rather than on essentialist discourses of ethnicity. Ethnic essentialism has been more influential for other groups than for the Mapuche, whose main organizational strategy—at least in the short term—has involved a case-by-case, territory-by-territory plan for reassembling their ancestral territories.

---

This strategy has both advantages and drawbacks. The government in Santiago, backed by international agencies, has been encouraging economic integration—that is, encouraging the Mapuche to adopt present-day business models for agriculture and forestry. These policies, however, are congruent neither with indigenous development policies as originally laid out nor with the disadvantaged situation facing the Mapuche today. A recent report assessing the government’s land restitution policy states that Mapuche, when they receive land, are often forced to sublet it, deforest it, or simply abandon it. In addition, the state’s integration policies have created tensions and divisions within the Mapuche movement. Also, the “localist” approach taken by the Mapuche has sometimes fractured their movement and prevented it from developing a common political project. As Castro (2006) notes, the state’s efforts to “discipline” progress and modernization are being made in a context in which Latin American indigenous people have begun to show a lack of consistency. Some protest the pillaging of their resources and the loss of their independence; others protest their meagre share of the model’s benefits (ibid., 126). And though the Mapuche have adopted some environmentalist discourses against plantations, it is still unclear whether indigenous people will be included somehow in the forestry industry or excluded (because they are competitors for land). According to Clapp (1998a), Chile’s forestry development model hinges on the capacity of Mapuche people to resist pressure from tree plantations while they struggle to retain their lands, livelihoods, traditions, and (so it follows) their identity.

Yet members of the Mapuche movement take a positive view of this “lack of consistency.” Long ago, the groups now known collectively as Mapuche organized themselves around several territorial or regional identities, and those identities persist. Since pre-colonial times these people’s autonomy has been based in their political decentralization and strategic alliances.

Ultimately, the success of the Mapuche will depend on their ability to balance external pressures and opportunities with local perceptions of indigenous legitimacy and strong local identity. Another factor in whatever success they achieve will be the extent to which networks of access, exchange, and influence reinforce or undermine their goals. Political economic structures influence local people’s land use decisions; at the same time, those people are constantly resisting, contesting, recreating, and reproducing those structures. This process enables local

---

agents to modify not only the natural environment but also broader political, ideological, and economic structures, which then influence and cultivate new forms of human agency.

I will also be assuming that Mapuche rights, as well as their arrangements for access to natural resources, are underpinned by competing values and discourses. Thus I will be addressing the ways in which the politics of land and resources are shaping forest ecosystems and the local environment. The Mapuche struggle is a response to the historical context. In this regard, systemic and institutionalized forms of racism\textsuperscript{16} are key to modern-day discourses of development. Racism is still considered a taboo subject in many parts of Chilean society. In part, this is because of power relations—sustained since colonial times—that are obscured and thus accepted without thought, thereby creating the categories and images through which disputes over the environment, resources, and economic development are framed. Since colonial times, nationalism and hegemonic and homogenized patterns of development have combined to produce racialized people and racialized landscapes; this in turn has helped white Chileans maintain their privileged status. One result is that the dominant discourse portrays the marginalization of indigenous people as “common sense”—that is, as the inevitable result of poverty and race.

As Brosius (1999) notes, we need to examine a number of complex and connected factors: the relationship between historical and contemporary forms of domination; existing and emerging structures and institutions; the politics of representation; processes of discursive production; and emerging forms of political agency. Any attempt to understand the discursive foundations of environmentalism, developmentalism, or indigenism must take into account the broader spatial and temporal context. In this regard, institutionalized racism has a strong impact on today’s resource conflicts as well as on how politicians manage them. Concealed forms of racism today are justifying discriminatory actions under the guise of protecting the rights and privileges of non-indigenous Chileans as well as corporations (both national and transnational). Racism has enabled the curtailment of indigenous people’s rights and the appropriation of their resources. My work will emphasize the political, practical, and discursive shifts involved in the processes

\textsuperscript{16} Racism ‘was grounded in biological essentialism and determinism, the idea that human beings could be placed in groups based on physical characteristics, or more deeply, their genetic make-up’ (Grillo 2003: 162). In my research I link the concept of racism with ethnocentrism, which can be defined as ‘the manner in which a group identifies with its own socio-cultural individuality and creates a privileged and central image of itself in relation to others’ (Shanks and Tilley 1987: 155).
by which Mapuche people are attempting to regain their ancestral lands, acquire constitutional recognition, and win political autonomy. In particular, I hope to highlight the tensions between traditional resource use practices and the changing patterns of access and use on indigenous lands.

**Structure of the Dissertation**

Following the introduction, this work is organized into seven chapters:

*Chapter 2. Research Design*

This chapter describes the steps I took while designing the research, including its main objectives and guiding questions. Because this work is based on a case study, I explain the criteria I applied when setting up the case. I describe the Mapuche organization that has been the centre of attention for my research and introduce the reader to the study’s location. I identify the different methodological strategies and tools I used to collect and analyze data. I also address how I handled problems of validity, reliability, and generalization, as well as ethical considerations.

*Chapter 3. The Background*

This chapter briefly describes the Mapuche people and the historical processes of land exclusion and cultural denial carried out by the Chilean state. I also outline the controversy surrounding forestry development in Chile and the conditions that contributed to the formation of the Mapuche movement.

*Chapter 4. From Forest Ecosystems to Industrial Plantations*

This chapter begins by outlining the ecological significance of Chile’s temperate forests. I then analyze the political economy of tree plantations and the role played by Chile’s forestry sector in the global economy. I focus on pulp, as this is the main product exported by the forestry sector, and explain its impact at the local level. I also consider the various competing values assigned to forests, as the social, economic, and ecological dimensions of forests often clash with one another. This analysis is key to understanding the interactions among social groups, private actors, and the state in their pursuit of political power. I describe how social and ecological
considerations have influenced the debate on the future of temperate forests. The importance of those forests is discussed in terms of management policies and practices. Discussed as well is the impact of industrial forestry over the past few decades. Because this problem cannot be analyzed solely in economic or technical terms, the final section of this chapter examines the controversy over the replacement of native forests with monocrop plantations—in particular, the role played in that controversy by values, knowledge, and power.

**Chapter 5. Ecological and Social Transformations in Indigenous Territories: A Perspective from Environmental Racism**

Drawing from post-structuralist theories of nature and recent literature on environmental racism, this chapter expands conventional theories of conflict used in political ecology and environmental justice. I assert that racism is the best lens through which to view this particular conflict. I argue that racial discrimination in its various forms has been obscured in Chile, where formally and informally, racism has been rendered invisible. Discourses of indigenous rights as well as ethnocentric ideas relating to economic development have combined to delegitimize Mapuche land claims. As a consequence, Mapuche visions have been neglected and their interests have been underrepresented in national debates over land use, forestry, environmental, water, and indigenous policy.

Much of my research has involved tracking and examining the ecological and social impacts of large-scale tree plantations. Forest products are Chile’s second-largest export. In Chile’s VIII and IX Regions forest plantations (and the pulp industry) have been expanding most rapidly in areas inhabited by the Mapuche. The poorest Mapuche live in the areas where tree plantations are expanding most rapidly, and these people are being forced to bear the social and environmental costs. In this light, I explain why environmental racism cannot be isolated from other forms of racism. Racism interacts with other power structures and economic forces both locally and globally. The ecological and social transformations arising from growth in the forestry sector are subjecting Mapuche people to systemic forms of racism.

**Chapter 6. The Revitalization of Indigenous Movements and the Transformative Politics of Mapuche Territorial Organizations**

In this chapter I analyze how indigenous people organize themselves to address their marginalization, exclusion, and displacement (e.g., through resistance, negotiation, and
accommodation). I consider the internal dynamics of the Mapuche movement since its political incorporation into the Chilean state in 1883. The Mapuche movement began to form in the early 1900s, after the “pacification” years, and has followed various political strategies ranging from a radical Indianist and culturalist position to one that seeks assimilation into the modernizing Chilean state. Drawing from recent theories of new social movements (identity movements in particular), I describe how the Mapuche movement has evolved from a traditional class-based movement to one based on identity. Generally speaking, indigenous movements utilize essentialist discourses in a strategic manner. I describe the principal organizations and various political strategies used by the Mapuche movement, highlighting that movement’s distinctiveness in relation to other indigenous movements that have emerged in recent years in the context of land claims and resource conflicts.

This chapter also considers the links between land and identity and how indigenous people’s political strategies shape their social and environmental world views. Memory has played a key role in the reconfiguration of the Mapuche movement. Many Mapuche are migrants to the cities; there, they have maintained a strong sense of cultural belonging that reproduces their ties to the land. However, the drastic transformation of the rural landscape has made it much harder for them to maintain traditional material relationships with the land—relationships that are vital for Mapuche cultural survival. I examine how the Mapuche people’s sense that “nature has been lost” has inspired reflections on territoriality linked to processes of identity formation. The emergence of a self-conscious group identity has drawn the Mapuche to reconfigure both their past and their future. This is especially so among urban youth, who suffer from a loss of connection to natural and cultural places. The land-based nature of Mapuche claims and the ongoing process of reinventing identity together have played a key role in the Mapuche people’s rethinking and renarration of their history and environment. In an effort to avoid engaging in developmental and environmental discourses, the Mapuche are debating land in terms of territoriality; this narrative, however, continues to be nourished by a cultural imaginary that expresses nostalgia for a spiritual landscape: the mapu.

Chapter 7. Government Responses to Indigenous Demands: A New Deal with Old Rules

In this chapter I discuss the impact of resistance strategies on resource management, as well as state responses to indigenous claims. I explore the main obstacles preventing the Chilean government from addressing more effectively, in its resource management policies, the social,
economic, and cultural needs of indigenous peoples. Employing Foucault’s concept of
governmentality, I argue that, though the Mapuche have broadly contested the state’s neoliberal
policies, they have nevertheless been drawn into a new set of governing strategies that are
fundamentally neoliberal. These strategies have led to the reconfiguration of their relationship
with the state, NGOs, and foreign aid donors. Operating at both formal and informal levels of
social and political interaction, this new mentality of government employs coercive and co-
optive measures to cultivate Mapuche participation in the neoliberal project, while continuing to
neglect the long-standing relations of inequality and injustice that underpin conflicts over land
and resources.

The chapter ends by discussing the Chilean state’s legal responses to indigenous demands. As in
many other nation-states, indigenous groups contesting power relations are subjected to
persistent violations of their fundamental rights as governments criminalize their legitimate and
historically rooted demands. Indigenous/state relations are often marked by violence and
counter-violence. The violence of the state is legitimized as “peacekeeping”; yet any act of
protest or even self-defence by indigenous groups is often labelled terrorism. Here I discuss the
Chilean state’s responses to indigenous claims and the legality of antiterrorism laws as they
relate to political and social conflicts. Using the Mapuche case, I will describe how antiterrorism
and state security laws are applied to Chile’s indigenous people in Chile, and provide a brief
account of recent trial proceedings.

Chapter 8. Summary and Conclusions

In this chapter I synthesize the main arguments that support my thesis regarding the significance
of indigenous transformative politics as it relates to environmental change. I discuss the main
impacts of state policies and market forces on indigenous communities as well as the
consequences of political mobilization on local communities. I analyze how the strategies
followed by the communities to revindicate their rights, and the government’s strategies against
the Mapuche resistance movement, have affected resource management at the local level.
Chapter 2. Research Design

As noted in the previous chapter, this research is in the form of a case study and examines how indigenous communities’ resistance and adaptation strategies shape their natural and social livelihoods. Accordingly, I have focused on the following research questions (see Appendix A for subset of linked questions):

- How do different social groups, especially indigenous communities, secure their identity and livelihoods under varying conditions?
- How do the social processes and political strategies followed by indigenous communities affect their livelihoods and their forest ecosystems?
- What competing values and discourses underpin negotiations over rights and access to natural resources?
- Given the current forest development model, how do the forest management practices of the Mapuche and their relationship with the environment change over time?

Designing the Case Study

I make no claims that this is a fully “grounded” study. Rather, it evolved as time went on, and its conclusions, while consistent, are not necessarily definitive. This is, in the end, a thesis—that is, a proposition with evidence. By the end I will have outlined how and why certain events took place or outcomes resulted; what this means for our political and environmental understanding; and what remains unknown (and thus requires further study).

Early on, I decided to study deforestation and reforestation as these processes are mediated by institutional arrangements, with a focus on the social and cultural dynamics of resource management. Without doubt, this topic was too broad. Too many different actors were involved (the state, the industry, environmental groups, politicians, academia, etc.), and social movements are difficult phenomena to track as they are constantly adapting to shifts in political circumstances. The Mapuche movement itself is multifaceted, and its strategies vary from one organization to the next. Many of its strategies involve indigenous leaders formally engaging with government departments, and these institutional arrangements are often augmented by political actions at the community level. In addition, institutional arrangements are usually
studied under the CPRM or Common Property and Resource Management literature, whereas in this case study most of the analysis relates to forests managed under regimes of private property, with access to and use of these resources linked to power relations rather than property regimes. In light of all this, I decided to adopt the theories and methods employed by political ecologists.

In 2000 I carried out preliminary fieldwork in order establish a field site, gather preliminary data, and develop contacts in Chile. I decided to focus on the political strategies of one of the many organizations in the Mapuche movement: Coordinadora Arauko-Malleko. This group encompassed communities from the province of Arauco in VII Region and the province of Malleco in IX Region. In 2002, after internal in-fighting, this group fragmented. In the aftermath, I decided to work mainly with one of the resulting groups, Comunidades en Conflicto de Collipulli (Communities in Conflict of Collipulli; CCC), in the province of Malleco in IX Region.

Soon after starting exploratory fieldwork, I found that I could not ignore my own role and social position. As a *winka*” (a white or non Mapuche in Mapudungun, the Mapuche language), I found it hard to gain access to the movement, which guards its strategies closely. In time, I became more interested in understanding the role of locally based indigenous organizations in mediating resource access and management, and in national and transnational discourses of development, indigeneity, and environmentalism. Here, the works of Geertz (1988) and Clifford and Marcus (1986) influenced me strongly, especially when it came to acknowledging the role of my identity and epistemological stance and the relative value of various modes of inquiry. Overall, and as challenged to do so, I have avoided the extremes of deductive/etic and inductive/emic and have adopted more recent paradigms that combine emic (insider) with etic (outsider) perspectives. As the critical realist stance points out, differences between insider (emic) and outsider (etic) views are negotiable. For example, Rappaport (1984), in his ground-breaking analysis of the ritual life and ecology of the Tsembaga people of New Guinea, illustrates how ritual practices help keep the environment in balance. Here, the etic function of the sacrifice is to solve the problem of too many pigs, while its emic function reflects the local rationale that one must sacrifice pigs to appease the ancestors. The alternation between operational (etic) and cognized (emic) models gradually uncovers the metaphorical overlay; this makes it more possible to articulate and delineate the boundaries of terms and categories—from our own background as well as that of the Other—as an exchange of ideas.
At this stage, a systematic review of the literature helped me build a theoretical framework; it also enriched my initial field experience (Wolcott 1995). Critical ethnography (Berglund 1997; Brosius 1999; Routledge 1996; Scott 1990) was central to my thinking as it helped me understand ethnography in a different way. Critical ethnography is the application of critical theory to anthropological research; it places at the centre of ethnographic studies questions of power and inequality, the political economy of symbols and actions in contemporary culture, and the social and ethical relationships between the interpreter and the one being interpreted. In my research I use critical ethnography as described by Thomas (1993): “as a way of applying a subversive world view to the conventional logic of cultural inquiry. It does not stand in opposition to conventional ethnography. Rather, it offers a more direct style of thinking about the relationships among knowledge, society, and political action. The central premise is that one can be both scientific and critical, and that ethnographic description offers a powerful means of critiquing culture and the role of research within it” (vii).

In February 2002 I made a second trip to Chile in order to further my entry into one organization. I visited the CCC headquarters and spoke with its leaders to explain my purposes. I told them I would be focusing on the relationship between political mobilization and land negotiations. Thereafter, I restricted my investigations to the political strategies used by that group and their expected and unexpected consequences. I examined closely the political strategies followed by CCC for the purpose of analyzing the land recovery process in the region and the resulting changes in resource access and control.

I spent two more months in Chile in 2003 and another two months in 2004 interviewing a broad range of actors and organizations, paying particular attention to CCC. My objective was to closely examine the political strategies that group was using in the context of environmental conditions and present-day development policies. Those policies related to land restitution, resource management practices, and resource access and control.

I chose this particular case on the basis of three criteria: location, characteristics of the organization, and situation:

**Location**

- The zone had experienced severe and profound land use changes in recent decades.
• Different forest covers were found in the zone (native forests and exotic tree plantations).
• Exotic forest plantations were being concentrated in the area, while native forests were disappearing.
• The zone was facing environmental problems as a result of water shortages, drastic climate change, and low agricultural productivity.
• Land claims were still unresolved.

*Characteristics of the group*

• The group’s leadership dynamics were driven by local interests.
• Though the group was not represented in environmental debates, it was finding ways to affect resource management policy.
• The group represented different communities with different strategies whose demands had been acknowledged by the state, albeit in different ways.

*Situation*

• The case could be compared to other cases around the world and thereby contribute to theory development in political ecology.
• Unequal power dynamics were evident. The various actors had conflicting values on how to access and use resources.
• The case had a high profile in the media and so would be easy to track.

**The Case Study: Comunidades en Conflicto de Collipulli**

As already noted, this case study is based on information provided by Mapuche organizations and communities in VII and VIII Regions. When analyzing land demands, resistance strategies, negotiation processes, and environmental changes at the local level, I will be focusing on CCC.\(^{17}\)

This organization has a reputation as one of the most radicalized groups in the Mapuche

\(^{17}\) As previous noted, before the separation into factions the Collipulli communities were part of “Coordinadora Arauco Malleco.”
movement. As such, it stands in well for the problems and the opportunities that similar organizations have faced, and are still facing, in their efforts to secure their members’ livelihoods. The differences are mainly a function of strategy. The CCC’s stance has been that it will “negotiate not under the terms of reference imposed by the Chilean state but by their own means.” Its core aim is to pursue not just land claims but territorial sovereignty and—just as important—recognition as a distinct ethnic group or “nation” and their territoriality:

“Our people [are] more aware of the problem, which is the territoriality of the Mapuche community ... We still recognize ourselves as a different culture and we still have in our collective memory the consciousness that we were and we are a first nation” (La seguda, March 18, 1999).

In 1998, the “Coordinadora Arauco Malleco” began coordinating communities in the provinces of Arauco in VIII Region and Malleco in IX Region. Then in 2001, six of the communities involved in CCC decided to continue their struggles independently. All six are located in IX Region in the Municipality of Collipulli (see map below):

1. **Choin Lafkenche.** San Jorge sector, 12 kilometres northwest of the Municipality of Collipulli. This group is led by *lonko* (chief) Luis Ancalaf and his brother, Victor. Victor Ancalaf is a former political prisoner and was recently sentenced to ten years’ imprisonment by the Chilean Supreme Court. The community has about forty members. Its territorial demands amount to 1,372 hectares.

2. **Juan Ayllala Varela.** Caillin sector, 10 kilometres northwest of Collipulli. This group is led by *lonko* Francisco Llanca and seeks 854 hectares of territory. The Chilean state has recently charged Llanca with usurpation of land. He is currently a fugitive.

3. **Lonkomahuida Alto.** Located 13 kilometres southwest of Collipulli. This group is led by *lonko* José Ignacio Neculpan. This community claims Fundos Los Cophihues and El Mirador. At present, both parcels are held by large farm owners. These territorial demands total about 180 hectares.

4. **Antonio Paillacoi.** Huapitrio sector, 30 kilometres northeast of Collipulli. This community’s 220 members are led by *lonko* Ariel Tori Linqueo, an ex-political prisoner who is today being prosecuted for violating the Law on State Security. This group is claiming agricultural lands and irrigation channels. The lands are Fundo Rucañanco
(1,090 hectares), now held by the Forest Company MININCO, and Fundo Taitamito (400 hectares), presently held by the landowner Gerard Schmidt.

5. *Katrio Ñancul.* Huapitrio sector, 20 kilometres northwest of Collipulli. This group is led by *lonko* Domingo Millalen. It claims Fundo Santa Ema (460 hectares) and Fundo Araucanía (250 hectares). Both are property of the Forest Company MININCO.

6. *Kolihuinka Tori.* Huapitrio sector, 17 kilometres northwest of Collipulli. This group is led by *lonko* Jose Tori, who is being prosecuted by the Chilean state for violating the Law on State Security. Along with the community Antonio Paillacoi, it is claiming 1,500 hectares of Fundo Rucañanco.

Illustration 2.1 Indigenous communities in Collipulli municipal district

Most of the land transformations that have affected these communities have been implemented over the past three decades. Thus I will focus on the more recent privatization processes and on the economic incentives and subsidy programs imposed during the years of military dictatorship. I will also be discussing processes of environmental change as they relate to Chile’s emergence.
as a significant actor in the neoliberal market economy. While I will be touching on policies and
their consequences at multiple levels—from the local to the global—I will be focusing mainly on
the local impacts of social, cultural, and environmental changes. This will include CCC’s (and
other Mapuche organizations) history, leadership dynamics, and political strategies. This
multilevel level analysis will suggest how local communities shape and are shaped by global
developments, especially those pertaining to environmental health and human rights. The
discourses of development in which processes of social and environmental change are embedded
will also become visible through this study.

The Collipulli communities are located in the zone with the largest indigenous population in
Chile. That same zone has experienced significant land use changes over the past few decades. In
Regions VIII and IX there are 1,693,286 hectares of native forest, which makes this one of the
world’s largest zones of temperate humid forest. These regions, however, have been dramatically
altered as a result of land use changes, selective logging, forest fires, and the introduction of
plantations of exotic species of commercial timber. Put simply, this region’s native forests are
disappearing and being degraded at an alarming rate. At the same time, exotic tree plantations
are expanding dramatically. Intensive land use for agriculture and forestry has resulted in severe
environmental problems; the region now suffers heavily from frequent droughts, followed by
floods and the inevitable result—soil erosion.

**Methodological and Analytical Tools**

As has been the trend in anthropology, I let the fieldwork shape my project rather than the other
way around. At times, my findings were quite unexpected, and as a result I had to struggle to
adjust my theoretical framework—for example, by including human right issues and autonomist
discourses. I often followed a discovery-oriented approach; that is, I identified key categories in
my data and interview transcriptions and used them to generate still more categories, which
influenced the direction of further interviews.

I also tended to ask open-ended questions, especially when raising my principal research topic,
which concerned the environmental criteria used during land negotiations. I asked, for instance,
about accessibility to the lands, the resources in place (water availability, soil quality, tree
species), and the productive potential of the lands to be transferred. I remember posing these
questions to the CONADI official in charge of the FTA program. Laughing, he told me that “the
only criteria used is the political criteria … Many of those who first received land from CONADI were specifically those who fought against the dictatorship, there were some political commitments that influenced these decisions.”

**Data Collection**

To answer the research questions and while gathering data, I relied mainly on ethnographic methods—that is, I blended historical, observational, and interview methods. I participated as much as possible in local daily life while carefully observing everything about it. I made detailed field notes; conducted interviews based on open-ended questions; and gathered whatever site documents were available. The latter included annual reports, memos, correspondence, newsletters, websites, court proceedings, posters, and minutes of meetings. I also examined secondary information: historical documents; news stories; statistical reports; official documents about environmental, indigenous, and forest policy; documents about institutional arrangements and the structure and functioning of public agencies; results of the national vegetation inventory; results of past studies of forest management; and results of the application of laws, economic incentives, and subsidies relating to reforestation.

I also conducted twenty-nine individual interviews and three focus groups with various stakeholders (farmers, NGO program officers, lawyers, forest workers, researchers in the area, government officials, journalists, indigenous people, and forestry company executives). Informants were selected using a judgment and convenience sampling procedure, which took into account their accessibility, representativeness, and expertise in terms of the research. The interviews covered the various perspectives and positions of forestry companies, small forest owners, indigenous people, experts, NGOs, foundations, and public officials involved in forest management and indigenous communities.

When interpreting and positioning these actors, I analyze the discourses of various sources, including the media, government reports, and the academic literature. Following Escobar (1995), and Foucault’s insights into discursive aspects of development, I take discourse analysis\(^\text{18}\) to mean close scrutiny of the words we use, the concepts they embody, and the rules that develop

\(^{18}\) From Hajer’s perspective, discourse analysis is a method for analyzing what language does, the politics of meaning that take place, the way in which language affects perceptions and cognitions, and the way in which language distributes power to some and less to others. This method helps illuminate how policy problems are constructed (Hajer 1995, 15).
within a group about what are appropriate ways of talking about things and the meanings so inscribed. According to Escobar, discourse is the articulation of knowledge and power whereby some claims become visible, even self-evident, whereas others become invisible and inexpressible.

The early arguments (and discursive frameworks) in favour of expanding tree plantations will be taken from the book *The Forest Debate in Chile*, published in 1996 by the Association of Forest Engineers. This is a compilation of public dialogues on Chile’s forests (and especially on plantations) that were held in the media between 1992 to 1995. My other main source is *The Tragedy of the Forest*, a book published in 1998 by Defenders of the Chilean Native Forest, an environmental NGO representing the position of ecologists, scientists, foresters, writers, poets, musicians, artists, and other representatives of civil society, who contributed their perspectives on and hopes for Chile’s native forests.

In addition, I examined thoroughly the different points of views offered by various sources. These included casual conversations, interviews, newspaper accounts, memos, and library and historical records. I also extracted some quotes and images from policy documents, the media, and the interviews to analyze the discursive nature of this conflict as well as representations of the Mapuche in the media. Online articles and other web-based data were key to this discourse analysis. Using different Internet search engines, I scanned relevant texts on websites from 1990 to 2007. I also analyzed Mapuche local newspapers as well as international journals dedicated to the forestry sector, such as *Pulp and Paper International*. For instance, when analyzing the campaign True Forest for Chile, which promoted plantations, I found that all of the images highlighted the importance of planting pine and eucalyptus trees. The following image (illustration 2.2), for instance, shows how indigenous land claims were delegitimated, with environmentalists being labelled as terrorists.

As these sources will show, the current debate encompasses a dialogue not only about science but also about beliefs, values, and the validity of different knowledge systems. I will use three levels of analysis relating to the values, knowledge, and power relations that underpin the discourses used by the different actors involved in the debate.
Some Native Americans have started protesting against development of the land, urged by the “greens.” *Pulp and Paper International (February 2001)*

In addition to standard ethnographic methods, I used quantitative techniques to develop percentages or counts. For this purpose, I also used close-ended questionnaires and analyzed social and geographic surveys, such as the national vegetation survey and CASEN\(^\text{19}\). I also used a geographic information system (GIS) to analyze the extent to which communities had been affected by tree plantations—effects that included environmental change and the displacement of indigenous people. Time contraints prevented me from completing this task in time for the dissertation.

To keep track of the research, I kept process notes (for day-to-day activities, methodologies, and decision-making procedures) as well as personal notes about motivations, experiences with informants, and so on.

---

\(^{19}\) CASEN is a tool designed to describe and analyse the socio-economic situation of Chilean families, including housing, education and labour characteristics. It is a cross-sectional survey, having the dual objectives of generating a reliable picture of socioeconomic conditions across the country, and of monitoring the incidence and effectiveness of the government’s social programs and expenditures.
Data Analysis Procedures

Following Bernard’s guidelines (2002, 430) for data analysis, I constantly checked validity by looking for consistencies and inconsistencies among my informants. In doing so, I made a point of switching back and forth between the emic and etic perspectives. This was especially relevant when analyzing essentialist and antiessentialist discourses relating to indigeneity and nature. I encountered several contradictions. For example, an argument the Mapuche use against plantations is that they cause natural and cultural loss. Yet the Mapuche also involve themselves in plantation projects and are willing to plant some pines and eucalyptus. Sometimes I asked my informants whether they would plant these tree species on their home territory. The answers were sometimes contradictory. Two things helped me understand these inconsistencies: first, cultural differences influence how people perceive forests and plantations; and second, views differ depending on who owns the land, who plants the trees, how many trees are planted, and the purpose of the forests. Typically, a handful of exotic trees were not perceived as a plantation when they were planted on the respondent’s territory. Thus, people would plant pines and eucalyptus on their lands even while protesting against plantations somewhere else. Small stands of native trees were generally not perceived as “forests”; rather, they were designated in terms of their cultural value and use as menoko (swamp forest), mallin (wetlands with herbaceous ground cover), mawiza (a patch of trees from different native species), monte huallizada (a patch of roble beech), tuwe (evergreen plains) wingkül (hills), or lil (ravine forest). Rarely are these places identified simply as forests or woodlands; rather, they are specific places from which are obtained medicinal plants or edible nonwood forest products, or they are sacred places inhabited by spirits. It is noteworthy that most of the respondents were aware of the contradictions just mentioned and had valid reasons for maintaining them. For example, co-optive government policies left the Mapuche little choice but to act as they did; the agricultural sector was collapsing; or they were too poor to turn down money for logs (especially when there were purchasing agents in every community).

I analyzed the collected data throughout the fieldwork, constantly refining my questions as well as my data collection methods. Typically, I would conduct an interview or field visit, then read through (at least once) the field notes, interview transcripts, site documents, and any general data. I would then mark or code these initial data sets to indicate any patterns, connections, similarities, or contradictions. I then reduced the data set (which grew to considerable length)
and reconstructed it through a coding and sorting process. Coding is a systematic practice of establishing locally relevant and theoretically salient categories of meaning. These may include, but are not limited to, the terms informants use for particular things or actions that might turn out to be important for understanding land use change or political behaviour in reference to the field of political ecology. I also paid close attention to important issues as the informants identified them (and to what they considered unimportant). Following Glaser and Strauss’s (1985) grounded theory approach, I constantly summarized the data collected from interviews and returned them to the participants in order to ensure that my interpretations “fit” and were “relevant” to the issues they raised. I transcribed all interviews and coded each according to key emerging themes and analytical categories. As new themes appeared, I checked and rechecked “what was said” and “what was meant to be said.” Ultimately, all coded data were disaggregated and reaggregated into subcomponents of the thesis sections. I then reorganized them in order to develop a narrative. Tables, charts, and diagrams that helped illuminate results were used whenever possible.

Problems of validity, reliability, and generalization were resolved according to conventional practice in qualitative work—that is, by triangulating findings across the various types of data gathered. The different themes were tested with alternative explanations for what I was starting to draw from the data. I also routinely presented my emerging or nascent conclusions to the informants for examination and debate. This sort of respondent validation helped ensure that the results were trustworthy and allowed informants to elaborate various points, often by offering further information.

**Outcomes of the Research**

The primary outcome of the research will be a greater understanding of resistance movements and how the strategies they use are affecting natural resource management and the environment. Over the past decade, many Mapuche communities have founded their own organizations, yet their demands are still being overlooked. This project will foster public debate around the Chilean forest development model and its local impacts. It will also expose the role played by indigenous movements in resource conflicts, how these movements work, and what the consequences of their political strategies and discourses are, especially for environmental
sustainability. The research will establish links between the resistance and adaptation strategies of indigenous communities and local processes of environmental change.

This research has policy implications for governments and organizations involved in land restitution for indigenous groups. It also serves as a basis for further research into local responses to macrostructural factors, thus contributing to the expansion of conventional theories of resource conflict and political ecology. This research will be presented in seminars and conferences and lead to later publications.
Chapter 3. Background

The Mapuche People

Mapuche means “people of the land.” Mapu means land, che means people. The Mapuche inhabit the south-central territories of Chile and Argentina. According to their own historical perspective (Ñanculef 1989) their ancestral territory has five distinct regions, which together comprise the Wallmapu (see Illustration 3.1). Those regions are Puelmapu (land of the east, now Argentina), Pikunmapu (land of the north, or central Chile), Gulumapu (south-central Chile, from the Andes to the Pacific Ocean), Lafkenmapu (land of the Pacific coastal region in the west), and Willimapu (land of the south). The Mapuche of these regions are identified accordingly—for example, as Lafkenche or Williche. As described in classic ethnographic works (Berdichewsky 1975; Faron 1968), the Mapuche originally included both sedentary and nomadic communities; depending on the region, they might be hunters, farmers, gatherers or fishermen. Their social organization has always been based on extended families, each known as lof and each under the authority of a lonko (chief). Traditionally, the Mapuche governed their internal and external relationships, as well as their relationship with the land and its resources, in compliance with their own system of norms known as the admapu (the law of the ancestors).

After centuries of colonialism, Christianization, and modernization, the Mapuche continue to be a deeply religious people. In a syncretic way, they have incorporated some Christian practices into their earlier belief system. Their cosmology maintains that a celestial family that holds the power of nature created the world and all earthly beings. The spiritual leader, or shaman, is the machi, who still plays an important role in the internal decisions of each community (see Bacigalupo 2003). The most important ceremony is the ngillatun, which is held in a specially allocated area toward the east. This ceremony usually lasts two or three days. People also gather for community invocations and for harvests. However, under current political conditions such as those relating to land claims and demands for political rights, some ceremonies are being practised in other contexts for only few hours (e.g., during protests or within detention centres). The Mapuche language is called Mapudungun, which means “the language of the land.” There are a number of regional dialects, though the differences are slight. The ancestral belief is that the language emerges from listening to the land and all beings. Most of the place names on maps
Illustration 3.1. Mapuche ancestral territory

Mapuche Territory in 1540

of central and southern Chile have Mapudungun roots. Many plant and animal names also come from Mapudungun.

Many people continue to speak Mapudungun, especially during community ceremonies. However, many Mapuche children are growing up relying more on Spanish, and the great majority have stopped learning it at all, which is a great loss.

The Mapuche are also known as the Araucano, a name assigned to them by the Spanish colonists. By the time the *winkas*\(^{20}\) (the Spanish) arrived in the sixteenth century, the Mapuche population had already fallen drastically as a result of diseases (introduced by Europeans) and territorial wars (Berdichewski 1975). A century after their arrival, in 1641, the Spanish signed the Treaty of Quillin, which defined the boundaries of the Mapuche nation.

**Historical Context: Land Exclusion and Cultural Denial**

When the Spanish arrived, in 1540, the Mapuche occupied most of what is now Chile, from Antofagasta in the north to Chiloe Island in the south (see Illustration 3.1). Today, however, they have lost control of and access to by far the largest part of their territory\(^{21}\) (COTAM 2003). After the Treaty of Quillin in 1641, the Mapuche were confined to their old territories south of the Bio Bio river, in an area of approximately 10 million hectares (see Box 1 for a chronology of Mapuche land tenure).

**The Republican Period**

The Spanish Viceroyalty was overthrown in 1810. Argentina and Chile declared their independence, at which time the Treaty of Quillin was abrogated. After independence, Argentina and Chile both took measures to take over Mapuche territory. By the end of the nineteenth century, the Chilean and Argentinean armies had occupied the remaining Mapuche territory and subjugated the indigenous population. This was a violent time, marked by an undeclared war, referred to by Chilean historians as the “Pacification of the Araucania” and by the Argentines as the “Campaign of the Desert,” during which both countries violated their original treaties with the Mapuche (see Villalobos 1992).

---

\(^{20}\) A pejorative term used by Mapuche to refer to the Spaniards; literally, it means “thief.”

\(^{21}\) A hectare is 2.47 acres.
Yet the history of Mapuche relations with outsiders and invaders is quite unique. They are the only indigenous group on the continent that succeeded in driving back an invasion by the Inca Empire. And even though they were defeated in 1869 by the Chilean army after a bloody struggle (Bengoa 1985), they have never admitted that they were defeated ("pacified" is the Chilean government’s term). The Mapuche prefer to call the war the “penultimate struggle.”

Box 1. Historical Review

1540. Arrival of the Spaniards. Mapuche territories occupied from Antofagasta in the north to the Island of Chiloe

1641. The Treaty of Quilin (Mapuche will stay south of the Bio-Bio river).

1881–83. “Pacification” by Chile in 1883 (the “penultimate struggle”).

1860. Titulos de Merced (north) and “escrituras de comisario” (south); granted by the state, communal for possession and use, not for ownership (inalienability).

1927. Law #4.169. Subdivision of communal lands into individual ownership titles.

1929. 3,078 reserves on 525,000 hectares.

1972. Law # 17.929. Consolidation and increase in size of Mapuche land holdings and confirmation of communal ownership.

1974. Mapuche lands regained were expropriated again. Decree Law # 2568: “For the Indians Indian Lands, the Division of the Reserves and the Liquidation of the Indian Communities.”

1979. Division and liquidation of the Mapuche reserves (350,000 hectares).


1993. Indigenous Law 19.253 is enacted; CONADI is formed.

1993 to date. Land acquisitions.

Between 1881 and 1883, the Chilean army put down a major Mapuche uprising. The Chilean and Argentinean armies finally defeated the Mapuche nation in 1885. During these years, many indigenous people were either killed or driven from their homes to live impoverished lives in isolated villages or in the cities. Later they were settled on fixed reserves, called “reducciones” or “comunidades” (see Table 3.1). These reserves were much too small for the groups assigned to them and were generally separated from one another by areas settled by Chileans and European immigrants (Anaquod, Thomas, and Taylor 1984). The resettlement process continued until 1929, by which time 3,078 reducciones had been created—a total area of only 525,000 hectares—benefiting around 78,000 indigenous people. The total area allocated to the Mapuche
through these *reducciones* was equivalent to 6.39 percent of their traditional territory (Aylwin 1999). Having been forced onto lands that were too small to sustain them, the Mapuche were turned into poor farmers and forced to change their customs, forms of production, and judicial norms (Bengoa 1999). In effect, many Mapuche signed on for wage labour on nearby estates. By 1979, the date of the current law, which allows the division and liquidation of the Mapuche *reducciones*, this land base had been reduced even further, to only 350,000 hectares (Bengoa 1985).

**Table 3.1. Process of Mapuche’s forced settlement (1884–1929)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Province</th>
<th>No. of indigenous reserves</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Land surface</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Persons</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Ha./pers.</th>
<th>% of total territory</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ARAUCO</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>9,700.59</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>2,477</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>3.92</td>
<td>1.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIO-BIO</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>16,667.00</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>804</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>20.73</td>
<td>1.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MALLECO</td>
<td>280</td>
<td>9.6</td>
<td>80,900.75</td>
<td>15.8</td>
<td>9,455</td>
<td>11.4</td>
<td>8.56</td>
<td>6.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAUTÍN</td>
<td>2,038</td>
<td>69.8</td>
<td>326,795.31</td>
<td>64.0</td>
<td>61,798</td>
<td>74.8</td>
<td>5.29</td>
<td>17.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VALDIVIA</td>
<td>477</td>
<td>16.4</td>
<td>70,852.32</td>
<td>13.9</td>
<td>7,091</td>
<td>8.6</td>
<td>9.99</td>
<td>3.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OSORNO</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>5,470.70</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>1,004</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>5.45</td>
<td>0.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>2,918</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>510,386.67</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>82,629</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>6.18</td>
<td>6.39</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: González (1986).

In the 1860s the Chilean state began issuing the Mapuche “*titulos de merced*” in the north and “*escrituras de comisario*” in the south. The *titulos de merced* were lands conferred or considered granted to the Mapuche by the state. Title was communal, though generally in the name of the head of an extended family or community, and provided clear evidence of ownership. The *escrituras de comisario* were also communal; however, they were also inalienable—that is, these lands were granted only for possession and use, not for ownership. Thus the state retained ownership and prohibited sale of these lands to non-Mapuche (Anaquod, Thomas and Taylor, 1984).

Since 1927, titles of individual ownership have been issued to Mapuche; as a consequence, communal lands have been subdivided into individual family holdings. The legal intrument for
this was Law 4.169 (slightly modified in 1961), which established the Special Court for the Division of Indian Communities in Temuco (Aylwin 1999). Under this law, inalienability must be renewed every ten years. Between 1943 and 1947, as a result of this particular clause, about 100,000 hectares of land were purchased from the Mapuche on highly unfavourable terms (ibid.).

**Allende’s Agrarian Reforms (1970–1973)**

In 1972, Salvador Allende’s socialist government restructured Mapuche land tenure by enacting Law 17.729. This law flowed out of conferences with the Mapuche in Ercilla in 1969 and in Temuco in 1970; the latter was attended by Allende himself, along with his agriculture minister, Jacques Chonchol. The government did not meet all Mapuche demands; even so, the legislation was essentially favourable to them. It provided tax exemption for their lands; it offered agricultural credits; and it cancelled debts as well as all expropriation decrees. Finally, the law put an end to further land divisions. Mapuche lands were to be inalienable, and any further divisions would have to be approved by an absolute majority of community members.

Unlike all of the past legislation, this law was introduced not to divide lands but to consolidate them. Also, it restored lands to the Mapuche that had been taken from them, and it confirmed the principle of communal ownership (Berdicheski 1975). The same law defined “Indians”: they were those who spoke an indigenous language and who maintained distinctive cultural practices; and they were the owners or occupiers of lands referred to in the relevant legislation (since 1860). Law 17.729 made it clear that the “Indians” owned their lands, and it spelled out various procedures for them to recover lands that had been taken from them. This included lands that had been part of the original 525,000 hectares that had been granted in the 1880s. The same law even opened the door for an increase in the amount of indigenous territory. During the Allende years, through agrarian reforms, lands were expropriated from large landowners and public lands were allocated to indigenous people (ibid: 4).

Allende established a new government agency: the Directorate of Indian Affairs (DASIN). Its main objectives were these: to promote the social, economic, educational, and cultural development of indigenous communities, while seeking their gradual integration with Chilean society; and to respect their distinct cultures. Accordingly, debts were forgiven and credit was extended; indigenous territories were exempted from land taxes; and the decrees of expropriation of Mapuche lands (1931 and 1961) were annulled (Aylwin 1995). During the brief period that
the law was in effect, the Mapuche regained a good deal of the land that the large landowners had wrested from them. Sometimes this was done according to the law; several times, though, the Mapuche took back these lands outside the law (A anaquod, Thomas, and Taylor 1984).

**The Military Regime and the Counter-Reform (1973–1989)**

Chile was the first Latin American country to carry out a complete neoliberal transformation. Soon after the military coup in 1973, a small group of economists in the Pinochet administration set about reforming Chile’s economy along free market lines. These economists were known as the “Chicago Boys” because they were disciples of Milton Friedman of the Chicago School of Economics. Their task was to decentralize economic and political power by designing government policies that would promote free markets. The resulting policies encouraged foreign investment by lowering trade barriers and let the market regulate both the economy and society. These neoliberal policies emphasized deregulation, a reduced role for the state, and the privatization of state-controlled industries and services. Furthermore, it called for the “titling and privatization of property rights in land, water, forests, fisheries, and other resources that had previously been commonly or state owned” (Liverman and Vilas 2006, 330).

Yet for all of this to come about, the authoritarian regime would have to intervene in the economy. Market reforms did stimulate export growth, but so did direct and indirect government incentives and subsidies (Schurman 1996). Public resources were used to build the infrastructure for private business; this was coupled with fiscal subsidies and tax incentives. The forestry sector in particular benefited from special subsidies (e.g., Law 701), tax breaks, and other incentives designed to stimulate investment (Silva 2004). Neoliberalization was accompanied by social and political measures: cuts in social spending, restrictions on public participation, a rolling back of labour and environmental regulations, and the rewriting of laws and of the constitution itself (Barros 2002).

The Mapuche were strongly affected by all of this. During the Allende years, their communities had gained title to about 500,000 hectares. After the Pinochet regime took power in September 1973, the gains made under Law 17.729 were reversed. The lands that Mapuche families had just regained were expropriated back. Even worse, the military promulgated new laws declaring that there were no indigenous people in Chile, only Chileans. In 1979 the military regime issued Decree 2568, which encouraged the division of Mapuche communal lands and their conversion
to private ownership. Decree 2568 stated “for the Division of the Reserves and the Liquidation of the Indian Communities”. This decree allowed the division of Indian lands at the request of only one person, an “occupant” of a community or reserve, and that individual did not even have to be an Indian or a resident. Following a division, the lands would no longer to be considered Indian, nor the people “Indians.” “Indians” were no longer defined in terms of language or culture, and no appeal of a judgment was possible. Finally, a land division could not be annulled or rescinded.

As shown in Table 3.2, during the military regime almost 400,000 hectares were released to the market through Decree 2568. According to Aylwin and Castillo (1990), under this decree, by the end of 1990, about 2,000 Mapuche communities had been divided into more than 70,000 individual land plots or hijuelas22 with a total expanse of 463,000 hectares (approximately 6.4 hectares per hijuela).

Table 3.2. Total of land (in hectares) of indigenous reserves seized during the military regime

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>VIII</th>
<th>IX</th>
<th>X</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1979</td>
<td>7.71</td>
<td>4,662.44</td>
<td>5,108.84</td>
<td>9,779.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>5,892.45</td>
<td>38,869.75</td>
<td>14,919.43</td>
<td>59,681.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>45,249.52</td>
<td>19,276.54</td>
<td>64,526.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1982</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>39,613.90</td>
<td>14,370.53</td>
<td>53,984.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1983</td>
<td>331.56</td>
<td>35,031.90</td>
<td>12,154.96</td>
<td>47,518.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1984</td>
<td>194.07</td>
<td>40,034.45</td>
<td>4,686.59</td>
<td>44,915.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985</td>
<td>15.45</td>
<td>36,659.81</td>
<td>3,510.03</td>
<td>40,185.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1986</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>39,731.76</td>
<td>1,415.74</td>
<td>41,147.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1987</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>28,021.10</td>
<td>901.88</td>
<td>28,922.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>6,441.24</td>
<td>307,874.6</td>
<td>76,344.55</td>
<td>390,660.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: INDAP/DASIN (in Aylwin and Correa 1995)

---

22 An hijuela is the land portion of a formerly joint property that is adjudicated to belong to an individual through a process of inheritance or division. Thus, if a person inherits a piece of property, the portion of the will indicating the specific inheritance is the hijuela. The model used for the division and privatization of community lands, then, was that of a division of a joint estate, and the document indicating an individual's share was called an hijuela.
Under the counter-reform, Mapuche lands were privatized. Most were then sold off to wealthy landlords and foreigners, who then received subsidies to develop them as part of Chile’s neoliberal project. By the end of the land division, the average Mapuche family had title to less than six hectares of land and was no longer considered indigenous (Aylwin 2004). Mapuche who had migrated to urban centres were not included in the land division, which divided Mapuche communities even more. Yet many Mapuche had no choice but to move to the cities. In their efforts to adapt to Chilean society, they faced difficulties with employment, education, and wage discrimination. Many changed their Mapuche names to Spanish ones and stopped speaking Mapudungun. The military counter-reforms were also accompanied by human rights violations. Between 120 and 300 Mapuche leaders were executed or disappeared. Several hundred more were imprisoned in the early years of the dictatorship (Saavedra 2002, 192).

**Indigenous Rights under Succeeding Neoliberal Regimes**

With the return to democracy in 1990, the Chilean government changed its policy toward indigenous people. In 1993 the government introduced Indigenous Law 19.253, the Indigenous Peoples Protection, Promotion, and Development Act.\(^{23}\) For the first time, the ethnic identity of indigenous peoples was recognized. This act obligated both the state and Chilean society to protect indigenous cultures and help them develop. One of the law’s main objectives was to put an end to further land losses and expropriations. It included provisions that recognized indigenous communities’ rights to lands they occupied or possessed (Anaya and Williams 2001). Indigenous lands were to be protected by legislation (article 13) and could not be seized, sold, transferred, taxed, mortgaged, or acquired by prescription, except between communities or between members of the same indigenous group. Lands owned by indigenous individuals could be rented or given to third parties for their use and administration, but for a maximum of five years, and even then only with the authorization of the National Corporation for Indigenous Development (CONADI). If government or private sector projects required that indigenous communities be relocated, those communities would have to be compensated with land of equal value—a process referred to as *permuta* (land exchange)—and only with the community’s free and informed consent. If the owner did not accept the *permuta*, no transfer would take place. Furthermore, if a single individual disagreed with the *permuta*, there could be no agreement.

---

\(^{23}\) Ley 19.253, publicada en el Diario Oficial el 05 de Octubre de 1993.
Mapuche lands could no longer be sold to non-Mapuche, which meant that indigenous lands were effectively removed from the market. This law has not always been respected and enforced; even so, it was a sincere effort to resist pressure from large national and multinational corporations. In particular, it served as a roadblock to the forestry and agricultural sectors, since it prevented them from investing in new territories.

Articles 18 and 19 of the new law recognized indigenous people’s collective rights to lands as established by their own customs, as well as the right of indigenous people to engage in collective activities on lands of cultural significance. However, the same law recognized indigenous subjects only as individuals. That is, the statute did not recognize indigenous communities per se.\(^{24}\) Instead, it assimilated those communities into a Western-based statute that allowed them to remain as “indigenous communities,” but only in the sense of being recognized as rural councils, indigenous associations, or indigenous corporations. In other words, indigenous communities were recognized as legal entities rather than as historical communities with distinct ancestral rights. At the same time, it prohibited indigenous communities from representing themselves collectively (i.e., indigenous federations were forbidden). The consequence is that indigenous people in Chile are not recognized by the constitution as a distinct ethnic group and cannot represent themselves collectively.\(^{25}\)

The new civilian government implemented other measures besides. It established the National Corporation for Indigenous Development (CONADI), a stand-alone agency within the Planning Ministry. The participation of “indigenous advisers” in CONADI and the establishment of “legally” recognized communities and associations would ensure that indigenous peoples had a say in policies and programs affecting them. By 1997 there were 2,340 communities and 340 associations participating in local development plans.

CONADI has been criticized for cronyism and for trading in political favours at the expense of democratic processes. It is widely viewed as a government department rather than a community

\(^{24}\) Federación Internacional de Derechos Humanos (FIDH), La otra transició chilena: derechos del pueblo Mapuche, política penal y protesta social en un estado democrático. Federación Internacional de derechos Humanos. Informe No 445/3 (Abril 2006).

organization. There are seventeen members on CONADI’s council, eight of them elected directly by indigenous communities and eight chosen by the ministry. The council’s president is appointed directly by Chile’s president. Mapuche communities have criticized the consultation process for ignoring their traditions. For instance, election processes have usually not been made public, with the consequence that the elected councils are not seen as representing community interests. Also, voting processes do not take into account the lonkos. More often, CONADI representatives are elected because of their political clout or their fluency in Spanish (Nesti 1999).

CONADI has also established a ‘Fund for Indigenous Lands and Waters’ (FTAI), which negotiates over disputed lands and distributes state-owned lands. CONADI has been regulating the land with the goal of expanding and consolidating indigenous properties. However, much of rural Chile is under pressure to develop quickly according to the neoliberal model, and CONADI is always being criticized for defending development projects instead of protecting indigenous rights. Large-scale development projects that were launched under the Pinochet regime are ongoing. Roads are being built through Mapuche lands, including a highway around Temuco (where most indigenous communities in the south are concentrated) and a coastal highway that will benefit the fishing and forestry sectors. Forestry activities are damaging unique ecosystems on ancestral territories, and megaprojects such as the Bio-Bio Dam are being built on rivers these communities depend on. In the north of the country, mining activities are having a negative impact on the water resources (their quality and quantity) on which Aymara communities depend.

A serious problem for Chile’s indigenous people is that the government in Santiago has not committed itself to international conventions for the protection of indigenous rights. Chile’s constitution does not recognize the rights or even the existence of indigenous peoples, and the government has not signed any existing international laws (such as International Labor Organization Convention 169) that protect and promote indigenous rights. Until it does, indigenous groups will be unable to stop persistent violations of those rights.

---

26 This is at present the only instrument in international law which asserts fundamental rights for indigenous peoples and “tribal peoples” and which commit the signatory states with corresponding duties for their protection. The most important articles concern: the full granting of human rights and fundamental freedoms without hindrance or discrimination (Art. 2, 3); the right to cultural identity (Art. 4); the right to communal structures and traditions (Art. 4); the right to participation in the making of
The Overlaps between Indigenous Land Seizure and the Forest Development Model in Chile

The forestry sector in Chile is concentrated in VIII and X Regions. Coincidently or not, that is where most Mapuche live, including the poorest of them. Those regions are home to 1,693,286 hectares of native forest—one of the world’s largest temperate forest zones. VIII Region has one of the largest concentrations of tree plantations, but only 17,624 hectares of frontier forests, of which 80 percent are unprotected. For its part, IX Region has 154,527 hectares of frontier forests, 60.8 percent of which are protected (Neira, Verscheure, and Revenga 2002). More so than the natural forests south of 40°S, these regions have suffered from logging, forest fires, changes in land use, and the conversion into monocrop plantations of exotic species. First, “clearance fires” open the land for wheat. Then, as wheat yields drop, livestock are moved in. As a result of this system, soil erosion and land degradation were visible by 1960s, and calls went out for agrarian reform (Klubock 2006).

Between 1965 and 1973, the Chilean Development Corporation, CORFO, helped finance lumber mills and undertook extensive reforestation projects with Monterey pine (better known as *Pinus radiata*) and eucalyptus (Clapp 1995). Both are fast-growing trees that are not native to Chile. These plantations consist of even-aged, monoculture plots. Trees are planted in rows at an optimal growing distance and are later clear-cut on a rotational basis. The point of these plantations is to maintain a stock of exploitable trees for the pulp-and-paper industry. They have transformed entire rural areas, many of them inhabited by indigenous people, whose economies were previously dedicated to agriculture or whose territory was covered by native forest. These plantations—in effect, “industrial forests”—represent progress, which in fact is how the government promotes them. Forestry development is widely viewed as the Crown Jewel of Chile’s neoliberal economy (see Jelvez, Blatner, and Govett 1990; INFOR 1998). Yet this modernization project would not have been possible without the state’s economic and political support. As Angotti (1995) has noted, capital investments in Latin America favour export decisions affecting these peoples (Art. 6); the right to making one’s own future (Art. 6, 7); equality before authorities and courts (Art. 2, 8, 9); right to land and resources (Art. 13-19); right to employment and adequate conditions of employment (Art. 20); right to vocational training measures and access to the means of communication (Art. 21).

27 “Frontier forests” are the world’s remaining large intact natural forest ecosystems—undisturbed and large enough to maintain all of their biodiversity.
industries that are not closely linked to national and regional economies. The neoliberal model would have it that a “free” market should be the sole regulator of all economies; yet in practice, the forestry sector has been heavily subsidized by the Chilean state. This was especially the case during the Pinochet years, when Chile developed most of its incentives and subsidies. The Matte-Larrain and Angelini conglomerates, two of the largest industrial actors in Chile, have thrived largely as a result of economic programs launched during the Pinochet years (Fazio 2000). In the 1980s, Anacleto Angelini, who had been operating in VIII Region since 1974, merged with a New Zealand group, Carter Holt Harvey, and purchased 40 percent of Chile’s plantations and 63 percent of its wood processing industry. Around the same time, Matte-Larrain took control of more than 40 percent of Chile’s timber production and exports through CMPC (Compañía Manufacturera de Papeles y Cartones)28, one of the largest forestry consortiums in the country (Carrere and Lohmann 1996).

In 1974, one year after the military coup, Decree 701 granted tax breaks to plantations and subsidized 75 percent of the costs of establishing them. This bill is part of the environmental legislation that assigns CONAF the authority to approve or reject management plans (article 10); supervise compliance with approved management plans; and reforest denuded lands (see Appendix C). Thus, Decree 701 contains both environmental provisions and enforcement obligations (article 31). It also provides a 75 percent subsidy for afforestation costs, as well as tax exemptions for plantations established after 1974. In 1978, subsidies for administrative costs (surveillance, and maintenance of fencing and fire lines) were also introduced (Lara and Veblen 1993). However, Decree 701 was not drawn up to benefit smallholders. Only 4 percent of its subsidies benefited small farmers (Quiroga 1996). Without the resources and technical capacity to manage their forests, small farmers cannot access these incentives, nor can they obtain the economic benefits of timber sales. Most of Decree 701’s regulations have benefited the large forestry companies. In addition to this, transnational corporations have been granted the exclusive right to participate in the formation of public policy, such as the forest law and its regulations. No significant changes have been made to this law regime in the years since Pinochet: Chile remains a neoliberal democracy, and Decree 701 remains in place. Meanwhile, a new proposal titled “Law for the Recovery and Promotion of the Native Forest” has been

---

28 For more information see http://www.cmpc.cl
languishing in Congress since 1992\textsuperscript{29}. At present, subsidies are offered only to compensate producers for establishing new plantations and pruning existing ones. Other subsidies are still available for large companies—mainly for planting on fragile soils that are undergoing desertification. In 1998, Law 701 was renewed to cover the period through to 2011\textsuperscript{30}. Since 1974, and as of 2004, the Chilean government has paid $245.3 million in subsidies (Table 3.3).

**Table 3.3. Law 701 payment summary**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subsidy amount (US$ million)</th>
<th>Area subsidized (hectares)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Period</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trimming</td>
<td>1983–2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reforestation</td>
<td>1976–2004</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: INFOR, 2005.

Subsidies in Chile are the result of decades of lobbying by powerful business interests. Chile has a fairly strong presidential system, but presidents are constrained by party politics as well as by the corporate forces that dominate Chilean democracy behind the scenes. This ensures that the business elite and the dominant political ideology will be perpetuated. Present-day forest development is driven mainly by the private sector, but governmental assistance (influenced by corporate forces) takes different supportive forms of involvement. This is visible in the direct intervention of public agencies in technology transfers, scientific advancement, and road building. As well, government agencies such as the National Commission on Energy (CNE), the National Commission on the Environment (CONAMA), and the National Forestry Corporation (CONAF) readily authorize development projects. Also, many government departments—including the Education Ministry—have been actively supporting forest companies and their public relations campaigns. In general terms, the forestry sector exerts strong influence on


\textsuperscript{30} [http://www.infor.cl](http://www.infor.cl)
government’s responses to indigenous claims, especially when such claims contest or intersect with the country’s economic development policies.

In August 2000, faced with civil society’s rising concerns about the future of Chile’s native forests, the forestry industry with the government’s support launched an aggressive campaign to improve its public image. This campaign’s slogan was “True Forests for Chile.” The campaign, which cost an estimated US$6 million over five years, was carried by all the country’s media, including television, radio, and print. The TV spots offered the confusing message that the pine plantations were “forests for Chile.” The same ads showed a house, furniture, and other wood products over the mantra, “forests for Chile.” Meanwhile, CMPC implemented its “Good Neighbor Plan,” which included publishing a “Good Neighbour” bulletin, aimed primarily at indigenous communities, government organizations, and schools at all levels. All of this was interpreted by Mapuche groups and environmental NGOs as an attempt to co-opt communities and neutralize their opposition to unjust timber concessions.31 The same plan included the following programs and actions: annual fellowships for rural students; sponsorship of rural schools; extension programs for schoolchildren, including visits to the company’s high-tech facilities; knitting, sewing, jam-making, and cooking lessons; and courses on medicinal plants and greenhouse cultivation. The same campaign highlighted the jobs that forestry companies were creating (which favoured those who lived near the plantations, in other words, Mapuche communities); the firefighting training the companies were offering; and their open-door policy whereby thousands of families were permitted to freely scavenge firewood, mushrooms, and other items from company property.32

Having conducted several interviews in the targeted “benefiting communities,” I gathered that these programs had two objectives:

- To co-opt communities so that they would abandon their political mobilization, or alternatively, to divide those communities by offering economic incentives only to some members.

31 This version was repeated during personal interviews with members of NGOs and indigenous organizations.

32 http://www.cmpc.cl
• To meet the requirements for forest certification (and/or ISO norms), especially those relating to social responsibility.

The certification process for plantations has been criticized by environmental NGOs, especially with regard to the criteria established by the main international certification organization, the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC). The FSC’s Principle 10 states that “while plantations can provide an array of social and economic benefits, and can contribute to satisfying the world’s needs for forest products, they should complement the management of, reduce pressures on, and promote the restoration and conservation of natural forests” (see Appendix D). As it currently stands, this principle opens the door for unsustainable industrial tree plantations, especially in the South, by certifying them no matter what their negative social and environmental impacts.33

It is interesting that the debate in Chile revolves around privately owned forests and plantations (which is not the case in most other countries). This partly explains why the issue is not viewed as a social problem but rather as a conflict between interest groups. Only recently has the general public begun questioning the external costs of private plantations and the industry’s treatment of forests. After the return of democracy in 1990, the country’s environmentalists succeeded in launching a broad national debate over the 1974 forest law, which was doing much to decide the fate of Chile’s native forests. In 1991 the Government at that time introduced two pieces of legislation: a Reform of DL 701 to incorporate small land-holders and the Native Forest Recovery and Development bill. The latter was stalled since 1992. This bill was introduced under Chile’s “extreme urgency” legal procedures, yet it was only approved in December 2007, mainly because the various stakeholders and government agencies involved could not agree on its content. The media have been covering the topic extensively in recent years; as a result, the country’s forestry policies are being increasingly challenged. Their “successful model of economic growth” is being strongly questioned, and there is more acknowledgment of problems relating to how plantations are being managed, by whom, and at what cost.

Forestry plantations have done more than generate environmental concerns. They have also heightened conflicts involving the Mapuche, the state, and the industry. The environmental movement is opposing the expansion of exotic tree plantations and the felling of native forests; meanwhile, indigenous groups are organizing themselves into a social movement. It would seem

that the environmentalists and indigenous movement have a common enemy: the forestry sector. Yet they have not built strong alliances, for their demands and strategies are different.

**The Renaissance of a New Indigenous Movement**

As is the case with other indigenous movements in Latin America, the Mapuche movement has alternated between a class-based discourse and one driven by ethnic identity (Kearney and Varese 1995; Perrault 2001; Yashar 2005). During the military regime, the movement seemed to die out. During those years, the Mapuche allied themselves with peasants, miners, and the urban proletariat. As a consequence, their specific demands were buried under the class struggle being waged by leftist groups, who were trying to overthrow the dictatorship. Since the return to democracy, the Mapuche have largely abandoned their political partisanship in order to develop an indigenous movement, the goal of which is to promote their ethnic identity as a fundamental right.

In the 1990s the Mapuche launched a strong campaign against the expansion of forest plantations on their traditional lands. Into that process they injected new forms of resistance and political discourse. Today, the Mapuche movement’s goals are to recover their territorial autonomy; to regain access to their land and its resources; and to preserve their integrity as a distinct culture.

The indigenous struggle today is strongly linked to identity politics and involves an ongoing process of negotiation. Territoriality and identity, nature and culture, are constructed and negotiated in the context of colonialism as well as the neocolonial rhetoric that continues to delegitimize indigenous rights. Traditional territories have been reduced as a result of colonialism and the industrial capitalism that followed it. The Mapuche have been consigned to small estates and *reducciones*, where they are surrounded by forest plantations of immeasurable value to the global economy. Increasingly, they have found themselves deprived of their territories and fundamental rights. The landscapes and ecosystems that for centuries were tied to their culture are now being altered dramatically by the state and the forestry sector.

Violent resistance exploded in 1997, when the Mapuche began openly claiming their ancestral territory and confronting the expansion of forest plantations. That year, two logging trucks were torched and Mapuche communities occupied two estates near the town of Lumako (IX Region). These events, however, took place only after years of peaceful appeals to the local government. The violence did not begin until the Mapuche had exhausted all democratic procedures. A week
before the trucks were destroyed, Mapuche organizations had travelled to Temuco in a last-ditch effort to negotiate with local authorities. Only when nothing came of this did the Mapuche leaders mobilize their communities. Some focused on local political engagement; others took advantage of the government’s own legal mechanisms for redistributing the land (specifically, the Land and Water Trust Program). Whichever strategy was followed, the goal was the same: to regain lands they considered historical or traditional property belonging to indigenous communities.
Chapter 4. The Significance of Temperate Forests: From Forest Ecosystems to Industrial Plantations

The spread of monoculture plantations has triggered strong controversy, especially in the developing world (Cossalter and Pye-Smith 2003). Some contend that plantations will destroy the environment and displace small farmers; others, including environmentalists, note that exotic trees are replacing natural forests and damaging wildlife, water resources, and soils (WRM 2003). Local and indigenous communities complain that plantations are taking over lands that at one time had provided them with a livelihood. Meanwhile, those who support plantations contend that these forestry systems help protect natural forests and encourage economic growth. They argue that intensively managed tree plantations reduce the pressure on fragile forest ecosystems (Sedjo and Botkin 1997). Given the steady increase in the demand for pulp and paper, the planting of monoculture plantations is likely to continue for some time, and so too will the debate surrounding forests and plantations.

In this chapter I discuss the social and ecological debates surrounding this controversial topic. In particular, I examine the contentious debates among timber companies, environmental groups, and social activists regarding what a forest is. I analyze the discourses for and against forest plantations as valid and legitimate each in its own right—which is not to favour one discourse over the others. Many questions need to be considered, not the least of which is whether plantations are replacing native forests. So I will be defining the terms “tree plantation” and “natural forest ecosystem” and discussing how monoculture plantations differ from other forest ecosystems.

In this chapter I also explore the links between political and economic conditions affecting the current state of temperate forests, as well as the ways in which scientific knowledge intersects with forest policy debates. I then track the relationship between international perspectives on how forests should be valued, on the one hand, and the perceptions of local stakeholders on the other.

34 See Wendake Action Plan, presented by the participants of the Indigenous Peoples' Forest Forum to the World Forestry Congress, Quebec, 2003.

When I began this research I explored the parallels between forestry practices in Chile and those in British Columbia. This comparison helped me understand how temperate forests are valued and managed. Both places are home to a variety of old-growth temperate forests, including the world’s largest virgin temperate rainforests. Yet both governments, Chile’s and Canada’s, are currently allowing forestry companies to clear these unprotected ecosystems at a rapid rate. This is highly relevant, when we consider that most of the world’s forest policies and regulatory frameworks do not take into account the uniqueness of forest ecosystems and the social, economic, and political contexts in which they are managed. In light of this, I will be analyzing the political economy of tree plantations and the role of Chile’s forestry sector in the global economy. For this purpose, I will be focusing on pulp, which is Chile’s principal forest export commodity. My goal is to explain the impact of that particular commodity at the local level.

The last section of this chapter explores the various competing values assigned to forests. The social, economic, and ecological dimensions of forests often collide with one another, so I will be examining the conflict between native forests and monocrop plantations, paying particular attention to the role of values, knowledge, and power in this controversy. I will argue that these controversies cannot be resolved through conflict resolution based on scientific evidence or statements of values (though both are certainly important), but only through the capacity of interest groups to mobilize resources to defend certain arguments represented in scientific debates.

Local and Global Perceptions of Temperate Forests: A Comparison between Chile and British Columbia

Forests are generally viewed as a global asset and thus of global concern, yet typically, the uniqueness of temperate forests is insufficiently recognized. In recent decades, tropical rainforests have attracted international attention owing to their importance to biodiversity. Yet temperate forests are important in just the same ways. Many temperate forests have developed a high degree of endemism and thus represent an important source of biological diversity (Ehrlich

35 The international policy dialogue has been dominated by discussions of tree-specific management regimes, in which forest-related discussions tend to focus on criteria and indicators of sustainable forest management and certification schemes for sustainably produced timber. Among the international processes that impinge on forest policy and management are the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Montreal Process, and the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change.
temperate forests are receiving greater attention for their carbon storage capacities and for their fibre supplies.

Chilean temperate forests are considered the most biologically diverse temperate forest ecosystems in the world (Wilcox 1996). This is partly because of their topographical and climatic complexity and biogeographical isolation. Chile’s forests are exposed to an extremely heterogeneous environment, one with great variations in altitude and latitude. This heterogeneity is a function of Chile’s dynamic environment, which is characterized by glaciation, landslides, fires, volcanism, and climate extremes. Furthermore, Chile’s forests are bounded by the Pacific Ocean to the west, the Atacama Desert (the world’s driest) to the north, and the Andes Cordillera to the east. As a consequence, Chilean flora and fauna have evolved in isolation, more so than other temperate forests. As a result of these factors, and the river valleys that cross Chile from west to east, the local forests have maintained a high degree of endemism in their gene pools (ibid.). According to Arroyo and his colleagues (1996), Chile’s temperate rainforests are home to more than 70 percent of Chile’s forty-four tree species and are the most biodiverse regions in the country. Fifty-one percent of Chile’s native plant species, 77 percent of its amphibians, 80 percent of its bryozoans, and 92 percent of its of hemiptera and heteroptera species are endemic (see Armesto 1996; Marticorena and Rodriguez 1995; Bustamente and Simmonetti 1996). Despite efforts by many specialists to increase their knowledge of Chile’s biodiversity, many gaps still exist. For instance, while important studies of Chilean natural history have been conducted (Bustamente and Simmoneti 1996), there is also a lack of systematic taxonomic research in some regions of the country (Gajardo 1995). Similarly, there is little information at the ecosystem level.

In terms of biogeography and climate, the temperate forests of southern Chile and the Pacific Northwest are remarkably alike. They share many ecological characteristics, especially their coastal rainforests and their deciduous and evergreen forests. However, while Canada’s forests are characterized mainly by gymnosperms (“needle leaves”), Chile’s temperate forests are rich in angiosperms (Kellog 1993). As noted by Armesto and his colleagues (1996), Chile’s temperate forests are mixed evergreen forests; specifically, they combine broadleaf and needle-leaf species such as southern beech (rauli, roble, coigue), cordilleran cypress, mañio, lenga, and alerce.

Temperate broadleaf deciduous forests are found in both hemispheres (Armesto, Rozzi, and Caspersen 2001b). However, Chilean temperate deciduous forests have a greater number of
species and biological types. There are also some variations in the forest seral stages (which relate to the mix of even-age second-growth forests and remaining old-growth forests). For instance, in southern Chile’s native forests, such as beech deciduous forests, the old-growth forest emerges in the canopy layer (see Pollman and Veblen 2004). Below that layer is often found a second canopy characterized by shade-tolerant species; below again, a layer of shrub; below again, a layer of herbs. This spectrum of tree layers encourages the growth of a wide variety of epiphyte plants (i.e., plants that grow on trees). The creepers in these forests are highly abundant as well as vital to the biochemical cycle. Galloway (1996) has described Chilean temperate forests as one of the world’s great biodiversity centres for creepers. Unfortunately, these species are highly sensitive to human disturbances and are being affected by forest degradation, logging, pesticides, and herbicides. Primary formations from the remaining original forests have been destroyed. In Chile, some efforts have been made to protect these ecosystems; however, when forests are not managed by the National System for Protected Areas (SNASPE), the threat looms that they will be replaced by plantations or cleared for agriculture.

As Wilcox (1996) notes, the coastal rainforests of southern Chile and the Pacific Northwest are remarkably similar; the topography and climate (characterized by rain, fog, wind, and shade) produce specific growing conditions that only a handful of species can tolerate. Those species depend on natural disturbances to create gaps in the canopy. Often, the giant Sitka spruce and the southern beech cannot achieve second growth unless there has been a catastrophic disturbance. Natural disturbances such as floods, landslides, fires, volcanic eruptions, or strong gales may allow them to shoot up relatively quickly when these create an opening in the canopy. Plant communities can then occupy the disturbed area, replacing the former vegetation until a mature forest takes hold (ibid.). In vast areas of the world's forests, however, this ecological succession has been altered over time by human activity. Afforestation with exotic species and the large-scale manipulation of natural disturbances have together altered the natural processes and climatic conditions that are necessary to maintain the complexity of temperate forest ecosystems (Wilson et al., 2005). The late successional stages of forests—stages that in temperate forests rely heavily on species diversity—have been interrupted by human activities. This threatens biodiversity.

As Odum (1996) argues, this forest type does not have as great a diversity of species as tropical forests. However, the individual trees are larger, and some of them are the world's longest-lived
tree species. Some trees in these forests are thousands of years old; the alerce can reach the age of 4,000 years. The alerce is the largest tree in the Southern Hemisphere and the second-longest-living tree in the world after bristlecone pine. Like the redwood of the Pacific Northwest, the alerce has very thin growth rings and produces a straight-grained, rot-resistant, reddish-brown fibre (Wilcox 1996). In the southernmost part of Chile, lenga, an exceptionally common deciduous tree, often grows in heavy snowpack above the true rainforest, much like the mountain hemlock in the Pacific Northwest (ibid.).

**How Temperate Forests Are Valued. State, Assessment and Trends.**

Temperate forests are currently evaluated mainly in terms of their timber production. The concept of “sustainable yield” or “maximum sustainable yield” is assumed to be a sufficient measure of their sustainability (Vehkamäki 2005). Sustainable yield is a valid measure when the primary concern is commercial; however, broader concerns should also be considered, such as biodiversity, environmental protection, and social values (including the cultural needs of first peoples). The conservation of species and genetic variations has been identified as crucial for both economic and environmental reasons. As noted earlier, temperate forests are generally paid less attention than tropical forests, though they, too, are of vital importance. According to Dudley (1992), temperate forests—especially temperate rainforests—have areas of great natural wealth, and the biological and genetic diversity of some temperate forests can approach that of tropical ones.

Temperate forests are among the world’s most endangered ecosystems. They are home to many endangered species as well as to many indigenous groups, most of whom have suffered severely in recent decades as a result of forest mismanagement by outsiders. According to Dudley (1996), the following groups in particular rely heavily on temperate forests: the First Nations groups of North America, the Inuit of the boreal regions, the Sami of Lapland, the Maori of New Zealand, some aboriginal groups in Australia, and indigenous groups in South America, including the Mapuche. Too often, the societal and economic benefits of preserving temperate forests are not considered. Some examples:

- Temperate forest cover reduces soil erosion and the risk of landslides, thereby protecting hydrological systems and the aquatic species that spawn in them.
Temperate forests help regulate the local climate and are important carbon sinks for mitigating global warming (Myers, 1997).

Temperate forests provide a wide range of commercial products besides timber, including foods and medicinal herbs (Armesto et al. 2001a).

Temperate forests are important recreational areas, especially but not exclusively in the wealthy countries. In many developing countries, tourism has become an important source of income.

According to Prado (1997), the quality of temperate forests is difficult to assess, since at least four factors must be considered:

- “Authenticity” as it relates to species composition, size and age variations, the presence of dead timber, the continuity of forest cover, integration with the landscape, and the “absorption” of natural phenomena such as fires and winds.
- Forest health—that of both flora and fauna.
- Environmental quality as it relates to biodiversity, soil and watershed protection, and the impact on the local and global climate.
- The forest’s resource value in terms of timber, but also in terms of non-wood forest products such as medicines and foodstuffs, as well as recreation.

Generally, assessments of the quality of temperate forests focus almost solely on the economics of logging them. Little heed is paid to forest ecology. Nor are forests assessed in terms of their environmental benefits to society, such as the biological diversity they offer, the protection they provide to streams and soils, and their ability to capture carbon (Silva 1997). Because this sort of research is lacking, and given the complexity of forest ecosystems, it is difficult to predict the impact of disturbances (be they natural or human) on the structure, functions, and diversity of forests. These sorts of data are vital to the development of forest policies, which, as presently configured, tend to treat all forests the same.

In the countries of the North, especially in Europe, there has been a trend toward establishing forest management policies that heed both environmental and social issues, including soil and water protection, recreation (including hunting), and non-wood forest products (Nilsson, 2005).
Canada has recently been abandoning its reliance on maximum sustainable yields\textsuperscript{36} in favour of sustainable management practices that consider environmental, social, and cultural values as well as market values. “Ecosystem management” and “adaptive management\textsuperscript{37}” are the new paradigms in forestry policy. In Chile, this trend is only just emerging where it is visible at all. As noted by Prado (1997), a past director of CONAF, sustainable timber yield has long been the only factor his country has considered (most often in terms of the ratio between harvested wood and volumetric forest growth). The properties of ecosystems have been left out of all equations.

The reasons why Chile has lagged behind have mostly to do with conflicting social values and political mindsets as a result of which ecological concerns tend to be trampled. For instance, present-day forest certification programs refer to good forest management practices, yet the politics involved in establishing certification standards are bitter. As an example, some countries classify plantations as forests, other do not. Several NGOs have recently asked the FSC to withdraw its approval certificates from forestry companies in a number of developing countries, including Chile, on the grounds that they are violating the FSC’s mandate, which is to promote “environmentally appropriate, socially beneficial, and economically viable management of the world's forests.” This is evidence that these countries are facing critical problems in terms of monitoring and enforcing their forestry policies. In 1997 the World Rainforest Movement published a detailed critique of the shortcomings of FSC’s Principle 10, which focuses on the social, environmental, and economic importance of importance of strong forest plantation management (see Appendix D).

Similar debates are taking place with regard to carbon sequestration and the Kyoto Protocol. Scientists involved in climate change research have widely divergent views regarding conservation, biological diversity, and the restoration of forests and watersheds; and this doesn’t begin to touch on important issues of social equity (Bachram 2004; Bäckstrand and Lövbrand 2006). Many so-called carbon-fixing projects are viewed as colonialism through the back door—that is, as utilizing climate policies to remove CO2 even while promoting and subsidizing large-scale plantations that cannot be sustained. An example of this is Mikro-Tek, a Canadian

\textsuperscript{36} This term can be defined as the amount of harvestable material that can be removed from an ecosystem over a long period with no apparent deleterious effects on the system (Dearden and Mitchell 1998).

\textsuperscript{37} An approach that develops policies and practices to deal with the uncertain, the unexpected, and the unknown. It approaches management as an experiment from which we learn by trial and error (Dearden and Mitchell 1998).
company that has been helping Chilean companies and landowners plant more than one million trees. According to the Kyoto Protocol, this comes under the rubric of Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) projects, which means that the associated carbon credits can be sold forward to Canadian greenhouse gas emitters, brokers, or investors (Reedy 2003). Yet most of Micro-Tek’s projects focus strongly on pine and eucalyptus and involve planting genetically modified (GM) seeds. As Bäckstrand and Lövbrand point out (2006, 71), tree plantation projects developed to mitigate climate change risk reinforcing the top-down model of global environmental governance.

There is no scientific consensus regarding the role plantations play in offsetting carbon emissions. Yet entrepreneurial companies are charging ahead with plantations in the South, all the while propagating the notion that consumers need not change their lifestyles and can even become “carbon neutral” by planting trees (Bachram 2004). A recent study by the Carnegie Institution’s Department of Global Ecology indicates that planting trees in temperate regions may do nothing to mitigate global warming. According to Bala and colleagues, tropical forests help keep the land surface cool by evaporating a great deal of water; northern forests tend to increase temperatures because they absorb a great deal of sunlight without losing much moisture. In one simulation, the researchers covered much of the northern hemisphere (above 20°N) with forests and observed an increase in surface air temperature of more than 6°F. The replacement of grass and croplands with forest plantations may in fact lead to a mean global warming of 1.3°C—almost 60 percent of the warming produced by a doubling of CO2 concentrations (Gibbard et al. 2005).

What are the implications of all these different perspectives on temperate forests and their management? Recent conferences offer some insights, especially relating to the value of forest ecosystems. Environmentalists emphasize the uniqueness and irreplaceable value of old-growth forests; to this, logging companies reply that they are fostering social and economic well-being by complying with forest regulations such as annual allowable cuts (AACs). Foresters rely on science to manage forest ecosystems without risking their ecological integrity; to this, many First Nations people and some environmentalists reply that such methods do not take traditional knowledge into account. According to Kimmins (1997), the better we understand forest

ecosystems, the less chaotic and the more predictable they turn out to be. Armed with these insights, foresters can actually mimic nature; it follows that logging has the potential to increase diversity of species as well as their distribution. Kimmins, here, is acknowledging that forest ecosystems have complex dynamics, but he seems overly optimistic about the capacity of scientists to understand those dynamics. He seems to be relying mainly on the inherent capacity of forests to recover over time: “This inherent stability results from a large number of ecological processes … They [forests] are resilient, they are elastic: they bounce back, unless the mechanisms of recovery have been damaged” (1997, 20). The question is this: What are the mechanisms of recovery that must be maintained in forest ecosystems?

Still more questions arise from this debate: Who has the right to manipulate forest ecosystems? Are they indigenous property or state property? Should they be protected in the world’s interest? This is not simply a matter of science, or of reaching consensus on forest ecosystems. Just as much, it is a political matter in that it concerns the right of individual countries to manage and protect their own forests.

**Forest Policy and Management Practices**

It is now recognized that some form of management will be necessary if we are to protect the world’s remaining native forests (Ehrlich, 1996). Also recognized is that most current forestry practices are environmentally damaging (WRM 2003). Plantations and intensive management are transforming the world’s natural forest ecosystems by reducing species variety as well as genetic variations within species. This process is beginning to accelerate as monoculture plantations grow in size, pushing out native species. The present day’s forest management practices are also degrading wildlife habitats through poorly managed afforestation schemes. Those same practices are accelerating soil erosion, with negative effects on hydrological cycles, and increasing the risks of fires and insect plagues. All the while, artificial fertilizers, herbicides, and pesticides are being introduced into natural systems. Finally, industrial plantations are destroying the landscape and creating severe social problems for the forests’ original inhabitants (Garforth and Mayers 2005).

In Chile, forest harvesting is regulated through Forest Management Plans. These plans must be approved by CONAF before harvesting begins, and after the harvest at least as much land must be reforested as was cut. However, many of Chile’s forests are being logged illegally. Because of
legal loopholes and a lack of consensus as to what constitutes a “forest,” a “degraded forest,” or a “native forest,” forestry laws and regulations have been under review since 1992. The biggest lawbreakers seem to be the state itself, transnational corporations, and the larger forest companies (Carmona, 2002). Forestry regulations are supposed to control logging activities but are not strong enough to do so. Because of a lack of enforcement and institutional capacity, 60 percent of the activities denounced as illegal in IX and X Regions have gone unpunished (Defensores del Bosque Chileno 1998). Court records reveal that illegal fires and clearcuts can be attributed mainly to the larger forestry companies. The Chilean government’s own agencies are highly vulnerable to political pressure and lack the resources to enforce policy.

**Forest Endowments and Land Tenure Systems**

Most of Chile’s forests are in private hands. Less than 7 percent of Canadian forests are private property (Canadian Forest Service 2002), whereas in Chile, the forests are controlled mainly by a handful of conglomerates. Four Chilean companies account for more than 70 percent of the country’s forest exports; they and seven foreign-controlled companies account for more than 80 percent of the country’s forest exports (Bellisario 2007). Just two of the largest holding companies, Arauco (the Angelini group) and CMPC (the Matte group), own 50 percent of all tree plantations in Chile and 75 percent of pulp production. They are also the two largest exporters of lumber. Together they control the country’s largest sawmills, pulp mills, and packing factories. Besides this, they have invested heavily in energy, shipping, mining, and financial services (Catalan 1999). CMPC produces 90 percent of Chile’s paper. Forests in Chile are considered private property, which means that these companies own both the land and the trees. This distinction between suelo (land) and vuelo (trees) is a controversial one in Chile because many plantations now “owned” by these companies were planted before the agrarian counter-reform. Indigenous communities are now claiming the right to harvest those trees.

---

39 In first place is the Angelini Group, owned by one of Chile’s wealthiest and most influential families, with forty-three infractions. It is followed by Celco with twenty, then Forestal Valdivia with fifteen and Bosques Arauco with eight (Also see Revista Que Pasa, January 3, 2000).

40 Four of the Chilean entrepreneurs that belong to these economic groups are on Fortune Magazine’s list of the two hundred richest people in the world.
Industrial Forestry in Temperate Forests: The Chilean Case

The radiata pine was introduced to Chile from California in the early 1900s as an experiment in preventing soil erosion (Klubock 2006). These trees were so fast-growing that they were soon being planted on a large scale. Ironically, the United States now considers radiata pine an import risk because of the pests associated with that species. In 1997 the United States tried to impose non-tariff barriers on timber imports in order to protect its own forestry sector. Though Chile complied with all American regulations, the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) determined that Chilean wood did not comply with American phytosanitary controls. After long battle, the courts ruled in Chile’s favour. Frequent changes in American regulations and non-tariff barriers continue to vex foreign companies that are trying to compete with the United States. Figure 4.1 illustrates the evolution of Chile’s radiata plantations since their introduction in the early 1900s.

Figure 4.1 Evolution of radiata plantations in Chile

The introduction of exotic species is only one concern for Chile. Another important issue is the sheer scale of production. Industrial forestry is undergoing radical technological changes, with severe ecological impacts: native and old-growth forests are being heavily logged; other forests are being micromanaged (this includes the spread of plantations); and the pulp industry is polluting the environment (Unda, Paschen, and Stuardo 1997; Carrere and Lohman 1996; 41 “Catastro Nacional sobre Barreras Externas al Comercio–Versión 1998,” Ministerio de Economía de Chile.
Garforth and Mayers 2005). Technological advances are trimming the industry’s workforce and contributing to the specialization of production. On top of all this, most of Chile’s timber is being turned into pulp or chips. This is greatly increasing the pressure on the country’s forests, since a far broader range of tree ages and species can be utilized. Forests that were once not worth harvesting are now being cut, and the rotation times of plantations have been drastically shortened.

Meanwhile, the timber industry is falling into the hands of fewer and fewer large companies (Morales 2005). This has been accompanied by vertical integration, with companies involving themselves in all stages of production from tree cutting to the marketing of end products. And all the while, sources of timber are shifting from the North to the South (see Carrere and Lohmann 1996). Now that tropical hardwoods are being exhausted, companies are expanding their holdings in temperate countries and implementing plantation programs in tropical areas as well. Forest preservation policies in the countries of the Northern Hemisphere have reduced deforestation rates to almost zero; the result, though, has been sharp increases in harvesting rates in the Southern Hemisphere. This has been accompanied by the expansion of monoculture plantations, especially in the developing world. As Chapter 5 will discuss, the social and ecological impact of these developments has been profound. In this regard, Chile serves as a case study for what is happening around the world. Countries with large plantation programs, such as New Zealand, Portugal, Spain, and Chile, are becoming increasingly important on the world stage; other countries (including Canada) have increased their harvest rates to keep up with cheap exports of plantation timber or to develop domestic industries.

Environmental groups are working hard to protect native and old-growth forests, yet these continue to be logged in many countries. Especially at risk are north-western North America (including British Columbia, Alberta, and Alaska); northern Russia (including Siberia); Chile; Australia (including the eucalyptus forests of Tasmania); old-growth forests in Eastern Europe and the Baltic states; and forests in China, lowland Nepal and parts of northern India and Bhutan (FAO 2000).

Chile is far from competing with Canada, which holds 10 percent of the global forest cover and is the world’s largest exporter of forest products. Nevertheless, over the past two decades Chile has often been considered a model of a successful forestry practices, mainly because of its tree plantations (see Figure 4.2).
This, even though much of Chile's timber production has involved destroying native forests. According to Lara and Veblen (1993), between 1974 and 1992 more than 200,000 hectares of native forest were replaced in some areas of Chile.

Chile has planted more pine plantations than any other country except New Zealand and is the world’s third-largest exporter of wood chips (FAO 2000), with 6 percent of the world market. Yet these measures of success often conceal powerful ecological impacts. Replacing uneven-aged stands that contain diverse species with even-aged single-species plantations is a costly practice in environmental terms, however marketable the resulting products. Chile’s temperate forests are especially vulnerable to the demand for pulp; radiata and eucalyptus plantations are spreading rapidly (Armesto, Rozzi, and Caspersen 2001). Of the 2 million hectares of trees recently planted in Chile, radiata pine accounts for 68 percent, eucalyptus for another 24 percent⁴² (Table 4.1).

---

⁴² INFOR 2006
Chile’s forest ecosystems are being transformed, and species composition and abundance are changing dramatically. Industrial logging reduces biodiversity by destroying local species of plants and animals. Moreover, many logging practices increase forest fragmentation (Bustamante and Simonetti 2005) thereby “trapping” species on islands of old growth (which has the further effect of subjecting large areas to climate change). Valuable habitats, including dead standing trees and downed logs, are lost (Dudley et al. 1996). Clear cutting also increases the risk of soil erosion and watershed destruction. Especially damaging, according to local people, is the pushing of roads through forests. Old-growth logging seems to be on the decline, since there are fewer such forests to cut. Logging regulations are generally too weak to provide sufficient environmental protection. Saving remaining areas of temperate old-growth forest has been identified as a conservation priority (Dudley 1992; Neira, Verscheure, and Revenga 2002).

Many proposals for mitigating the damage done by the forestry sector have been offered over the years. An example is the one floated by the Montreal Process in 1993.43 Generally, these initiatives seek to balance the industry’s objectives with environmentalists’ priorities by following practices based on patterns of “natural disturbance.” For example, some trees could be

---

43 The goal of the Montreal meeting was to develop a scientifically rigorous set of seven criteria and sixty-seven indicators for evaluating forest ecosystem sustainability.
left standing after a clear cut to maintain age variety; dead wood and debris could be left as is; and an interconnected network of old growth could be maintained, perhaps along firebreaks such as rivers and ridgelines. But these proposals remain controversial, especially regarding biodiversity factors and differences in how natural and “managed” forests must be managed. The Montreal proposals made it quite clear which ecosystem attributes counted most but did not explain how “criteria and indicators” (C&I) were to be interpreted (Raison, Brown, and Flynn 2001).

The role of Chile’s Forest Industry in the Global Economy: Forests for Pulp

According to data obtained from INFOR and the USDA Foreign Agricultural Service, 133,783 hectares were planted in Chile in 2005. Just over 73,000 of these hectares were plantations, almost 61,000 involved reforestation. The same year, Chile’s forestry sector accounted for about 3.4 percent of the national GDP and 8.8 percent of total exports. In 2006, Chilean forest products had a value of US$3,890 million, an 11.3 percent increase over 2005.

For analytical purposes I will focus on wood pulp, which is the country’s main export (see table 4.2).

Table 4.2. Chile's forest exports by major commodity, 2005 (US$ Million)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Commodity</th>
<th>Value (US$ Million)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wood pulp</td>
<td>1,205</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sawn wood (pine)</td>
<td>714</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paper, paperboard, paper products</td>
<td>417</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wood continuously shaped (pine)</td>
<td>262</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fibreboard</td>
<td>234</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plywood (pine)</td>
<td>208</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wood chips (eucalyptus)</td>
<td>161</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doors and frames</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other woods and wood products</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Printing products</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Furniture</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>3,455</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Aduanas de Chile, 2006

---


46 [http://www.infor.cl](http://www.infor.cl) acessed Feb 2007
In 2005 the country exported 2.6 million tons of pulp worth more than US$1,200 million (INFOR 2006).

According to Bull (2000), worldwide there are about 123 million hectares of forest plantations for fibre production. Chile is one of world’s biggest pulp producers and is planning to grow this part of its economy, mainly by planting more industrial plantations. During the 1990s, Chile’s wood pulp production increased an average of 12 percent per year; by 2000 Chile ranked tenth in total pulp production and fifth in market pulp production (INFOR, 2002). New projects will double Chile’s pulp-producing capacity in the coming years (Hennicke 2006). In contrast to Brazil, which specializes in short-fibre pulp from eucalyptus, Chile has always focused on long-fibre pulp from radiata pine. However, because eucalyptus trees grow to maturity twice as quickly, Chile is now diversifying toward short-fibre pulp (see Illustration 4.1).

Illustration 4.1. Chile’s pulp production by type, 1990–2010

Climate, soil, and water conditions in Chile allow radiate pine trees to grow more quickly and with higher density than in other countries (see Table 4.3). As a result, industrial plantations are able to shorten their cutting cycles. Between 1996 and 2002 the average planting rate was 90,000 hectares per year and the annual harvesting rate was 25,000 hectares (Hennicke 2006). However, the Chilean government’s policy decisions do not consider long-term social, environmental, and economic sustainability.
Table 4.3. Annual growth rate for radiata pine

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Growth rate (M3/ha/yr)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chile</td>
<td>24.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Zealand</td>
<td>20.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>2.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Patterns of Consumption and Demand

The world’s annual consumption of pulp has increased significantly since the Industrial Revolution (Carrere and Lohmman 1996). In recent decades this has not been the result of rising literacy; rather, demand is being fuelled by commodities such as shopping bags, shipping cartons, drinking cups, building materials, and laser and inkjet paper. Even more recent items, now almost indispensable to modern life, include diapers, tissue paper, and Tetra Paks. Many of these products are part of daily life, yet most people do not associate them with their environmental and social impacts. Over 40 percent of the world’s paper production in 1991 went to packing and wrapping paper; 13 percent to newsprint; and less than 30 percent to printing and writing paper (ibid.). The main consumers of paper and importers of pulp are the United States, Germany, and Japan (Pulp and Paper International 1995). Almost half the world’s production is consumed by these three countries, with the United States alone consuming 32 percent (Carrere and Lohmann 1996, 39). These three countries are also among the biggest producers of paper.

The North’s growing paper consumption and the removal of commercial barriers have attracted transnational corporations to Chile, where they form consortiums with powerful economic groups on the local scene. During the Pinochet years, forestry activities were privatized and deregulated, and this process has continued since the return of democracy (Silva 2004). The state’s role in that sector has declined, while private sector influence has swelled. In particular, the pulp-and-paper companies have been exerting their influence in the political arena. Today the pulp industry is implicated in a network of inequalities regarding how the industry’s costs and
benefits are distributed. The *CIBC World Markets Report* (2005) notes that “prices of pulp in Chile, Brazil and Australia are one-half to one-third of that prevailing in many of the main producing regions in the northern hemisphere (2005, 12).

Chile’s forestry companies broadcast their comparative advantage and growth potential. Meanwhile, workers in that sector are kept in a cycle of poverty and debt by the current global economy, which thrives on the exploitation of cheap labour. According to Hawkins Wright (2003), Chile is by far the world’s lowest-cost producer of bleached softwood kraft pulp (BSKP). Chile’s cost advantages are a function of labour costs (see Illustration 4.2). Wood is 55 percent of production costs for Chilean producers; even so, it is far cheaper for them to obtain relative to their Swedish and Finnish competitors. Chemicals, which are priced similarly to what competitors spend, are 21 percent of costs. Labour is, again, much cheaper for Chilean companies—from one-half to one-third of what other countries pay.47

![Illustration 4.2. Comparative advantages of pulp production (BSKP only)](image)

**Illustration 4.2. Comparative advantages of pulp production (BSKP only)**


According to Carrere and Lohman (1996), regional and global trade agreements are making it easier for the industry to exploit these cost disparities by shifting production to the South. As

47 “Guide to Business in Chile,” [http://www.bussinesschile.cl](http://www.bussinesschile.cl)

48 [http://www.cmpec.cl](http://www.cmpec.cl)
Table 4.4 indicates, buyers from around the world are seeking Chile’s pulp; they include major consumers such as the United States, which leads the world in both per capita consumption and commercial pulp production. According to *Pulp and Paper International* (1995), the United States imported 5 million metric tons of pulp in 1993. That was 17 percent of the world’s imports.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 4.4. Chile’s forestry exports by destination 2003 (US$ millions)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Country</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mexico</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Korea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peru</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total exports</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Instituto Forestal (INFOR), 2003*

According to the Chilean Wood Corporation, CORMA, Chile’s investments in the pulp industry have led to a doubling of capacity over the past few years. Production of wood pulp was 2.4 million tons in 2000; by 2010 it is expected to be 3.5 million tons (Azzopardi, 2006). Projected exports for 2010 are 3 million tons, with the balance supplying the domestic market. Clearly, this growth is linked to infrastructure investments and the opening of more land to tree plantations. New plantations and mills in Chile are a reflection of export growth. Large American corporations such as Boise Cascade and Trillium are investing massively in Chile (and in other South American countries).
According to data from Prochile (2000) and the Central Bank of Chile, in 1999 forestry exports to the United States increased to US$487.2 million (i.e., by 39 percent). That made the United States the primary market for Chile’s forestry products. The strongest exports were coniferous wood strips and mouldings ($139.1 million in sales). Other exports included coniferous boards, doors, and door mouldings. Also in 1999, the United States was the destination for almost half of the country’s exports of wooden furniture and parts. Many of these products were imported into the United States free of duty under the Generalized System of Preferences program (Prochile 2000). According to INFOR’s statistical reports, radiata pulp accounted for 20.4 percent of total forest exports in 2006. Other factors influencing the rapid diversification and expansion of the Chilean forestry industry are trade agreements signed recently with South Korea, Mexico, Canada, the United States, Mercosur, and the European Union. These trade policies have significantly reduced import duties and eliminated tariffs (Sedjo and Simpson 1999; Clapp 1995).

Yet the benefits of this growth never reach workers or local communities; the exporters are the sole beneficiaries. The areas with highest concentrations of tree plantations are also those with Chile’s highest poverty rates (Newbold 2004). In addition, forestry activities have marginalized farmers (Unda and Stuardo 1997), who have not benefited from state subsidies for forest plantations. Neither have they received any direct benefits from the rising investment in pulp exporting.

According to the interviews I conducted, most small farmers sell directly to contratistas (intermediaries), who then sell to the pulp exporters. The contratistas are known to take advantage of small farmers, paying them below-market prices and keeping a high percentage for themselves. In contrast, the large forestry companies usually process and export their own harvests, which are then sold at the prices set by the international buyers.

Small farmers lack the means to process their wood for pulp. As a consequence, importers purchase pulp from established exporters and large plantation owners. The importers provide a crucial service to large exporters (technology, pesticides, advice, etc.). Because many plantation owners rely on these services, American importers wield a great deal of influence over management practices in Chile.

---

Controversy: Tree Plantations and Native Forests in Chile

Next I consider the competing values attached to Chile’s forests: social, economic, and ecological. I describe how social and ecological considerations have influenced the debate on the future of temperate forests. The greatest challenge in forest management policy is how to balance competing interests; thus I will be discussing the importance of temperate forests in terms of policy and management practices as well as the impact of industrial forestry in recent decades. Scientific findings sometimes conflict with popular perceptions; moreover, many claims remain contested because there is still a great deal of uncertainty about the impact of fast-growing tree plantations. Science has not been able to settle key questions relating to ecological health or the ethical, political, and social consequences of the forest plantations.

As Clapp notes (1998b, 5), since 1990 a broad national debate has been conducted over the law to replace Decree 701,¹⁰ which was promulgated in 1974 and is still the most important law relating to the future of Chile’s native forests (see Box 2). The military government introduced Decree 701 to encourage forestry exports, in large part by subsidizing plantations (up to 75 percent of their costs) and exempting them from taxes (Clapp 1998b; Kay 2002). The subsidy provided an incentive for small forest property owners to replant and reforest; but according to studies conducted by the Chilean Fund for Agricultural Research (FIA), those incentives have focused mainly on large, corporate plantations, and small property owners have often been displaced as a result. Between 1975 and 1995 only 28% of the properties that received subsidies corresponded to small farmers with less than 200 hectares; this, despite the fact that small owners represent 76% of forest lands. On the other hand, lands over 1000 hectares (which represent only 5% of forests lands) concentrated more than 35% of the subsidies (CONAF 1998). The National Forest Corporation (CONAF) estimates that 800,000 hectares have been replanted under the incentive program; less than 4 percent of the replanted properties are of less than 50 hectares. The decree was in effect for twenty years, starting in 1974; then in 1994 it was renewed by the Frei government, whose goal it was to encourage small landowners to establish forest plantations (CONAF 2000).

¹⁰ Decree law 701 establishes the legal framework with regard to forest lands and lands suited for afforestation, published in the Official Gazette, November 28, 1974, amended by Law 19.561.
Box 2. Chronology of the Controversy

1987. The first shipments of wood chips to Japan. Terranova, a Swiss–Japanese joint venture, projects a large clearcut of native forests, which will be replaced with eucalyptus in eight-year rotations. The company obtains permission during the military regime (later, it will seek final approval from the incoming democratic government). CODEDD, an important environmental NGO (which survived the military regime), strongly opposes this approval and seeks international support. This triggers a major change in how sustainable forest development is defined in Chile.

1991. Woodchips became Chile’s largest timber export by volume. A cabinet committee rules out large-scale clear cutting and substitution with exotic species. Meanwhile a letter from forty-one ecologists, conservationists, and foresters appears in the press, asking the government to clarify its forest policy and demanding that the planting of exotic species be rejected. Terranova suspends its operations, declaring that without a free hand in deciding where to clear-cut and where to substitute, projects will no longer be commercially viable.

1992. During the Aylwin administration, the Native Forest Recovery and Development bill is introduced to Congress.

1994. President Aylwin extends National Monument status to five endangered species. CORMA complains that the forestry sector will be affected by the new regulations protecting native forests because from now on any species could be declared at risk or a National Monument.

1995. Since 1990 the volume of woodchip exports has increased at an annual rate of 40 percent. In October a controversial national environmental report is released to the media. The report had been conducted by the Central Bank to meet the UN standards for national accounts adjusted to reflect resource depletion and environmental degradation. It estimates that by 2025, half of Chile’s remaining native forests will have disappeared. This projection generates heated debate. The economist who has exposed the environmental effects of large forestry projects is fired; the industry accuses him of harming the national economy.

1995. “Defensores del Bosque Chileno” launches a massive ad campaign to spread the controversy to the general public.

1998. The National Vegetation Survey, requested by all parties, is completed.

In this context various questions arise: Who has the right to forest resources (including plantations)? What are the competitive advantages of pine and eucalyptus plantations? What are the effects of replacing native forests with exotic plantations? And finally, how can Chileans negotiate among disparate knowledge and value systems as they relate to the country’s forests?
To answer these questions I will draw from discourse analysis (detailed in the method section). I will explain that in Chile, most of the controversies surrounding plantations and native forests will not be resolved solely through conflict resolution techniques; another factor will be the capacity of interest groups to mobilize resources. Policy decisions in Chile are shaped by processes of advocacy and bargaining, with stakeholders forming competing coalitions on the basis of shared values (Sabatier and Jenkins-Smith 1993). This explains why certain perspectives are elevated in the scientific debate whereas others, such as traditional knowledge, are ignored (Sillitoe et al. 1998; Dove 1996; Kraus, Malmfors, and Slovic 1992).

**Actors’ Positions, Their Values, and Discursive Frames**

**The Industry**

Chile’s forestry industry views itself as having the legitimate right to appropriate nature. As noted earlier, almost all of Chile’s forest plantations are in private hands, with almost 50 percent of them owned by two companies. Roughly 70 percent of the country’s native forests are held by small and medium-sized owners; the remaining 30 percent are managed by the state through the National System for Protected Areas (SNASPE). Overall, the forest companies are driven by the assumption that as legitimate landowners, they have the right to exercise rational choice in the governance of their holdings. During an interview, Juan Eduardo Correa, the former vice president of the forestry companies’ association (CORMA), told me that social and environmental values (including biodiversity) should be protected through the SNASPE, not the private landowners. CORMA’s position is that the state should protect landowners’ freedom of choice, even when that choice is to convert native forests into exotic plantations where the economics make sense (Raga and Sierralta 1995). As an alternative, CORMA (1994) asserts that the state could compensate landowners for lost economic opportunities. In a group interview with CORMA representatives they said:

“The restrictions and possible immobilization of the resources contribute to evaluation of the forests by their owners because, like it or not, they do have owners and they don’t belong to all the society … unless they are legally expropriated and the costs of this assumed by all Chileans”.

A coalition formed by forestry companies, professional foresters, and the state has insisted that Chile must use its native forests or lose them and that the country is too poor not to exploit all of
its natural resources as fully as possible (Clapp 1998b). CORMA’s position, in particular, has been amplified by a publicity campaign promoting commercial forestry
51 and arguing strongly for property owners’ rights. The forestry sector’s spokespersons contend that “the solution to deforestation lies in freer markets and more of them, not in regulating land use.” As Clapp (1998b) has noted, that sector has also suggested that because the Chilean state is relatively weak, industry must take the lead in economic development—which here would involve the commercialization and commodification of public lands:

“Expanding markets for native woods will lead landowners to manage their forests for wood production. In the absence of [timber] markets, forests will be cleared to gain access to the productive potential of the underlying land... Because of the limited state capacity, the native forests must be converted into commercial forest because otherwise the state will lack the resources to protect them” (Revista Chile Forestal 1991 in ibid:23).

The forestry sector also argues that given recent uncertainty about interest rates, returns on investment cannot be calculated to a certainty (Leslie 1987). As Clapp (1998b) notes, when future returns are discounted, it makes economic sense to extract natural resources rapidly, since doing so converts natural capital into economic capital, which can then be invested in more ‘secure’ industries. CORMA representatives have been also emphatic regarding the need to convert native forests to industrial schemes; doing so, they contend, will make it easier to manage them rationally. It is worth remembering here that Article 12 of Decree 701 subsidizes the following: forestry activities in areas that have fragile soil or that are undergoing desertification; forestation of degraded land, as well as activities aimed at recovering those lands; and the afforestation of suitable lands (see Appendix C). Yet as mentioned earlier, many of the industry’s premises and tactics are highly questionable; for example, forestry companies have been known to assign the label “degraded” to native forests.

The forestry sector invariably sees native forests as an extractable resource, and as non-renewable and therefore as not worth the effort to maintain in anything close to a pristine state. Indeed, CORMA has stated that Chile’s native forests were exhausted as early as 1965 and has recommended that they be replaced entirely with exotic plantations.52 According to Clapp (ibid.),

51 A national campaign, “True Forests for Chile,” was launched in 2000 on radio and TV.

52 A report from the FAO mission to Chile in 1991 in fact recommended converting old native stands to young stands, if necessary by replacing native species with exotics (Clapp 1998a).
pulp industry representatives and the forestry industry association describe native forests as “disorderly” and are calling for them to be replaced with single-species second-growth forests, in order to homogenize the environment, thereby reducing production costs. This argument is rooted deeply in the principles of economic rationality. From that restricted perspective, it is logical to homogenize forests in order to simplify production, transportation, and marketing. Given that economic interests dominate the present-day debate over natural resources, the economic perspective has been adopted almost wholesale, such that the only benefits and costs being considered relate to markets, never to ecosystems (or biodiversity more broadly). Questions about how to define “costs” and “benefits” have largely been dismissed, along with questions about how both are distributed among the Chilean polity. And all of this is complicated further by the fact that not all costs and benefits can be identified, quantified, measured, or priced (Kalof and Satterfield 2005).

The forestry industry spokespeople whom I interviewed felt that they had been falsely targeted as the villains in land conflicts with the Mapuche. In their view, it was up to the government to resolve the Mapuche problem as a societal problem (i.e., not an economic problem). According to the forestry sector, the problems facing the Mapuche are endemic poverty, unemployment, and lack of education, and assimilation is the only way to overcome their marginalization—land rights will not do it. The forestry companies maintain that the lands being disputed will almost certainly never be farmed again using traditional methods. In their view, the Mapuche should be brought into the forestry sector as small entrepreneurs associated with large companies.

The Government

In the years since the end of military rule, the primary mission of Chile’s democratic governments has been to show the Chilean people that democratic governments can combine economic growth with social justice and redistributive measures. Chile’s success as an exporter has been based heavily on the exploitation of just a few natural resources, such as fish, wood, and other primary products. In this set of new political priorities, the environment has not been viewed as a significant social benefit; indeed, environmental protection has been perceived as incompatible with development. At the start of his term (1993–97), President Eduardo Frei declared that “no investment project will be blocked on environmental grounds.”
In an effort to soften public discontent with forestry policies and regulations, the government has established several multistakeholder forums to discuss sustainable forest management. The government’s goal in this is to regulate the forests democratically by involving the various stakeholders, and to do so in a way that does not violate the property rights conferred by the constitution. Yet forestry policies continue to be paternalistic—a mindset that can be traced back to the military regime. The state continues to subsidize timber companies and to fund silvicultural research. And the primary goal of that research is to increase the economic viability of exotic plantations.

**Environmentalists**

Compared to the industry and the government, Chile’s environmentalists take a variety of positions. At one end of the political spectrum are the radical ecologists, including Defensores del Bosque; these groups are proposing that native forests be turned into national parks in which no human intervention will be permitted. Other, “softer” environmental groups, such as CODEFF, are in favour of managing the native forests. For example, they are calling for restrictions on exports of raw timber and for “slower” (i.e., more careful) management of pulp exports. More radical NGOs, such as Defensores del Bosque, have not been included in stakeholder negotiations, having been dismissed as “too emotional,” as green fanatics with no scientific arguments to offer, and as impediments to the rational use of resources. Yet Defensores del Bosque has achieved a great deal. It was able to negotiate an agreement between environmental activists and the Chilean timber companies to stop logging native forests. Instead of resorting to the courts and the legislature, it launches boycotts and protests against corporations (such as Home Depot, an American company). It persuades large retailers to pressure their suppliers and business partners to change their practices, in this way generating a “green” domino effect (Carlton 2004). At the end of 2003, Chile’s largest forestry companies, under pressure from Defensores del Bosque in alliance with Forest Ethics (US based environmental NGO), signed an agreement under which Chilean logging companies would take

---

53 Since 2001 a series of organizations from different sectors have been participating in a forest round table, Mesa Forestal. Among these are government bodies such as the Agriculture Ministry, CONAMA, CONAF, and INFOR. The forestry sector is represented by CORMA. There are also NGOs represented, including Terram, CODEFF, RENACE, Defensores del Bosque, and MUCHECH, as well as academic groups such as Agrupación de Ingenieros Forestales por el Bosque Nativo (AIFBN) and Sociedad Ecológica de Chile.
stronger conservation measures; in return, the environmentalists agreed to stop calling for a boycott of the big pulp-and-paper companies.

Around the same time, a group of somewhat less radical environmental NGOs received the endorsement of prominent biologists and ecologists (Sociedad de Biología de Chile 1996); this raised public awareness that Chile’s forests are ecosystems serving multiple functions. Organizations such as RENACE and CODEFF are advocating integrated management practices based on an “ecosystem approach,” “adaptive management,” and “multiple-use management.”

Whatever their differences in tactics, broadly speaking the country’s environmental groups have two principles in common. First, all advocate careful stewardship of private forests and assert that economics must not be the sole factor guiding the development of forest policies. The “stewardship” concept aims at protecting the environmental values (and other public values) of all the country’s forests. This will require that limits be placed on landowners’ decision-making freedom (Arnold 2003, 322). Second, they oppose all conversion of native forests into fast-growing exotic plantations. As Clapp (1998b) notes, the first of these principles is the thornier of the two. Indeed, CORMA’s president has responded by demanding total freedom in decisions relating to forest management on private lands; CORMA is even demanding that this freedom be extended to native forests, which (as already noted) the industry has described as overmature, degraded, and worthless. It has proposed that these forests be thinned of old-growth trees in order to “rejuvenate” them.(ibid)

**Indigenous People**

Despite their lead role in the opposition to the expansion of tree plantations, the Mapuche have generally been sidelined from most negotiations between the forestry sector and the environmentalists. Chilean history has unfolded in such a way that Mapuche political discourses link land seizures to discrimination. Land claims and resistance to the intrusion of industrial forestry reflect the values that indigenous people attach to their traditional territories, which are being converted into plantations that solely benefit capitalism. Further their claim is not one of compensation for lands lost but for specific sites or ancestral territory. For the Mapuche, land use specialization and the concomitant relocation of indigenous groups when nonindigenous societal interests are at stake (timber or energy needs) do not constitute a legitimate basis for action.
Land, in this sense, is said to have a “use value” but not an “exchange value” per se, which cannot itself be compensated or transacted in monetary terms.

Mapuche activists have sometimes allied themselves with specific environmental NGOs and human rights organizations such as the Institute for Indigenous Studies and Environmental Conflict Watch. In doing so they have garnered the support of a network of scientists, who are documenting the impact of plantations on their communities. Using participatory community research methods, Frias (2003) has documented how individual Mapuche have been affected by plantations and how they been intimidated when they try to resist. Many Mapuche are working to bring historical accounts and everyday experiences—including traditional knowledge—into the ambit of “expert” knowledge, in the hope of participating in scientific debates about Chilean forests. However, the timber companies, the state, and even environmentalists tend to dismiss Mapuche claims as “political” and their knowledge as “anecdotal.”

**Small-Scale Foresters and Peasant Farmers**

In recent years a previously low-profile sector has activated itself and forged alliances with other sectors. That sector is the peasants and small farmers who own small forest tracts. For instance, the Chilean Peasant Farmer Movement (MUCECH) has recently been injecting itself into debates about forest policy. Its main goals are to modify Decree 701 (Silva 1999) and to implement preferential afforestation schemes for small-scale farmers (MUCECH 1998). MUCECH has done much to recast many of the regulations that had long prevented its members from benefiting from Decree 701. In fact, it was MUCECH that explained to the Agriculture Ministry and CONAF what those mechanisms were in the first place. As a result of MUCECH's involvement, clauses have been deleted from Decree 701 that had long blocked the participation of smallholders (Silva 1997). In 1998 the decree was amended so that it showed more favour toward small producers. Small farmers are now refunded for up to 90 percent of planting costs for the first fifteen planted hectares and for 75 percent of the rest. Later pruning and thinning costs are also subsidized up to 75 percent of costs. Also, the larger producers can apply for a 75 percent refund for the costs of afforesting ecologically fragile and degraded soils as well as for planting wind breaks.  

---

54 http://www.infor.cl
The Legal and Conceptual Battles: Reading Between the Lines

In the climate of escalating controversies, several drafts of a new proposal titled “Law for the Recovery and Promotion of the Native Forest” have been circulating. The first of these came before Congress as early as 1992 (Clapp 1998b). Though not yet approved, the drafts of this bill and the ensuing discussions have brought forth the concept of “commercial” native forests. To a degree this reflects the industry’s own project, which is to open up native forests to commercial extraction followed by conversion. But the proposed law does not go all the industry’s way. In particular, the law calls for incentives, subsidies, and prohibitions that together would encourage reforestation with native species on cleared land. On the other hand, the conversion of old stands would continue. Early drafts of this law permitted the conversion of “degraded forests” to exotic species; however, agreement has yet to be reached regarding what constitutes a degraded forest. Nor is there agreement yet regarding what watersheds and wildlife habitats are and how to protect them from the impacts of timber extraction. Environmentalists told me that the lack of reliable data on forests is being used as an excuse not to protect the remaining stands of native forests.

Chile’s new forest law is frozen in Congress in part because it is still full of holes that allow for myriad interpretations. Debates about the state of Chile’s forests were largely on hold until the results of a national land use survey were published in 1998. This survey, conducted between 1994 and 1997, made it possible to quantify the different classes of land on Chilean territory (see Appendix C). It thus provided an empirical base that was essential for land-use zoning; it also detailed who owned Chile’s lands and the value of those lands. None of this, though, helped reconcile environmental values with industrial ones. Long before this survey was completed, the director of this ambitious project was aware of the ongoing debate over how forests were to be defined. As the survey’s director stated, “We are going to arrive at figures for the native forest greater than the historic figures. In our maps, what was blank space now has vegetation” (Chile Forestal, in Clapp 1998b).

Until the survey was published, almost no information was available about the status and quality of Chile’s forests. So the survey has been significant in that regard. Yet the debate continues over

---

55 The survey was prepared by CONAF, CONAMA, BIRF, Universidad Austral de Chile, Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile, and Universidad Católica de Temuco. “Catastro y Evaluación de los Recursos Vegetacionales Nativos de Chile.”
how much forest should be left for productive as opposed to protective purposes. For example, there is no clear way to determine the number of plantations that exist, because the survey defines native forests and plantations in a manner that differs from what was established by Decree 701 and its regulations. The survey defines “native forest” as an ecosystem in which the tree strata are comprised of native species more than 2 meters high with treetop coverage of over 25 percent. Yet Article 2 of Decree 701 makes no clear distinction between natural and artificial ecosystems and defines a forest as “a place populated with vegetal formations— with the predomination of trees—that occupy an area of at least 5,000 m², with a minimum width of 40 meters, and with a treetop coverage of over 10% of the total area in arid and semi-arid conditions and 25% in more favorable conditions” (see DL 701, Appendix B and C). That is the definition applied by CONAF in relation to the management plans it requests and oversees. However, companies are not required to report the development of plantations to CONAF unless a subsidy is being requested.

Though the law does not allow the clearing of native forests for substitution, it does allow the clearing of “degraded” forests for agriculture. Also, Article 12 of Decree 701 allows for the subsidizing of forestry activities on fragile soils and in areas undergoing desertification; for the afforestation of degraded lands, and for activities aimed at recovering those lands; and for afforestation of lands suitable for forestry. The subsidy is generally 75 percent of the costs of the forestry activity. All of this means that plantations are allowed on degraded land, but again, there are no uniform criteria regarding what constitutes a “degraded” forest. Thus, how to define “forest” has become a key aspect of the controversy, and the lack of a definition has made it impossible to halt illegal cuts. Decree 701 allows for the substitution of “unproductive land covered with shrubs,” which leaves native forests in a vulnerable position. Under these criteria, ten species are considered “degraded” simply because they lack “commercial value.” The most vulnerable species are evergreens. This explains how CONAF can approve management plans that convert vulnerable forest ecosystems into exotic plantations. Roughly 40 percent of the forest areas approved for agricultural use are in fact destined to become exotic plantations (Emanuelli 1997). In sum, then, the definition of “degraded forest” is being used to justify new plantations; this is an additional concern because many lands defined as such provide more benefits to local communities (shelter, firewood, food, medicines, etc.) than the plantations that replace them (Kuaycharoen 2004).
According to CONAF, negligence and lack of resources are two further obstacles to native forest conservation, and local authorities have made no progress in this respect. Fines against landowners are being overturned, which reflects a lack of consensus that forest protection should ever trump the clearing of forested land.

**On the Way to Sustainable Forest Management … Whose Knowledge and Values Count?**

The concept of “sustainable forest management” is perceived in different ways by different sectors. After the Brundtland Report (1987), the concept of sustainable development grew in popularity because it promised to reconcile ecological concerns with economic ones. However, as noted by Clapp (1998b), Chile’s foresters, the government, and environmentalists have not been using this concept in any sort of consistent way. Sustainable development in Chile has been invoked to justify the conversion of old-growth forests to tree plantations but also to oppose any forest clearing at all. Obviously, the concept has different meanings for different stakeholders: some refer to the need to ensure sustainable timber production or sustainable economic development (thereby increasing profits and levels of employment), others to the need to ensure sustainable natural ecosystems and to develop local communities.

The questions asked vary with their underlying assumptions (Keyfitz 1995). Members of the Chilean government’s own advisory committees present evidence that could be true in the context of one discipline but not in the context of another. Following Keyfitz for example, an economist who might assume that all goods are substitutable and that the market will ‘naturally’ express the limits to sustainability by driving up the price of wood. Harvests, by this logic, will be limited as a species of wood becomes rare and/or until a substitute is found. Conversely, a biologist might argue that species cannot be substituted for one another and that biodiversity values are irrevocably lost when a species vanishes, by which time it is far too late for any market response to save it.

More broadly, it is human nature for people to treat concepts differently according to their different frames of reference. Clearly, the concept of “wilderness” provides one example of this. Say the word “wilderness” and foresters will see timber resources; ecologists will see an

---

56 Hartwig 1991.

57 Defensores del Bosque Chileno 1998.
ecosystem; geographers will see a landscape; and politicians will see the collective good. The point is that our perceptions of nature do much to determine whether we protect it or exploit it. Moreover, we bring those perceptions to environmental discourses. A final point in this vein: public discourse is one of the most powerful influences on people’s perceptions of nature.

In other words, value is not only a relational concept but also a dynamic one. As Brown (1984, 233) notes, it is “neither a concept held by the subject nor something attributed to the object. Value is not an intrinsic quality of the object; rather it is the result that arises from the preference of a subject for an object in a given context.” Values change over time as preferences change. Instrumental, moral, and aesthetic values can all underpin the framing devices that environmentalists and policy managers use to formulate public discourses, but in the end, it is the power dynamics among the different actors that drive policy making.

In addition, the Chilean citizenry at large is exposed to media that are tightly linked to the private sector, the forestry sector in particular. Powerful economic groups are resorting to aggressive public relations campaigns to inform communities about the benefits of their activities and to undercut rational public concerns. Forestry companies have links to most of Chile’s media, which means they are able to control what is published about plantations—and the Mapuche, while they are at it. When indigenous people take a stand against exotic plantations, their claims are belittled and they are labelled as “terrorists” or as dupes of the environmentalists. For example, Pulp and Paper International had this to say about indigenous people’s efforts to protect their territories: “Some of Chile’s Native Americans have started protesting against development of the land, urged on by the greens” (February 2000, 42).

Local residents have tried hard to alert the public authorities about the risks associated with tree plantations. An example:

“The smallest streams have shrunk or simply disappeared, and as a result the flow of the larger watercourses and the water supply for rural populations do likewise … Streams dried up when plantations were established, reappearing only when the trees were felled. Wells, too, have dried up during the summer months, depriving local residents of water both for themselves and for their livestock. In some cases families have been forced to abandon their houses when water supplies dwindled” (in Catalan and Ramos 1999).
Yet their concerns are not being considered in the debate. Instead, their arguments are dismissed as lacking “scientific evidence.”

The Chilean government does call for public participation in policy decisions. However, it views the public merely as a political actor and not as a source of “scientific” evidence. Thus, when scientific evidence comes from the state apparatus it is considered neutral and objective and therefore irrefutable, whereas when renowned scientists represent citizens’ interests, those interests became part of what Gross and Levitt (1994) define as the “academic left.” That is, they represent a hybrid mass of environmentalists, feminists, postmodernists, sociologists, and anthropologists, who supposedly are driven by emotional presumptions or left-wing thinking (ibid). This polarization is not far from what Snow (1959) described as the division between the scientific culture and the culture of the humanities. But should physicists, architects, sociologists, or literary intellectuals be viewed as antiscientific simply because their answers to questions are not rooted solely in economic values? In this vein, consider that the scientific evidence offered to legitimate industrial expansion is driven almost solely by economic values. Research funding in Chile has prioritized studies of the commercial use of native trees; little research is conducted on forest ecosystems. Many Chilean NGOs and scientists are cautious with their opinions and even reluctant to oppose forest conversion without hard data to support their arguments. Without such data, opponents of logging will inevitably be labelled radical environmentalists.

When Marcel Claude, head of the Environmental Accounts Department of Chile’s Central Bank, released a study asserting that native forests would disappear in Chile within twenty-five years, the government and CORMA both rejected the study, calling him “alarmist,”58 and the Central Bank fired him. Soon after, a CONAF report came out stating that the area covered by natural forests had in fact expanded from 7.5 million to 13.4 million hectares. This study, though, defined native forests differently. CORMA took an even stronger position, declaring that Chileans understood almost nothing about environmental issues and that environmentalists were poisoning their minds. CORMA even demanded that environmentalists compensate them for damaging the forestry sector’s public image. Today, forestry companies are being stigmatized as environmental raiders (see Gregory, Flynn, and Slovic 1995) because of their heavy investment

58 According to the business group, the 1994 statistics include 3.8 million hectares of very young trees, the result of either human reforestation efforts or natural reproductive processes. The group hoped to use those figures to discredit the claims of environmentalists, who were accusing the logging industry of eliminating coniferous trees to plant exotic species with rapid growth rates (Gonzalez 1999).
in plantations and pulp mills, and are being compelled to invest in green campaigns as well as public relation exercises such as the Good Neighbour program.59

Environmental debates like this one “are not merely zones of contestation but zones of constantly shifting positions” (Brosius 1999, 283). In this regard, current arguments about preserving the native forest are very different from those of a decade ago.

The conceptions, assumptions, and interpretations relating to environmental peril tend to be a function of specific situations. For instance, the concerns and predictions that emerged from the Central Bank’s 1995 report could be linked to the sense of urgency felt by various actors. When the report stated that Chile’s remaining native forests would be destroyed by 2025, environmentalists perceived this as a statement of great urgency, whereas CORMA dismissed the study out of hand. Similarly, perceptions vary regarding how much action must be taken how soon. At the same time, debates this controversial often twist and turn as they take on a life of their own—thus, arguments about the future of Chile’s forests divide and morph into arguments about indigenous rights, forestry practices, resource development, free trade, and so on. Perceptions of issues are strongly conditioned by the positions, values, and interests of individual actors.

Public debates are not result of misunderstandings, of misreading the available information (Powell and Leiss 1997); in fact, they are forms of social mobilization, and they are rooted in the historical, social, and political contexts in which knowledges and beliefs are embedded. Those are the contexts in which the public draws conclusions.

Conclusion

To a large extent, the arguments in favour of industrial tree plantations (an unsustainable development model) rely on the confusion between plantations and forests. Chilean forestry companies well understand this and are paying close attention to how tree plantations are depicted in the media. They have launched PR campaigns with the goal of cleaning up their image in the public discourse. Tree plantations of any species, be they natural or exotic, are described as no different from natural forests and social environmental necessities. And even though most tree plantations cannot be called “natural forest ecosystems,” industrial plantations

59 In 1999, Mininco decided to set up the Good Neighbour program to improve its relations with the community.
are usually compared to the coniferous forests of the developed countries of the North. What is more, the word “forestry” is being used almost exclusively in reference to timber production and plantations. Campaigns supporting plantations also claim that plantations are “reforestation,” even though they are logged and replanted in short cycles. Besides, many of these plantations are in fact afforestation schemes on land that was previously used for agriculture.

The Chilean state and the forestry sector are promoting the present-day model as a success—as a generator of economic growth that has reduced pressure on native forests. This obscures the negative impacts. Some people see fair trade and certification as a solution. The question, though, is this: How does certification, especially the certification of plantations, address environmental and social issues? Environmental campaigns in the North have had an impact on the forestry sector. The pulp industry in North America has been severely affected by the high costs of production, and meanwhile, environmentalists have been targeting old-growth logging operations. Yet all the while, the demand for pulp and paper is increasing. Because the South offers fewer environmental restrictions and greater cost advantages, that is where investors in the forestry sector are turning.

The problem reflects the unequal power relations among the different actors involved in the debate over what forests are, who owns them, how to manage them, for whom they should be managed, and, indeed, whether they should be managed at all. The Chilean public has not been extended a genuine voice in decisions relating to the development of natural resources. The evidence presented by stakeholders is not considered reliable, and as a consequence, decisions are invariably reached in terms of the politics involved, which almost always favour economic interests. Obviously, this hard presses Chile’s indigenous people, who in addition to all this are affected by representations and discourses that perpetuate colonialist constructions of the “Other.” They have no legitimate voice in decisions about resource development, nor do they profit when the resources they once owned are extracted by someone else.

The Chilean controversy on forests seems to be far from resolution. Conflicting perspectives on forest values are among the reasons why the country’s forestry law has been stalled in Congress since 1992. Little progress has been made in reform because of the many competing assumptions, interpretations, and values that have beset the negotiations. For obvious example, the environmentalists contend that plantations are not forests, and the forestry sector contends
that they are. For the latter, if trees have no commercial value, they should be replaced with “productive forests”.

When we start to analyze this controversy, we soon find evidence of the relations among values, knowledges, and power. The discourses of both industry and the government reflect the position that free markets by their very nature require resource development and that forests’ sole value is economic. As a consequence, the Chilean forestry debate has come to be “dominated by ‘economism’ and ‘developmentalism,’” the idea that material incentives and economic values ultimately determine human action with the excuse that the country is too poor not to make each natural resource yield its fullest economic potential” (Clapp 1998b, 4). This points to a problem that arises whenever the environmental good is measured solely in terms of monetary values. As Kelman (1981, 31) notes, those who allow cost–benefit analyses to provide the sole guidance for public decisions assume that there is no difference between how people value certain things in private individual transactions and how they would wish those things to be valued in public decisions. He suggests that some things are “priceless” or have “infinitive value.” These terms, however, can be assigned different meanings.

As this study shows, the analysis of power relations is key to the study of conflicts in values. It is certain that the various stakeholders’ discourses will not be resolved through conflict resolution based on scientific evidence. Furthermore, the scientific claims that underlie the definitions of forest and plantation are economically and politically derived. The future of Chile’s forests will remain bleak as long as the dominant discourse values economic profit, as long as those profits are unfairly distributed, and as long as so many stakeholders are left out of decision making.
Chapter 5. Ecological and Social Transformations in Indigenous Territories: An Environmental Racism Perspective

This chapter examines landscape transformations in Mapuche ancestral territories from the perspective of environmental racism. Chile’s VIII and IX Regions are home to the poorest and most rural Mapuche communities (Mideplan, 2002); they are also where most of the country’s tree plantations are located (INFOR 2005, 2006). As I will explain, the recent expansion of plantations into areas claimed by indigenous populations has had a series of social and ecological impacts at the local level; one of these is that both the Mapuche and their environment have been racialized. Landscape transformations are driven not only by economic and geographical factors but also by transformations of communities in ways that can be described as environmentally racist. In southern Chile, landscape transformations and resource appropriations (lands, forests, and fisheries) need to be understood as more than a political economic process. As Sundberg (forthcoming) notes, race does much to shape control over resources, exposure to environmental risks and natural hazards, and access to environmental benefits. According to Sundberg, race is also decisive in determining who counts when policies are being formulated, implemented, and enforced, besides doing much to demarcate legal access to rights and resources ever since colonial times.

In this chapter I argue that the state has prioritized plantations and privileged export-oriented economic growth to the benefit of non-indigenous people and at the expense of the Mapuche, whose claims to contested lands have been delegitimized. Ever since colonial times, nationalist ideologies and homogenizing patterns of development have been producing both a racialized people and a racialized landscape by imposing ideological and legal systems that maintain the privileged status of Chile’s non-indigenous people. With this study I hope to provide new insights into the following: how environmental racism operates; how discriminatory actions are carried out “under the radar” against the Mapuche; and how these actions are threatening not only Chile’s landscape and natural resources but also Mapuche cultural survival. I will draw from the environmental racism framework to analyze the case of the Mapuche, as it offers a powerful approach to understanding many of the current indigenous struggles in Latin America. Besides social discrimination, most Latin American indigenous groups—including the
Mapuche—are suffering the consequences of systemic and institutionalized forms of racism—forms that make inequalities and injustices socially and even legally acceptable. Next, I define “environmental racism” and show how it operates.

As Pellow (2000, 581) notes, a number of conceptual, theoretical, and methodological issues have been debated in the literature on environmental justice. The environmental justice movement grew in the 1990s, raising many questions that have also inspired my research. First, is race (or class) responsible for discriminatory actions against marginalized groups such as indigenous people? Second, if vulnerable groups tend to be disproportionately located in or near hazardous environments, did they move in before or after the site became degraded (Pulido 1996, 2000; Bullard 1990, 1999)? Third, is there a causal link between environmental degradation and the presence of minorities in the developing world (and in the United States, for that matter)? And fourth, with regard to indigenous communities invaded by garbage dumps, pollution, and other environmental hazards, where racism interacts with various economic forces, can it be said that relations of production and regimes of accumulation lead to oppression (Pulido 1996)?

Chilean statistics on poverty and internal migration indicate that the country’s indigenous people are not benefiting from development; indeed, the costs of development are being imposed on them. This raises yet another question: Does it indicate racism that indigenous communities such as the Mapuche are disproportionately represented among the ranks of the poor? Remember here that they are subject to unequal distribution of wealth and that they enjoy less protection from environmental risks, all as a consequence of depressed land values, underpaid jobs, and limited political power. A second point relates to discrimination. Some people question whether an act or outcome can be called racist if the targeting is unintentional. This, in fact, has long been a key argument against the existence of environmental racism. As Ross (1999) notes, one cannot deny that racism exists simply because it is practised “by no one in particular against no one in particular.” He challenges the idea that white people can be considered innocent simply because they do not actively discriminate against people of colour. Put differently, to look for intent is to ignore the “unconscious nature of racism.” Systems of privilege—and the dominant ideologies that support them—are invisible practically by definition; that is how racism, however irrational it is, can come to be seen as normal. As a result of that invisibility, discriminatory acts become part of culturally accepted belief systems that defend the privileges of white society, within which discourses and practices shape non-white lives and environments to the detriment of both.
The Social Construction of Race and Forms of Racism

In the present day, race is widely understood as a social construct; in biological terms, it cannot be said to exist.60 A useful approach to the subject, then, is to trace how groups come to be racialized. Race is politically and culturally constructed insofar as it is a function of power. According to Haney Lopez, “race is neither an essence nor an illusion, but rather an ongoing, contradictory, self-reinforcing, plastic process subject to the macro forces of social and political struggle and the micro effects of daily decisions.” He defines race as a “vast group of people loosely bound together by historically contingent, socially significant elements of their morphology and/or ancestry” (Haney Lopez 2000, 193).

In the Mapudungun language, for instance, *peñi* (brother or Mapuche) and *winka* (Westerners/whites/non-Mapuche) are social constructs and do not refer to genetically distinct branches of humankind. Furthermore, these constructs are relational; thus, efforts to racially define the conquered, subjugated, or enslaved are at the same time efforts to racially define the conqueror, the subjugator, or the enslaver (see Crenshaw 1988). Racism is also part of a social tapestry that includes gender and class relations. One result is that the meanings surrounding race change quickly. Races are constructed around physical criteria; in this way, categories of difference and inferiority are produced that exist only in society and that have profound social consequences. These categories are produced by many conflicting social forces; they overlap and inform other social categories; they are fluid rather than static and fixed; and they make sense only in relation to other social categories, having no meaningful independent existence in themselves (Haney-Lopez 2000, 200).

The American Anthropological Association, drawing from biological research, currently holds that “the concept of race is a social and cultural construction … Race simply cannot be tested or proven scientifically." Moreover, “it is clear that human populations are not unambiguous, clearly demarcated, biologically distinct groups. The concept of ‘race’ has no validity … in the human species” (AAA Statement on Race, May 17, 1998). Race is not absolute, natural, or essential; but because of the inevitable visible differences within any phenotype, so-called racial

60 Paradoxically, different political positions are often driven by the same philosophical argument. Genetic explanations of social and cultural behaviours are often denounced as racist, yet genetic, biological, and physiological definitions of race are essentialist ideas—that is, they are part of commonsense discourses. The problem is that we only acknowledge biological definitions of race, not the un-biological aspects associated with race.
features are used as a signifier for race. As Hall (1997) notes, these signifiers offer cultures a classification system that enables racial meanings and practices to develop. Things gain meaning not because of what they contain in their essence but in the shifting relations of difference that they establish with other concepts and ideas in a shared social context. Hall and Jhally (1996) explain that racial signifiers (such as skin colour) are never fixed; rather, they depend on cultural context and in that sense are discursive constructs or “floating signifiers.” They are always relational, never essential. They are subject to redefinition and appropriation and are constantly being resignified, made to mean something new in different cultures, in different historical processes, and at different points in time. Thus racism must be situated in its broader social, cultural, and historical context.

What matters here are the systems we use to make human societies intelligible—that is, to organize differences into systems of meaning that render the world understandable. How, in this regard, do ideas about difference organize human systems and practices? After all, race may be a social and ideological construct, but it has strong material effects. Everyday individual practices as well as social practices at an institutional level—most obviously in public policy (housing, health, education and employment, environmental protection)—reinforce existing prejudices and actively reproduce both unequal social relations and racist ideologies.

As framed here, (cultural) ethnicity and (biological) race belong to the same discursive practices of generating difference. The point is not to deny differences but rather to emphasize that their significance is conditioned by the social and material circumstances in which they are seen to exist. Among the various kinds of differences in the world, only some are selected as axes along which power is covertly exercised. So it is important to analyze what the axes are and which of them are taken into social practices and organizations as means of imposing hierarchical or binary divisions and of distributing wealth, resources, knowledge, and opportunities. This is the lens through which one can analyze how people impose their power and, in so doing, gain access to and control over resources. Which brings us back to how racist practices can result in landscape transformations and natural resource management: the state creates privileged conditions for non-indigenous people to control and access resources; as a consequence, indigenous communities lose their rights to land and resources.
Commonsense Privileges: Making Power Systems Invisible

Notwithstanding that public discourses generally reveal a desire for the world to be “non-racist,” cultural and social systems continue to teach and reproduce racism in the form of complex individual and collective choices that racially segregate our schools, neighbourhoods, workplaces, and lives (Delgado 1995, 29). Racial stereotypes pervade our language and media coverage in a number of manifestations. In the media, academia, and even the sciences, as well as in everyday speech, it has come to be seen as “common sense” that people can be divided into separate races along biological and sometimes cultural lines. Few people fit snugly into any one category, yet this sort of reductionist thinking has been able to establish the idea that they can be, thereby shielding discrimination from plain sight. The way we think and talk about categories and subcategories of people obscures the patterns of domination and subordination that we impose on people (Wildman and Davis 2000), thereby making systems of power invisible, along with the privilege associated with that power. Members of privileged groups can choose to ignore the struggles of the oppressed. This is what the authors refer to as “the privilege of silence.” Whites are also racialized, yet they generally enjoy the luxury of ignoring their own race. By contrast, those who are subject to racism perceive race as a filter through which they are constantly required to view the world. As Wildman and Davis note, privilege is rarely visible to those who hold it; thus, they can enjoy their privilege and ignore the existence of oppression it engenders. White society is not subject to scrutiny and criticism because that society is the conceded norm—as defined, of course, by the privileged group. According to Grillo and Wildman (1991, 405), “many whites think that people of colour are obsessed with race and find it difficult to understand the emotional and intellectual energy that they devote to the subject.”

For Ross (2000), denials of racism are crucial to the rhetoric of innocence—that is, crucial to those who seek to reject or severely limit corrective measures such as affirmative action. Social discrimination is never defined with any precision in white discourse; at best, the result is the admission to an ephemeral, abstract sort of discrimination that is committed by no one in particular against no one in particular. The problem with this weak sort of admission is that it does not demand that something be done to distribute society’s burdens and benefits more equitably; after all, this mindset views the dominant as innocent. Pulido (2000) maintains that white privilege is a form of racism that underpins institutional and overt racism; it can be defined as the hegemonic structures, practices, and ideologies that reproduce whites’ privileged status.
The Environmental Racism Framework

Under economic globalization, conflicts over natural resources have intensified. Some authors view environmental conflicts as the most distinctive feature of the new global environment; they see it as reshaping the geography of conflict, as displacing traditional conflicts in that regard and placing indigenous territories on the strategic map because of the vast natural resources they contain (Peluso and Watts 2001; Le Billon 2001). New struggles are taking place over key resources, especially the ones that industrial societies require in order to maintain the prevalent economic model. These conflicts are inevitably linked to exclusionary and discriminatory environmental practices that, although not new, have yet to be critically examined.

The links between racism and environmental actions, experiences, and outcomes are still contentious. Only recently have environmentalist discourses extended their message to social justice issues, thereby bridging human rights to the environmental movement. It is now being conceded that human rights issues overlap with environmental ones. Sachs (1995) has pointed out that human rights organizations focus mainly on civil and political rights, and that they hesitate to defend broader rights such as economic, territorial, and cultural rights—which are at the core of environmental justice movements—for fear of weakening their own effectiveness. Furthermore, environmental campaigns have been known to succeed at the expense of local inhabitants’ territorial and costumary rights, especially as these relate to protected areas. Grassroots movements and human rights organizations have tried to give ecology a human face, but it remains the case that most conservationist approaches are not people oriented (Chapin 2004).

During the 1980s in the United States, environmental justice activists began to emerge from within the civil rights movement (Roberts 1998). The growing visibility of hazardous waste sites gave rise to studies carried out in 1983 by the U.S. General Accounting Office that established patterns of environmental discrimination. Later, other national and regional studies (United Church of Christ in 1987; Bullard 1990) demonstrated that people of colour were about twice as likely as whites to live in polluted areas. By the 1990s, grassroots activists fighting institutional racism were allying themselves with environmental activists to fight the use of toxic chemicals; in this way, the antitoxics movement grew into the environmental justice movement (Szasz, 1994).
Taylor (2000) points out that the environmental justice paradigm emerged as an ideological framework to link concerns over labour and social justice with environmental ones. These concerns developed into six principles: ecological health, justice, and environmental rights; autonomy and self-determination; justice in corporate–community relations; policy, politics, and economic processes; and the need to build social movements (ibid.). As the environmental justice movement emerged, activists transformed environmental discourses and extended them to people of colour and the poor, introducing key ideological components relating to social justice and inequality.

The environmental justice framework attempts to unpack the assumptions that foster unequal protection. According to Bullard (1998, 10–11), that framework embraces the following principles:

- It incorporates the principle of the “right” of all people to be protected from environmental degradation.
- It adopts a public health model of prevention (i.e., elimination of the threat before harm occurs) as the preferred strategy.
- It shifts the burden of proof to polluters/dischargers who do harm, who discriminate, or who do not give equal protection to people of colour, low-income people, and other “protected” classes.
- It allows “effects” as opposed to “intent” to infer discrimination.
- It redresses disproportionate impacts through “targeted” action and resources.

This framework has been challenged on both conceptual and methodological grounds. Various definitions of environmental justice have been used, reflecting different approaches, but there is plenty of overlap among them. Bryant (1995), for instance, defines environmental justice as follows:

“Those cultural norms and values, rules, regulations, behaviours, policies, and decisions to support sustainable communities where people can interact with confidence that the environment is safe, nurturing, and productive. Environmental justice is served when people can realize their highest potential … Environmental justice is supported by decent paying safe jobs; quality schools and recreation; decent housing and adequate health care;
democratic decision-making and personal empowerment; and communities free of violence, drugs, and poverty. These are communities where both cultural and biological diversity are respected and highly revered and where distributed justice prevails”. (1995, 6)

Similarly, Bullard (1999) merges the term *justice* with the idea of *fairness*. He defines environmental justice as follows:

“The fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, colour, national origin or income with respect to the development, implementation and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations and policies. Fair treatment means that no group of people, including racial, ethnic or socio-economic groups, should bear a disproportionate share of the negative environmental consequences resulting from industrial, municipal or commercial operations or the execution of federal, state, local and tribal programs and policies”. (1995, 7)

“Environmental *injustice,*” by contrast, arises when a particular social group is burdened with environmental hazards. To complicate matters, the environmental justice movement was once referred to as the “environmental equity” movement (Szasz and Meuser 1997). The term *justice* later replaced *equity*, environmental justice activists having considered that justice is a more inclusive term, one that incorporates the notions of equity and impartiality. Environmental equity stresses the importance of procedural fairness in the resolution of ecological conflicts as well as the achievement of social justice (Hoban and Brooks 1987; Mandelker 1987) in the way in which clean-up plans, regulated by the government, are distributed among communities (Zimmerman 1993). “Environmental quality,” by contrast, incorporates both good and bad elements as they are distributed across communities, nations, and the planet (Low and Gleeson 1998, 102).

More recently, Beck (1999) has focused on the distribution of environmental quality or the threat to human health and ecological well-being posed by industrial capitalism. “Environmental inequality” offers another perspective in that it draws attention to the intersection between environmental quality and social hierarchies (Pellow 2000). In so doing, “the concept addresses structural questions that focus on social inequalities—the unequal distribution of power and resources in society—inequalities that in turn contribute to the unfair distribution of environmental burdens” (ibid., 582). According to Pellow (ibid., 597), “the environmental
inequality formation (EIF) perspective stresses three major points: the importance of process and history, the role of multiple stakeholder relationships, and the life cycle approach to production and consumption”. Furthermore, whereas environmental justice is based on problem solving, environmental racism is based on problem identification. It attempts to identify situations in which racial factors have influenced outcomes. Environmental racism is an example of environmental injustice; however, environmental injustice does not necessarily involve a racial or ethnic group.

Definitional nuances aside, environmental racism (the preferred construct for this case) generally emphasizes non-whites’ disproportionate exposure to pollution. Following Taylor (2000), environmental racism is “the process by which environmental decisions, actions, and policies result in racial discrimination.” By her definition, environmental discrimination is the result of three linked factors: prejudicial beliefs and behaviours; the power held by individuals and/or institutions to enact policies and actions reflecting their prejudices; and privileged people being given unfair advantages (2000, 536). Thus, environmental racism or environmental discrimination describes the racial disparities in a range of actions and processes, including but not limited to the following:

1. The increased likelihood of being exposed to environmental hazards.
2. Disproportionate negative impacts of environmental processes on some groups.
3. Disproportionate negative impacts of environmental policies, for example, the differential rate of clean-up of environmental contaminants in communities composed of different racial groups.
4. The deliberate targeting and siting of noxious facilities in particular communities.
5. The environmental blackmail that arises when workers are coerced or forced to choose between hazardous jobs and environmental standards.
6. The segregation of ethnic minority workers in dangerous and dirty jobs.
7. The segregation of the environmental workforce.
8. The segregation of housing and communities.
9. The segregation of facilities and public conveyances, for example, parks, beaches, and transportation systems.
10. The lack of access to or inadequate maintenance of environmental amenities such as parks and playgrounds.

11. Inequality in the delivery of environmental services such as garbage removal and transportation.

12. The appropriation of land, the destruction of indigenous cultures, and the abrogation of traditional treaty fights.

13. The expulsion or removal of people from a territory.

Bryant defines environmental racism as an extension of racism: “It refers to those rules, regulations, and policies of government or corporate decisions that deliberately target certain communities for least desirable land uses, resulting in the disproportionate exposure of toxic and hazardous waste on communities based upon prescribed biological characteristics. Environmental racism is the unequal protection against toxic and hazardous waste exposure and the systematic exclusion of people of color from decisions affecting their communities.” (ibid. 1995,6)

While Bryant’s definition presumes “deliberate targeting”, Pulido (2000) focuses on differences in environmental patterns and the racist nature of the processes by which these patterns evolve. She argues that racism has been narrowly defined without considering the historical and broader processes of inequality that produce environmental racism. Thus, racial inequalities that cannot be attributed directly to hostile, discriminatory actions are not acknowledged as such but rather, perhaps, as evidence of individual deficiencies or choices (ibid., 13). Typically, environmental inequity refers only to the disproportionate exposure to pollution—probably by non-whites—whereas environmental racism is only conceded if malicious intent on the part of the decision makers can be proven. Coinciding with Pulido’s approach, racism could be understood from the other side: reflexive pondering over white privileges may be the basis for efforts to name a social system that works to the benefit of whites.

**Dismantling Environmental Racism in Chile**

Colonialism and nationalism, working in tandem, have led to sharp inequalities in land holdings between European immigrants and indigenous peoples (Solberg 1969). As Bocca (2003) has
noted, after the Republic of Chile was founded in 1810, the state developed a series of assimilationist policies; all land policies became regulated once the Civil Code was passed in 1857. To this day, that code is the foundation of the juridical order. Among other things, it established a regime for registering private property. In 1866, Chilean lawmakers passed a law that declared the lands south of the Bio Bio river to be public; in effect, this meant that the state had the right to allocate them to individuals for colonization. Around the same time, a commission was established to settle lands on indigenous communities that were able to prove possession (Aylwin 1999). Then, between 1880 and 1883, after a blood-soaked military campaign, the Chilean state took over those lands (Bengoa 1985), thus opening them to colonization. During this same frame, the country’s dominant political groups received extensive European financial support to expand the country’s southern frontier, which they did; in the process, they reduced Mapuche autonomy and wrested away their territories (Ruiz-Esquide 2000). The country’s new policies encouraged immigration; the new arrivals settled on Mapuche traditional lands. This was systemic racism, rooted in and reproduced by hierarchical colonial and postcolonial structures. The Mapuche were relegated to small reducciones (reserves), most of them isolated from one another by areas of white settlement (ibid).

Chilean society today behaves as if colonialism has been vanquished, or never existed in the first place. In doing so, it is forgetting its own history. The Chilean nation wants to embrace a homogenous white or Euro-Chilean identity from which other forms of identification are excluded. To that end, it has long promoted patriotic values based in nationalism and conservatism (Sznajder 1998), with little consideration for the poverty and racism faced by many of its indigenous people. State policies, with the help of the media, have quite deliberately excluded indigenous people from civil society and erased them from public affairs and the national imaginary. Amolef (2005) has studied the media’s treatment of the Mapuche conflict, especially in the country’s “newspaper of record,” El Mercurio. She describes how that paper is heavily influenced by political and economic groups that have lined up against the Mapuche; one result is that El Mercurio’s coverage has fostered negative perceptions of indigenous groups. As the Mapuche author Rosamel Millaman explains, racism is easy to discern in the behaviours,
images, and attitudes that characterize Chilean society and its institutions. That racism expresses itself in all layers of society, across social classes, and is embedded in religious and political values. It is also visible in how land rights and property rights are conceived. As a consequence, when land and resources are negotiated in the present day, privileged Chileans can declare that they own their lands based on inheritance, and the Mapuche are cast as wanting lands “that belong to others.” This thinking is manifest, for instance, in the words of a large landowner from Temuco:

“Like it or not, these lands now have legal owners. After getting this far in the history of integration, we can’t go back now. We can’t allow any kind of political, administrative, or territorial autonomy in our country.”

Racism is not always open or intentional; often it is masked by social attitudes and behaviour. Official discourses, the language of the educational system, and the country’s social symbols constitute an ideological mosaic that is saturated with systemic racism. For instance, when El Mercurio conducted a citizens’ poll to ask how land conflicts with indigenous people should be resolved, many respondents described the Mapuche people as drunken, lazy, communist, and so on. As Merino and Quilaqueo (2003) note, these descriptors point to a national legacy of racism—one, moreover, that does not acknowledge that many Chileans are mestizos (i.e., of mixed white and indigenous background). This is a consequence of Chilean society’s monocultural world view, which encourages people to deny their mixed heritage or at least emphasize their European heritage. This attitude has affected not only the Chilean national identity but also the Mapuche identity. Fearing discrimination, over the past two decades more than 960 Mapuche have changed their names to Spanish ones. This number would likely quadruple if we factored in relatives.

In addition, the Chilean state has long promoted a static conception of Mapuche culture, one that denies its continuity. Thus, politicians and academics talk of indigenous people as mythical

---

61 Recent discussions on racism include a paper presented by Millaman to the Preparatory Committee of the World Conference Against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia, and Related Intolerance, Durban, September 2001.


figures of the past, and then go on to describe present-day Chilean culture as having achieved an essentially monolithic state. All of this serves to deny that the Mapuche are legitimate actors who can make their own decisions and reconstruct their own identity. The conservative historian Sergio Villalobos, for instance, argues that idea of self-determination for indigenous people is “very dangerous, because it would weaken the juridical and geographic unity” of Chile. According to him, “the indigenous project of self-determination is based on “demagogy” and is creating confusion … Indigenous people have been voting in elections along with the rest of Chilean society for the past century, and accepting proposals for them to have their own representatives would amount to giving them privileges, rather than opportunities.”

Ideas about modernization and development have strengthened Eurocentric imagery at the expense of Mapuche identity. In colonial times, the prevalent idea was that empty lands needed to be developed; this was tantamount to declaring that traditional Mapuche lands were uninhabited forests. The colonial system then privileged foreign settlers, who assumed ownership of those lands, their resources, and even Indian labour. According to Bengoa (1999), the Mapuche already occupied those lands, but white Chileans were under illusion that those lands were empty. They felt pressure to develop the country and thus found it convenient to forget that Mapuche already lived there. This was explicit in the slogan of the time that was used to promote colonization in the south: “A southern Chile without people, and a vast territory without owners” (Bengoa 1999, 40–41). These conceptions live on today in the form of land management policies; it is as if indigenous people have never had the right to develop the land and its resources in appropriate ways. According to my field observations, the state’s regulation of Mapuche land holdings considers only the small agricultural plots surrounding Mapuche homes and does not include other components of the land that are essential to their survival, such as hillsides, rivers and forests.

The impact of racism in Chile was discussed in Chapter 4, which described how forest expansion is perceived as the only possible development policy. In other words, the official line is that forestry must be developed on the disputed lands, which are unlikely ever to be farmed again by traditional methods. CORMA’s chairman, José Ignacio Letamendi, has stated categorically:

---

“On no pretext and under no circumstances will we return the land to the Mapuche, who are incapable of cultivating it.”

The private sector has all but erased the capacity of Mapuche to use, “own,” or otherwise occupy those lands. In its view, the only role the Mapuche might play would involve them in forestry activities as small entrepreneurs associated with large companies. Once they accept that role, they will no longer be recognizable as Mapuche (personal communication with CORMA representatives).

**Loss of Territory and Neoliberal Expansion**

Since the Mapuche were incorporated into the Chilean state, their territories have been reduced and various forms of racism have developed. Under the banner of “Civilization and Christianity,” the state has divested the Mapuche of their land, attacked them militarily, and confined them to *reducciones* (Pinto 2000). Richards (2005) notes that “this process of containment was considered necessary by the Chilean state to promote national development; not only did the appropriated lands expand Chile’s geopolitical territory, but much of it was deeded to Chileans and European immigrants for agricultural production” (2005, 207). These measures reinforced the vision of a united and monolithic Chilean national identity while portraying Mapuche warriors as part of the Chilean past. Then, in modern practice, the Mapuche were treated as “a pernicious vestige of the past, a living expression of barbarity” (Bengoa 1985, 135).

Forced onto *reducciones* and marginal lands, however difficult the climatic and topographical conditions, these reserve communities actively managed their environment. They adopted new crops and livestock, with predictable impacts on their culture and economy (Faron 1968). As hunter-gatherers, and later as farmers and ranchers, they maintained their ties to land and its cosmology. Then Decree 2568 was promulgated in 1979, which broke their land holdings into much smaller plots, individually owned, with severe negative consequences for these more recent communities. It is true that Mapuche land tenure had for many years entailed separate family smallholdings within contiguous areas of communally held land, but until the new law this had never been an inflexible system (Anaquod, Thomas, and Taylor 1984): they still sometimes worked the land communally. Under the new law, this was much harder.

---

Historically, the Mapuche have always lived communally: growing crops, building houses, conducting ceremonies, harvesting, grazing—all have been carried out by the community as a whole (Stuchlik 1976). They have survived a whole series of property regimes, agrarian policies, and land privatizations. In recent decades, however, and especially since the forestry boom, landscape transformations and the consequent threats to natural ecosystems have been having a drastic impact on their communities. As Aylwin (1998) has noted, industrial megaprojects in the region—dams, highways, forest plantations, and the like—are fragmenting the land and depriving Mapuche communities of their rights and resources. Economic policies and resource extraction activities are displacing the Mapuche again. These projects are being designed by a systemically racist mindset and are being implemented in ways that are shattering laws and policies had been designed to offer these communities albeit minimal protections.

During the agrarian reform under Allende’s period, some ancestral territories were given back to the Mapuche. In some districts the state promoted tree plantations to address soil erosion (Camus and Hajek 2000). Then, in the wake of the 1973 coup, all of this progress was reversed and the lands that had been returned were expropriated once again, with or without the trees that had been planted by the Mapuche themselves. That explains why some Mapuche communities are claiming some of the plantations, not just the land. Moreover, when the military regime took power, all forms of communal property were eliminated; in this project, Mapuche communities were disproportionately targeted. According to Amnesty International (1992), during the military regime, hundreds of Mapuche were jailed, tortured, prosecuted, or “disappeared.” So were countless white Chileans, but the Mapuche suffered this disproportionately. Their rights were violated not only by the military but also by the civil society and landowners:

``On the day of the coup, the big landowners, the land barons, the military and the police started a great manhunt against the Mapuche who had struggled and gained their land back; the massacres of Lautaro, Cunco, Meli-Peuco, Nehuente, Lonquimay and Panguipulli … The counter-revolution of 1973 hit the Mapuche populations even harder than most other sectors’. (UN Ad Hoc Working Group on the Situation of Human Rights in Chile 1978)

No one has ever been able to accurately establish the number of Mapuche actually killed at that time. Only in 1979, after six years, were some people gaining the courage to
explain what happened to them and their families. (Inter-Church Committee on Human Rights in Latin America 1980).

As noted earlier, since colonial times the Chilean government has promulgated a series of laws and decrees permitting the occupation of Mapuche territories by Chilean and European settlers, as well as the subdivision of the Mapuche communities. This process was also facilitated by the military invasion in the 1880s and later by the Pinochet regime. As a result, communal landholding practices have given way to private property regimes. More and more private landholdings known as latifundios have been established in the southern regions by incorporating Mapuche lands, which had been taken by force or purchased illegally. According to Aylwin, “a significant part of the properties were sold to forestry companies at extremely low prices” (2002b, 8). The Commission for Historical Truth and a New Deal (2003) reported that landowners had expelled Mapuche from their lands through fraud and violence and by moving fences to increase the size of their properties. These practices accelerated the fragmentation process, and the atomization of Mapuche lands into ever smaller plots generated ongoing clashes for resources between large landowners and indigenous people (Calbucura, 1993:3-6).

The Gaps Between Indigenous and Non-Indigenous Populations: Beyond Statistics on Poverty

Over the past three decades, Mapuche land seizures have been accompanied by industrial expansion in the south, especially forestry expansion. Forest products are Chile’s second-largest export after copper, but this boom has not translated into poverty amelioration for those indigenous communities that are surrounded by forest plantations. Notes Alfredo (a member of Konapewan, an NGO), it issue is not simply development; it is also the distributive costs and benefits associated with industrial activities in the region: “We are not opposed to the so-called development and progress the large companies, transnationals, and government authorities have falsely bragged about. It is about stopping the growth of activities that have only brought destruction and impoverishment to the sectors which are more exposed and defenceless, causing great social inequalities and the enrichment of small groups at the cost of the destruction of natural resources and the irreparable costs that the Mapuche community must bear.”

Despite the government’s efforts to reduce poverty and unemployment in the region, there are great disparities in wealth between indigenous and non-indigenous Chileans. The country’s
poverty rate was more than halved between 1989 and 2005, from 45 to 18 percent. But according to the CASEN survey in 2000 (Mideplan 2002), indigenous poverty rates are clearly higher. The areas inhabited by indigenous people, especially the Mapuche, are the ones with the most extreme poverty (see Table 5.1). In 2000, about 11 percent of indigenous people lived below the poverty line, compared to 5.4 percent of non-indigenous people.

### Table 5.1: Poverty levels for indigenous and non-indigenous populations (%)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Below poverty line</th>
<th>Poor</th>
<th>Total poor</th>
<th>Non-poor</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Non-indigenous</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>14.7</td>
<td>20.1</td>
<td>79.9</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indigenous</td>
<td>11.0</td>
<td>21.3</td>
<td>32.2</td>
<td>67.8</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>14.9</td>
<td>20.6</td>
<td>79.4</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The most vulnerable groups are in VIII, IX, and X Regions (see table 5.2), where most Mapuche live and where plantations are concentrated. About 80 percent of pine plantations and the largest pulp mills are located between those same regions (see Illustration 5.1).

Despite the economic opportunities linked to the 350,000 hectares of radiata pine that have been planted in the region, Mapuche communities suffer the highest poverty rates. The CASEN survey has declared IX Region the poorest in the country, and 30 percent of the poor there are Mapuche.

### Table 5.2. Levels of poverty by region

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Indigenous population</th>
<th>Non-indigenous population</th>
<th>Total country</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>34.0 31.6</td>
<td>66.0 68.4</td>
<td>20.3 18.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II</td>
<td>21.0 12.9</td>
<td>79.0 87.1</td>
<td>16.5 13.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III</td>
<td>34.2 12.3</td>
<td>65.8 87.7</td>
<td>26.3 23.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV</td>
<td>27.0 49.4</td>
<td>73.0 50.5</td>
<td>30.3 24.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V</td>
<td>10.3 17.3</td>
<td>89.7 82.8</td>
<td>22.4 19.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>-----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI</td>
<td>14.7</td>
<td>35.3</td>
<td>85.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VII</td>
<td>30.7</td>
<td>15.6</td>
<td>69.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIII</td>
<td>52.3</td>
<td>31.7</td>
<td>47.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IX</td>
<td>41.6</td>
<td>42.1</td>
<td>58.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X</td>
<td>43.2</td>
<td>34.9</td>
<td>56.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XI</td>
<td>36.6</td>
<td>25.7</td>
<td>63.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XII</td>
<td>15.6</td>
<td>30.4</td>
<td>84.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RM</td>
<td>19.6</td>
<td>20.5</td>
<td>80.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>35.6</td>
<td>32.3</td>
<td>64.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Illustration 5.1 Concentration of plantations and Mapuche property (Source: Clapp 1998a)
Poverty levels in that region can be correlated with a high degree of land subdivision. In fact, the 60,000 small farms (less than 12 hectares) in that region belong mainly to Mapuche, and those lands represent 13 percent of region’s total surface (CONADI 1995). In some IX Region Mapuche communities such as Lumaco, Los Sauces, Galvarino, and Collipulli, migration and unemployment have both increased over the past decade (see Table 5.4). Because of the lack of resources and the degraded land, many families can no longer farm, or at least find that farming is no longer worth the effort (interviews conducted in some of these areas).

The Mapuche have been forced to become poor peasants on marginalized lands on geographically reduced territories surrounded by large forest landowners (see Illustration 5.2).

Illustration 5.2 The view from where Machi Carmen’s home, which is surrounded by the pine plantations of Fundo Antofagasta (in the distance), property of Forestal Arauco in Lumaco. (Photograph by Pablo Huaquilao in www.mapuexpress.net)

Several reports have demonstrated that, far from benefiting local communities, forest plantations are contributing to changes in land use patterns. They are also failing to provide opportunities for participation in the regional economy even while impeding subsistence activities (Montalba, Carrasco, and Araya 2005; Frias 2003; Seguel 2003a; Laigneau, Gallet, and Andrieux 1999).
Social and Environmental Impacts Associated with Tree Plantations

Tree plantations are having an accelerating impact on natural forest ecosystems (Otero 1990; Leyton, 1986; Seguel 2003a; Frias 2003). This is directly affecting Mapuche communities, which depend heavily on forests for hunting and gathering, fuel, medicines, and so on. Yet as discussed in the previous chapter, the impacts of tree plantations are still being debated. Plantation owners have resorted to a conservationist discourse in arguing that pine plantations help protect rivers and streams by reducing the economic pressure on native forests and mitigating soil erosion. Forestry companies are emphasizing the economic and ecological benefits of plantations; they are also invoking a populist discourse that highlights their contributions to the country’s economic development and their role in reducing unemployment. Local communities express very different perceptions of the forestry sector. For them, a key concern is the very scale of plantations, which, as commercial ventures, focus on extracting timber at the fastest possible rates, whatever the social or environmental impact. The following section describes some of the impacts associated with plantations and with the forestry sector as a whole, as well as how environmental racism operates in modern times. I will be arguing that the government has privileged one small economic segment of Chilean society at the expense of indigenous people’s rights to land, resources, and a safe, clean environment.

Economic conglomerates have been able to concentrate land and resources in their hands while depriving the Mapuche of both. This has reduced biodiversity and led to the substitution of native species, the displacement of rural communities, severe water shortages, and water pollution. All of this has tremendous social, environmental and health effects that are impacting Mapuche communities disproportionately. In effect, it is racism in a modern form, carried out by privileged (white) economic groups against Mapuche communities. Those communities face the highest rates of poverty in the country; internal migration and unemployment have both increased as a consequence. From the Mapuche perspective, the government does not guarantee them equal rights protection; indeed, it is continuing to reinforce policies that differentially affect and disadvantage them. In this regard, the following ten issues merit discussion:

1. Conversion of the Agricultural Sector and the Impacts of Plantations on Small Farms

The Pinochet regime introduced neoliberalism to Chile, and succeeding democratic governments have yet to abandon it (Murray 2002). The overriding objective continues to be export-oriented
rural modernization. The resulting policies have cut a swath through the country’s small-farm economy, including indigenous farmers. Government policies are encouraging large increases in non-traditional agricultural exports, in effect encouraging declines in traditional sectors. The state’s recent policies (carried out by INDAP, INIA, and SAG) are designed to draw small farmers into the agro-industrial sector (Kay 2002), mainly fructiculture; those same policies are encouraging small landowners to apply for reforestation subsidies. The government’s withdrawal of support for traditional crops is affecting small farmers, because it means that many of the staple crops they produce, such as wheat and sugar, are now being imported. The ranching sector is also disappearing. In addition to this, the replacement of native forests with monocrop plantations has removed another linchpin from the small-farm economy, for these farmers rely on native forests for wood, fuel, fruit, fibres, dyes, honey, mushrooms, forage, game, and medicinal plants (Otero 1990; CODEFF 1992). Illustration 5.3 shows that, because traditional farming practices are now so difficult, Mapuche farmers have begun harvesting small patches of pine and eucalyptus on their own properties.

**Illustration 5.3. Mapuche farmer harvesting eucalyptus**

Because of the increasing demand for industrial wood and pulp, tree plantations have come to surround more and more rural communities. This means that roads, sawmills, and pulp mills are
also being established close to these communities. While travelling through different communities in the south, I observed that pulp and woodchips were being supplied by large forest plantations but also by the remaining native forests owned by small farmers. With agriculture on the decline, many farmers are being compelled to sell their own trees to forest companies through intermediaries. The prices they receive are usually below market, and this forces them into poverty and debt.

One of the most controversial cases in this regard was the Boise Cascade project, which would have involved constructing a port in southern Chile as well as plants for converting native forests into wood chips and OSB (oriented strand board). The government's environmental agency (CONAMA) approved the project in January 1999; however, environmentalists contended that CONAMA had taken into account only the impact on the land where the installations would be built, and that it had ignored the impact on the surrounding area, where the trees would be felled to supply the mill. Also, the company would be purchasing wood from nearby landowners, and this would accelerate the destruction of the coastal temperate rainforest without any guarantees of replanting (Clapp 2001). In June 2000 a group of environmental lawyers filed a petition in Ottawa against Boise Cascade and Chile's Maderas Condor SA, claiming that Chile had violated its own environmental laws by approving the project's environmental impact statement. In doing so, they argued, Chile had violated a bilateral treaty with Canada. In 2001 the company cancelled the project.

In addition, the switch from food growing to tree planting is stripping rural workers of their livelihood. Agriculture depends heavily on human labour; tree plantations do not. Agriculture is short term in nature (i.e., in terms of crop cycles); with tree plantations, economic time horizons are much longer. As an example, Leyton (1986) points to one farming estate that once employed 260 people; then it converted itself into a tree plantation and cut its workforce down to 14. Soon it may require only one employee—a security guard. Between 1976 and 1997, forest-covered areas in the Mapuche region increased 53 percent, while the land devoted to wheat and maize to feed local populations was reduced by 29 and 21 percent respectively (ECLAC 1998).

---

66 This submission, made pursuant to Article 14 of the Agreement on Environmental Cooperation between the governments of Canada and Chile, was consequent to the failure of Chile’s environmental authorities to enforce Chile’s environmental laws with respect to Cascada–Chile project, proposed by Compañía Industrial Puerto Montt, S.A., a joint venture between the US corporation Boise Cascade and the Chilean Maderas Cóndor, S.A.
According to the Collipulli City Plan drawn up in 2003, the employment picture for the agriculture and forestry sectors is even more dramatic than this (see Table 5.3). Job opportunities dropped from 2,737 in 1992 to 1,526 in 2002; expressed another way, that district lost 44.2 percent of its jobs in these sectors within a decade. These numbers reflect the increasing predominance of forest plantations, which provide far fewer jobs. Forestry tends to be more automated; intensive labour is required only during planting. Another impact here is that plantations reduce the amount of land available for agriculture.

Almost by definition, large plantations do not belong to communities. Generally, they belong to large companies with few links to communities. Indeed, forestry companies view settled areas as obstacles and the inhabitants as fire hazards. This is why, instead of using local labour, companies in fact restrict local people’s access to forested areas (interviews with two forest workers in Collipulli).

Table 5.3 Employment rates in Collipulli

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Economic activity</th>
<th>1992</th>
<th>2002</th>
<th>Variation</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture, livestock, game, forestry, fisheries</td>
<td>2,737</td>
<td>1,526</td>
<td>-1,211</td>
<td>-44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mining</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
<td>638</td>
<td>414</td>
<td>-224</td>
<td>-35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electricity, gas, water</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction</td>
<td>370</td>
<td>486</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commerce</td>
<td>812</td>
<td>905</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport, tourism</td>
<td>351</td>
<td>282</td>
<td>-69</td>
<td>-20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financing</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>-112</td>
<td>-88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Real estate, small businesses, education</td>
<td>999</td>
<td>1510</td>
<td>511</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not specified</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>-13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>6,063</td>
<td>5,184</td>
<td>-879</td>
<td>-14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: INE (2003); Collipulli City Plan (2003)
2. Displacement of the Rural Sector and Indigenous People

The argument is often heard in Chile that plantations create jobs. However, too little attention is paid to who is employed, for how long, and under what conditions. Tree plantations have long cycles of productivity, and most of the jobs they offer are related to planting and harvesting. Thus, instead of creating more jobs, forestry activities have driven small farmers and wage earners from rural areas. In a given zone, the higher the concentration of plantations, the more rural workers are expelled from the local economy (Leyton 1986). According to a 2002 survey, communities with high concentrations of tree plantations have lost significant population (see Table 5.4).

Local residents seeking new forestry jobs must migrate to the cities because that is where employers contract their workers. As an alternative, they could migrate to the agro-forest and fruit export industries, where labour conditions are harsh, hours are long, and health insurance and social security are not provided. Forestry companies worry that the local people may start forest fires, so they try to coerce them into migrating. Companies have killed domestic animals, fenced their properties, cut off road access, and deliberately excluded local people from forestry work (Cruz and Rivera 1983; Leyton 1986). As a consequence, many small farmers have been forced to sell their land to these companies or to large-scale farmers.

Table 5.4. Migration rates in VIII and IX Regions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arauco—VIII District</th>
<th>Population 1992</th>
<th>Population 2002</th>
<th>Variation %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Contulmo</td>
<td>6,736</td>
<td>5,842</td>
<td>–13.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curanilahue</td>
<td>33,631</td>
<td>31,789</td>
<td>–5.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Laja</td>
<td>24,350</td>
<td>22,190</td>
<td>–8.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Antuco</td>
<td>4,062</td>
<td>3,911</td>
<td>–3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mulchen</td>
<td>29,934</td>
<td>28,943</td>
<td>–3.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cautín—IX District</th>
<th>Population 1992</th>
<th>Population 2002</th>
<th>Variation %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Carahue</td>
<td>25,500</td>
<td>25,433</td>
<td>–0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malleco—IX District</td>
<td>Population 1992</td>
<td>Population 2002</td>
<td>Variation %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Galvarino</td>
<td>14,076</td>
<td>12,771</td>
<td>–9.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loncoche</td>
<td>23,934</td>
<td>28,943</td>
<td>–3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collipulli</td>
<td>22,767</td>
<td>22,287</td>
<td>–2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ercilla</td>
<td>8,842</td>
<td>8,772</td>
<td>–0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Los Sauces</td>
<td>8,995</td>
<td>7,519</td>
<td>–16.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lumaco</td>
<td>12,258</td>
<td>11,249</td>
<td>–8.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purén</td>
<td>13,917</td>
<td>12,796</td>
<td>–8.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Renaico</td>
<td>9,197</td>
<td>9,131</td>
<td>–0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traiguén</td>
<td>20,622</td>
<td>19,314</td>
<td>–6.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: 2002 Survey. Instituto Nacional de Estadisticas, INE

3. Labour Problems and Working Conditions on the Plantations

During the military regime, most of Chile’s unions and other labour organizations were crushed, and employees were left with little if any legal protection. In this climate, the forestry corporations were able to impose an employment system based on subcontracting (Carrere and Lohmann 1996). Thus they were able to dismiss most of their permanent employees, maintain a reduced number of workers for administration and supervision, and hire subcontractors for the main operations. This system, which is still in place, has often enabled companies to work around regulations related to working conditions and safety standards. Workers are thus faced with short-term contracts, intermittent employment, safety and health hazards, low salaries, and long hours (Unda, Paschen, and Stuardo 1997; Carrere and Lohman 1996). Most forestry workers have not completed even a primary education. Jorge González, president of the Chilean Federation of Forestry Workers, states that only 25 to 30 percent of Chile’s 120,000 forestry workers are permanently employed. Of those working directly for plantations, 75 to 80 percent are temporary; thus they face permanent job instability and exploitation (Seguel 2003a; Sepulveda and Gatica 2006). Loggers are hired for brief periods and are paid according to their productivity at rates established by the companies. This also works against the employees’ interests. First, it increases the risk of accidents: workers try to cut as much wood as possible
during long working days, which does not encourage safe practices. Some of them work more than fourteen hours a day. Conditions for forest workers on large plantations vary widely, but most are paid around 100,000 Chilean pesos (US$250) per month (ibid.). An executive of Celulosa Arauco contends that the average salary for loggers is $500 and $600 a month; yet one employee of that company told me he has never earned more than $150 per month. He added that when chemical weeding fails, workers are required to spray again without being paid for the extra hours (personal interview).

Chile’s system of social security does not always cover accidents, and inspections are not frequent enough to ensure safe working conditions. Another problem is that it is very difficult to organize temporary workers into unions. For workers, the chief priority is job stability. They know that companies do not favour those who belong to unions, so they are often reluctant to join one.67 They usually work intermittently and without a contract, unemployment insurance, benefits, and the right to collective bargaining or a pension.

Working conditions are no better on large plantations. Many forest workers are migrants who sleep in bunks in temporary shelters (personal interview with a forest worker in Collipulli). Often they cook, wash, and bathe from the same water. Chile’s labour laws declare that workers must be enrolled in the health system; often they are not. Meanwhile, safety regulations are not enforced, with the result that the forestry sector has one of the highest accident rates in Chile. Overall, then, the main concerns of Chile’s forestry workers are job stability, working conditions, and collective bargaining rights.68 The subcontracting system, high unemployment, corporate political power, and legal restrictions on unionization have combined to depress wages in the forestry sector (Carrere and Lohmann 1996).

4. Landscape Transformations

The conversion of native forest ecosystems into monoculture plantations has greatly diminished Chile’s natural beauty. The natural diversity of Chile’s landscape is being replaced with the

---

uniformity of monocrop plantations, with their monotonous lines of exotic species (see Illustration 5.4).

Illustration 5.4 Radiata pine plantations

Munoz-Pedreros and Larrain (2002) found that in southern Chile, this transformation has accelerated in recent decades. Their study focuses on the concept of “visual landscape,” which is based on two key factors: aesthetics, and observers’ perceptions. According to the authors, over 53 percent of Collipulli’s landscape has been damaged, 41 percent of this as a result of the exotic plantations that now border the national highway.

Bustamante and Simonetti (2005, 243) have observed that forest fragmentation facilitates the invasion of exotic species, especially where forest fragments are surrounded by exotic plantations. Radiata pine and eucalyptus are aggressive colonizers that easily invade native ecosystems.

According to local residents I interviewed, logging activities and truck traffic have affected access to roads, especially in winter. Soil erosion and the impact of logging trucks cut off road access, leaving entire communities isolated.
5. Loss of Capital as a Result of Export-Oriented Subsidies and Incentives

In Canada, most forests are Crown property. By contrast, most of Chile’s forests are in private hands. This has restricted debate because problems are viewed not as social ones but as clashes between competing special interests. Only recently has Chile’s civil society begun to consider the idea that the country’s forests are a public good. Because most forests are in private hands, it is difficult for the government (and the public) to get involved in their management. Several forest-related laws have been passed (the first of these in 1925), but most such laws have been emergency or context specific—for example, they prohibit logging on steep slopes and next to streams, or they protect endangered tree species such as the alerce and the araucaria (CONAF 1989). Even at this juncture, there has been no public debate. Chile has yet to develop a comprehensive forest policy.

Forestry in Chile revolves around the heavily subsidized export of forest resources to which little value has been added. Between 1976 and 1992 the National Forest Corporation paid out more than US$100 million in subsidies (Catalan and Ramos 1999). In other words, Chilean people’s taxes are being used to subsidize forestry exports. In addition to this, the forestry sector’s contributions to the GNP do not take into account the impact on native forests, whose degradation represents a severe loss of natural capital. By most measures, Chile is sacrificing its ecosystem to economic practices that cannot be sustained (Núñez 1992; Christensen et al. 1996; Lara and Veblen 1996).

6. Water Scarcity and Water Pollution

Plantations are not the only source of environmental damage; another is logging operations themselves, including timber transport and processing. Pulp mills and sawmills pollute downstream water supplies. This is damaging beaches and coastal fisheries and harming the tourist sector (Cruz and Rivera 1983). An example is the Celco pulp mill, in Nueva Aldea on the Rio Itata, upriver from one of Chile’s most pristine coastlines.
Illustration 5.5. The Mininco plant in Collipulli

During a meeting held by the CCC, they mentioned that discrimination against the Mapuche in matters of policy making has isolated their communities and rendered them vulnerable. For example, water treatment plants in Chile have a free hand to discard chemical wastes in Mapuche areas. On this matter, a group known as Communities in Socio-Environmental Conflict has filed suit against the Chilean government through the UN Committee for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination.

On top of this, most Mapuche communities in IX Region are facing severe droughts, floods, and water shortages because the nearby plantations are absorbing entire watersheds.\(^{69}\) Pollutants and changes in hydrological cycles are affecting water supplies. While the debate continues regarding the impact of plantations on water yields, plantations are fundamentally changing

\(^{69}\) Toledo, V. 2006b. Política del agua en La Araucania. La novena, March 20, 2006
Accessed: [http://www.lanovena.net/content/view/15224/10/](http://www.lanovena.net/content/view/15224/10/)
watersheds. Illustration 5.6, taken in the winter of 2003, shows sharply water levels have fallen recently in one location near Collipulli.

Illustration 5.6. Water reservoir in Collipulli

Huber and Trecaman (2000) studied the impact of tree plantations on water availability in Collipulli. They found that water catchments had decreased by approximately 30 percent as a result of tree plantations, whose canopies intercept roughly half of annual precipitation. Collipulli means “red soils” in Mapudungun, and according to the authors, planting the clay soils of that district with *Eucalyptus nitens* and *Pinus radiata* reduces percolation and diminishes the recharging of groundwater. The floor of a pine plantation is dry for most of the year. Thus, the inability of soils under pine plantations to hold water, combined with a lack of water-retaining undergrowth, can lead to flooding in the valleys below. This happens often when, after storms, rainwater flows rapidly down hillsides. Even after heavy rains the surface is relatively dry (Cruz and Rivera 1983). Schlatter and Murua (1992) have observed that the soil under pine plantations has little capacity to absorb rainfall. Also, the ground is covered with fallen needles that prevent water from even reaching the soil.
A forest technician in a district of extensive pine plantations explained to me that the humus layer of a native forest is always wet; in contrast to exotic tree plantations, natural ecosystems have a great many small sources of running water. Plantations, then, dry up streams, as evidenced by the numerous dried gullies in districts where they have been planted (see Illustration 5.7).

**Illustration 5.7 Soil erosion in Lonco Mahuida (Collipulli)**

Experts and lay people are debating the relationship between water scarcity and plantations. That debate has served as a reason to take no action to improve management practices in areas of intensive plantations. There have been few studies of this issue, expect for those conducted by forest companies and government research centres, which mainly support the arguments made by plantation owners that their activities in fact protect watersheds. It would be interesting to critique those studies, especially as they relate to the impacts of percolation, evapotranspiration, and water quality in the surrounding areas. Local communities have denounced plantations for their impact on water resources, but their arguments have not convinced authorities and policy makers.
Illustration 5.8. High density eucalyptus plantation

7. Changes in Soil Quality

The rapid spread of pine and eucalyptus plantations in Chile has led inevitably to the impoverishment of soils. Tree plantations, like most forms of monocrop agriculture, tend to extract more nutrients than they return to the soil. Plantations produce humus more slowly than native forests; as a result, soil fertility is gradually reduced. Plantations also acidify the soil, which inhibits the growth of micro-organisms that help break down organic materials (see Giddens et al. 1997). Another problem, linked to hydrological cycles, is soil erosion (Oyarzun 1995). The decline of native forests and the burning of clear-cut lands leave the soil unprotected for several years after a plantation is established; the result is severe erosion during the heavy winter rains (Lara and Veblen 1993; Cavieres and Lara 1983). The same thing occurs after the final harvest, when all the plantation trees have been logged and the residual vegetation is burned. Erosion also affects streams, causing high levels of suspended matter in water supplies (Otero 1990), sometimes to the point that the water is not potable (Cavieres and Lara 1983).
8. Loss of Biodiversity

In the past, Chile lost biodiversity because native forests were turned into farm and pasture land; today, the process is continuing because those same forests are being turned into industrial plantations. Clear cutting and the burning of native forests have been increasing at dramatic rates since the mid-1970s. According to Lara and Veblen (1993), between 1978 and 1987 some 50,000 hectares of native forest disappeared in two of Chile's principal forest regions (VIII and IX Regions); over that period, almost one-third of VIII Region’s coastal forest was replaced with pine plantations. The conversion of native forests into plantations is threatening several endemic and endangered species (Bustamante and Castor 1998). According to local informants in Collipulli, natural flora and fauna are now scarce, with animals being killed or forced to migrate during logging and burning operations. These people also told me that since the plantations were established, birds and amphibians have been disappearing and reptiles and mammals have almost vanished. The diversity that is characteristic of native forests has declined; entire species are being eradicated, their habitats destroyed. According to Cavieres and Lara (1983), when fires are

Illustration 5.9. Formerly planted areas
used as a management method, almost all existing fauna are eliminated, at all stages of development: eggs, young, and adults.

9. Human and Ecosystem Health Risks Associated with Excessive Use of Pesticides, Fertilizers, and Herbicides

Agrochemicals are contaminating local watercourses (Orrego 2002). After plantations apply pesticides, rainwater washes them into streams, creeks, and rivers, which exposes nearby communities and animals to health problems. The people of Collipulli are reporting infestations of fungus, insects, and field mice. Plantation owners apply chemicals that poison not only mice and rabbits but also birds, bees, and other wildlife. Herbicides, including one similar to Agent Orange, that are applied to control weeds are also destroying native flora and fauna, including medicinal herbs used by the local residents (Lara and Veblen 1993).

Comprehensive risk assessments of organochlorine pesticides have already been conducted elsewhere (Neilson et al. 1991). In Chile, policies for managing exposure to these compounds require further development (Palma et al. 2004). The effects of pesticide exposure on humans (and other species) are multigenerational; thus, measuring only short-term effects will not provide enough information to develop policies to protect vulnerable groups. Much important health research has yet to be done in this field.

Rozas (1998) suggests that industrial expansion have been accompanied by discharges of long-life toxic chemicals into ecosystems. Decades of intensive pesticide use by Chilean landowners have contaminated natural ecosystems, with deleterious impacts on workers and the general population, who are exposed to those agents through their food, including maternal milk (ibid.). Regulations do exist to restrict the use of certain pesticides, yet the great majority of farmers continue the intensive use of toxic compounds. Some organochlorine pesticides are not officially approved yet are appearing in organisms and in maternal milk in Chile, in concentrations higher than recommended international maximums. For example, in the town of Río Negro, X Region, a

---

study found DDT concentrations in maternal milk as high as 12,287.3 ug/kg of milky fat.\textsuperscript{71} Over the protestations of CORMA, the Agriculture Ministry banned the use of pentachlorophenol in 1999. Pentachlorophenol is used to control fungus and wood stains in timber exports. Other toxic chemicals, such as methyl bromide, are used to sterilize soils before planting, to control rodents and weeds. Such chemicals affect surrounding populations. People in Collipulli told me that aerial fumigations are not regulated in Chile; as consequence, local communities are not warned in advance of those operations. Many locals have reported health problems to the authorities, to no avail.

Most of the chemicals used by plantations (cypermethrin, endosulfan, chlordane, glyphosate, atrazine, terbuthylazaine) are bioaccumulative. Organochlorine (OC) residuals found in animals in IX and X Regions surpass the norms by as many as fifty times (Rozas 1998). Rozas notes that despite regulations restricting their use, these chemicals are still present in living organisms and in the environment, which suggests that they linger in the environment for long periods or are still being used clandestinely. Some forest workers told me that though these chemicals had been banned, products “in stock” were still being applied, no substitutes for them were on the market, and enforcement of regulations was almost entirely lacking.

10. Uncertainty and Risk Associated with the Use of Genetically Modified Trees

According to Manzur (2000), the planting of genetically modified trees in Chile is in its initial phases, but some projects involving transgenic pine and eucalyptus are already underway:

- Bioforest, a subsidiary of Forestal Arauco, in VIII Region. This research program focuses on improving pine and eucalyptus using cloning techniques. The project also works on biological pest control.

- Genfor SA, a partnership of the Chile Foundation, Sylvagen of Canada, and Interlink of the United States. This project was founded in 1999 with the support of the Ministry of Industrial Development (CORFO). It is developing cloning technologies (somatic embryogenesis) and genetically modified radiata pines, which will soon be test planted.

A consortium of the National Institute for Agricultural Research (INIA), the University of Chile, the Catholic University, CINVESTAV Irapuato Labs of Mexico, the IX Region Department of Agriculture (SEREMI), Agrícola Mar Rojo, the Afodegama Foundation, and Indes Salus. This project is developing transgenic seeds to strengthen resistance to apple tree scab.

Royal Dutch/Shell. In Chile and Uruguay, this corporation is developing a genetically modified eucalyptus tree with a new type of lignin that pulp mills will find easier to remove.

The genetic engineering of trees is directed mainly at improving and expanding large-scale plantations. This effort is driven by the pulp industry’s need to ensure uniform paper quality. To this end, variability in raw materials is being reduced by “improving” species selection, zoning, spacing, agrochemicals, and breeding techniques. To optimize paper production, monoculture plantations will require genetically identical crops. According to Sampson and Lohman (2000), the main objectives of current research on GM trees are these: to reduce lignin, to strengthen resistance to insects and diseases, and to reduce resistance to broad-spectrum herbicides.

A new incentive has recently been created for establishing GM tree plantations. At the Ninth Conference of the Parties of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, held in 2003 in Milan and in 2004 in Argentina, GM trees were approved for use in plantations created to offset carbon emissions as a part of the Kyoto Protocol’s Clean Development Mechanism. This amounts to an incentive for Chile’s forestry sector to increase the scale of plantations, which will endanger natural ecosystems and local communities even more. The Chilean government has already embraced this idea by opening a Biotechnology Centre.

Sampson and Lohmann (2000) have detailed some of the risks associated with GM trees. According to them, the possible instability of introduced genes may have unintended consequences for forest ecosystems. GM trees with a competitive advantage could result in “superweeds” that have high resistance to pest and herbicides, with unintended impacts on non-target species. Because many tree plantations are on remote sites near remaining native forests, they are more difficult to monitor, and this will only increase the likelihood of genetic pollution.

Forestry companies favour these new technologies, arguing that GM trees will reduce pressure on the remaining native forests, mitigate global warming, and reduce pesticide use and the resulting pollution. Stewart (2004), for instance, claims that “engineering trees for less lignin will
greatly improve the environmental health of areas surrounding pulp and paper mills” (2004, 205). A serious problem in all this is the uncertainty and the lack of risk assessments relating to the use of biotechnology. In Chile, GM crops are not subject to environmental impact studies. Recently, NGOs led by the Fundacion para una Sociedad Sustentable (Foundation for a Sustainable Society) have been demanding that the planting of GM trees be subject to Environmental Law 19.300, which requires environmental impact studies. Other groups are demanding a moratorium on GM plantations until Chile develops a clear national policy for GM organisms and for assessing the risks they pose to human and ecosystem health.

**Institutionalized and Systemic Forms of Environmental Racism**

The social, economic, cultural, political, and ecological impacts described above not only indicate how forest landscapes (and rural livelihoods) are transformed, but also reveal the unequal power relations associated with these environmental changes. In Chile, some groups are privileged through mechanisms such as subsidies, credits, and legal favouritism; meanwhile, indigenous communities are left out, and their vision of development is ignored. As McFall and MacKinnon (2001) note, the current forest development model favours transnational corporations rather than local governments and local development. As a consequence, municipalities have lost control over local decisions. Yet for the Mapuche, municipalities represent a key space for influencing government. They see local governments as an import means for strengthening their culture and their ties to the land.

Indigenous and rural communities are at a disadvantage relative to industrialists, who are strongly supported by government agencies and by multilateral organizations such as the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), the International Monetary Fund (IMF), and the World Bank. Chile, like many other Latin American countries, has been developing economic policies that closely follow the recommendations of global multilateral agreements in which the rules of the emerging world order are implicit (Llambi 1994). The IDB, the IMF, and the World Bank have helped Chile implement its forest policy; at the same time, the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) and the UN Development Programme (UNDP) have been promoting research that encourages pine plantations, which in turn attract foreign investment (Catalan and Ramos 1999).
Most development projects are carried out by the private sector, albeit with the state’s participation, which takes two forms. First, public agencies offer financial assistance, build infrastructure (e.g., highways through indigenous lands), and carry out research and development. Second, they approve and support projects (in Chile’s case, through agencies such as CNE, CONAMA, or CONAF). In such a climate, the private sector enjoys strong influence over public policies, including forest laws and the accompanying regulations.

As Angotti (1995) points out, capital investments in Latin America disproportionately favour export industries that are not closely linked with the national and especially regional economies. Contradicting the principles of the neoliberal model and the free market economy, the forestry sector was and is highly subsidized by the state. In Chile, the military regime developed economic policies based on various incentives and subsidies. In 1974, a year after the military coup, Decree 701 granted tax breaks to plantations and subsidized 75 percent of the costs of establishing them. However, the attached regulations were not designed to benefit smallholders. Only 4 percent of the subsidies under this program have benefited small farmers (Quiroga 1996). Without the resources and technical capacity to manage their forests, those farmers cannot access these incentives, nor can they reap the economic benefits of timber sales. Thus small and medium scale farmers simply cut down their forests, often illegally, and sell their trees for wood chips (Silva 1997, 3); or, they sell their land to corporations. This situation has changed recently, however. Decree 701 was modified in 199872 in order to provide more benefits (in the form of subsidies) to small farmers. The impact of this change on native forests is still being debated.

Unequal Protection of Rights and Unequal Law Enforcement

Racism is deeply rooted in society’s unequal power structures and is perpetuated, intentionally or not, by institutional practices. Institutional or systemic racism is visible in the policies, practices, and procedures of institutions, which directly or not, deliberately or not, promote and entrench differential treatment by privileging people of certain races or ethnicities (Henry 1998).

Bullard (1996) articulates this point well. For him, institutional racism occurs when “the current paradigm institutionalizes unequal enforcement, trades human health for profit, places and burden of proof on the victims and not on the polluting industry or activity, legitimates human

exposure to harmful chemicals, pesticides and hazardous wastes, promotes risky technologies, exploits the vulnerability of economically and politically disenfranchised communities, subsidizes ecological destruction, creates an industry around risk assessment and delays clean-up actions, and fails to develop pollution prevention, environmental degradation, waste minimization and cleaner production strategies as the overcharging and dominant goal” (1999, 14–15).

As noted earlier, the environmental protection apparatus in Chile does not provide equal protection for all communities. Social and environmental impacts associated with industrial expansion are obscured by bureaucratic mechanisms and discriminatory policies that privilege particular groups at the expense of others, especially indigenous groups. By approving development projects affecting indigenous communities, government agencies have failed to strengthen Mapuche security as it relates to their land, culture, and environment. Both CONADI and CONAMA have been criticized by the public for not protecting a constitutional right that should be guaranteed to all: “the right to live in an environment free from contamination” (Chilean Constitution, 1980, ch. III, art. 19[8]).

For instance, access to water is controlled by government institutions, NGOs, and the forest and agriculture industries. According to the country’s 2004 mining survey, between VIII and X regions, where most Mapuche live, the state has granted 288,632 hectares of mining concessions to national and international corporations. Of these concessions, 144 are on Mapuche territory, affecting 104 communities (Toledo 2006). Likewise, a large number of aquaculture concessions—most of them for salmon farming, and including almost all lakes and coastlines on Mapuche territory—had been authorized by government agencies (Aylwin 1998). Local protests have led to a review of these concessions.

According to Cayuqueo (the editor of a Mapuche newspaper), the Chilean state has restricted not only Mapuche control over their land and resources but also their right to a safe environment (personal interview). He has written several reports that detail serious damage to the environment, especially with reference to the activities of Arauco SA, Mininco SA, Volterra, Shell, Mitsubishi, and Amindus: “They use chemicals such as sodium sulphate, chlorine, sodium hydroxide, chlorate and gasoline, which contaminate the beaches around Concepcion and its bay

---

73 INE, Anuario de la Minería de Chile 2004
area, the Bio-Bio River, and the Gulf of Arauco. They have destroyed native forests, caused the extinction of some species of tree and medicinal plants, poisoned people and caused congenital illnesses with their use of pesticides. They have chosen to replant forested areas with unsuitable species such as eucalyptus, which lowers the water table and leaves communities without water.”

On paper, Chile has many environmental laws; many of these, though, are obsolete, unenforceable, contradictory, or duplicative. In addition, the accompanying regulations often do not reflect a law’s intent or are lacking altogether. One of the main problems facing Chile’s indigenous people is that the legal system favours industrial development over local communities (see below). In a context of neoliberalism, the state has long demonstrated a preference for private megaprojects and public infrastructure projects, including ones on lands claimed by indigenous people. Examples include the Bio-Bio dams and the coastal highway. In the north of the country, mining projects are proliferating on Aymara and Atacameño territory (and those groups are complaining that the Mining Code and the Water Code have been given precedence over the Indigenous Law). In the south, forestry, agricultural, road-building, and hydroelectric projects are proliferating on Mapuche lands (Castro 2005). Unfortunately, owing to the constraints imposed in the 1990s during proposals for an Indigenous Law, existing laws do not sufficiently protect natural resources on indigenous lands (Toledo 1996).

The regulatory framework that should be protecting resources on indigenous lands is inconsistent with other policies relating to water, forest, and mineral resources. Large quantities of water have been diverted from agricultural and indigenous communities to mining operations (Dourojeanni and Jouravlev 1999). This transfer has been facilitated by the Chilean Water Code of 1981, which allows for independent water markets that are separate from land ownership. Thus, even when a resource is considered a public good, rights to its use are treated as private property that can be freely sold at market prices.

Laws in Chile compete with one another in a hierarchical system that is subject to broad interpretation. For instance, the energy laws can and do contravene indigenous rights, as demonstrated by the Bio-Bio Dam. In that case it was ruled that the Electric Services Law of 1982, which allows the “expropriation of any lands needed for energy development,” superseded the Indigenous Law of 1993, which protects the land rights of indigenous people.
Given the contradictory policies that Chile’s legal system encourages, private companies find it easy to expand industrial activities to indigenous territories. Moreover, there is a lack of consultation with communities affected by development projects, and systems for compensating those communities are weak. It is no surprise, then, that conflicts arise and that antidevelopment protests are launched by local communities and indigenous people’s organizations. These communities are being disproportionately affected not only by plantations but also by industrial wastes flowing from cellulose plants and landfills (see Box 3).

**Box 3. Dumping in Indigenous Territories**

Mapuche activists have denounced waste-handling practices in Temuco. According to Seguel (2003b), 70 percent of that municipality’s garbage is dumped in or near indigenous communities. In 2003, of the twenty-nine landfills in IX Region, nineteen were located in indigenous communities. Data obtained from the Temuco government and CONAMA indicate that that region produces around 16,000 tons of garbage each year and that 11,000 of it ends up in landfills in or near indigenous communities.

In 2004, I visited one of the most controversial landfills, the Boyeco garbage dump (see picture), which each month receives 7,500 tons of garbage. Mapuche communities have become Temuco’s dumping grounds. Industries such as the Chol-Chol slaughterhouse are disposing of their wastes on Mapuche lands. The community of El Natre has denounced companies for cleaning their pesticide equipment in indigenous communities. Private companies are able to do so, raking in high profits without concern for local impacts, because of a lack of regulations. In IX Region, only twelve municipalities out of thirty-one are complying with minimum sanitary standards for waste disposal. The rest are generating severe environmental problems (CONAMA, 1998).
Indigenous Struggle and Violations of Basic Human Rights

The Chilean government restrains Mapuche community groups mainly by applying antiterrorism statutes. Under those statutes, alleged abuses of police authority come before the military courts rather than the civil courts (see Chapter 7; see also Mella 2007). International human rights organizations have criticized this approach. The Mapuche no longer view the state’s security services as impartial. Indigenous leaders have denounced the police and the security services for oppressive surveillance of their activities. Police tactics include detentions, threatening behaviour, and the falsification of criminal charges, all of these for the clear purpose of harassing and intimidating Mapuche groups.74 The state, the police, and large landowners have formed strategic alliances to counter Mapuche demands. Since 1999, hundreds of Mapuche leaders have been arrested, assaulted, and tortured; no winkas have suffered the same consequences.

Especially in the provinces of Arauco and Malleco, the basic human rights of indigenous communities as defined by the UN have been systematically attacked75:

- **Violation of the right to personal integrity of body, mind, and spirit.** There have been many arbitrary detentions and cases of harassment. The police detain people illegally and torture them in police stations.

- **Violation of the right to legal procedures.** People are not treated according to the law, nor are they presumed innocent.

- **Violation of children's rights.** Children have been detained, handcuffed, insulted, and beaten by the police.

- **Violation of the right to liberty of conscience and religious belief.** The Machi, who is the supreme religious authority among the Mapuche, has been detained, insulted, and beaten.

- **Violation of legal principles.** At times of arrest or search, no appropriate legal documentation is produced.

---


75 This report is part of the 55th Annual Session of the UN Commission on Human Rights, held in Geneva in 1999. After presenting his report, Pedro Cayuqueo, the secretary of Arauco-Malleco Communities in Conflict, was arrested by the international police at Santiago's airport.
• **Violation of the right to private property.** People are prevented from using and enjoying their own land.

• **Violation of the right to privacy and dignity.** The police regularly photograph people and film their activities without their consent.

• **Violation of the right to move freely.** Armed police prevent Mapuche people from using public roads and right-of-ways on disputed lands.

• **Violation of the right to correct public statements.** The media publish false or damaging information about Mapuche leaders, insinuating that they have links to subversive left-wing groups.

**Conclusions**

This chapter has aimed to clarify various environmental justice issues. To that purpose, I have analyzed the case of the Mapuche people, applying the concept of environmental racism to offer a social justice perspective for understanding current indigenous struggles in Chile. Conflicts over resources cannot be understood solely in terms of political economic processes. Current debates over land rights and access to resources are also linked to historical processes of “race formation,” as a result of which indigenous groups are denied access to rights and resources and are burdened disproportionately with the costs of modernization projects. In Chile, struggles over natural resources are also racial struggles. Beyond social discrimination, the Mapuche face systemic and institutionalized racism, which in turn is being sustained by “commonsense” racism and media stereotypes.

Most scholars have analyzed indigenous struggle in Latin America as part of broader class conflicts or peasant rebellions. In doing so, they have ignored how Eurocentric conceptions of development have always represented the once colonized Third World. At work is a dubious assumption that colonial regimes of power and oppression have been replaced and that racism is no longer a problem in Chile. Here, I return to a question posed at the beginning of this chapter: Is race responsible for discriminatory acts committed against indigenous groups, or is class? I can only answer in the words of Wakar:

“We were oppressed and are still oppressed because we are Indians, from [an]other civilization, race and culture, not because we are proletariats or peasants. We are poor
because we are Indians, not the other way around. The oppression and the Indian struggle could fit in class theory only if it were shrunk and warped. Neither Aymaras nor Kheswas are social classes. We have existed for centuries, long before the white man made up these concepts” (Wakar 1979).

The many forms of discrimination are obscured in Chile. Formally and informally, the problem of racism is rendered invisible as popular discourses in the colonial and now postcolonial period delegitimize Mapuche claims. As a consequence, Mapuche visions have been neglected and their interests have been underrepresented in national policy debates.

Why are indigenous rights not protected in Chile? Why are that country’s native people discriminated against (both as poor and as indigenous)? And how have their territories and identities become racialized? In this chapter I have tried to answer these questions. I have also argued that environmental racism cannot be isolated from other forms of racism. The current forestry development model is the outcome of exclusionary negotiations between the private sector and government agencies in which large corporations are able, always, to control the outcomes of public policy debates. That is how neoliberalism and private property rights have been able to trump indigenous property rights.

This chapter has shown that in Chile, neoliberal policies privilege large industries, and that the economic growth they generate has failed to trickle down to local (especially indigenous) communities. Indeed, local communities have suffered as a result of monoculture plantations and weak environmental regulations. While the forestry sector expands, the Mapuche are forced to bear the physical, social, and cultural costs. This is evidenced by the numerous social and environmental impacts described earlier and also by the unequal protection of rights and unequal enforcement of laws. The spread of large-scale tree plantations on indigenous lands has generated environmental and social impacts and impeded Mapuche efforts to rebuild their ancestral territories.

The Chilean government has responded to Mapuche land claims by pursuing disputed estates and offering monetary compensations. It has done little or nothing to protect the cultural rights of Mapuche communities, which include their right to develop their culture in their own way.
Chapter 6. The Revitalization of Indigenous Movements and the Transformative Politics of Mapuche Territorial Organizations

Drawing on theories of “new social movements,” this chapter discusses the intersections among class, land, and identity and how indigenous people have organized and mobilized to address their marginalization, exclusion and displacement from current forest development processes.

In this chapter I do two things. First, I examine the internal dynamics of the Mapuche movement—its emergence, structure, demands, and political strategies (including resistance). I explain how territoriality and ethnicity are linked in Mapuche political discourse as part of struggles for power, space, and resources. Second, I examine how the Mapuche have organized to resist but also subsist within rural industrialized landscapes. In this regard, contested natures have become a basis for revitalizing the Mapuche movement. I argue that environmental changes have engendered a sense of lost nature among the Mapuche and that this has inspired new reflections on territoriality linked to new processes of identity formation. I explain how memories of the landscape and understandings of the past have become a key element in the revitalization of the Mapuche movement. The emergence of a self-conscious group identity has brought the Mapuche together around the task of reconfiguring both their past and their future. The Mapuche movement operates within a transformative logic in which land claims connect with broader demands.

The Emergence of New Social Movements in Latin America

The circumstances of social actors in Latin America and around the world have changed profoundly over the past two decades. Until the 1970s, the primacy of the formal political system was undisputed: political parties and elections were the arenas for change. The state was at the centre; society was at the margins and had little voice, since political power could be gained solely through the state apparatus. Since the early 1970s, however, activism based on class, ethnic, and gender identity has emerged as a new approach to politics. By emphasizing identity

76 By rural industrialized landscapes, I am referring to those areas of southern Chile that have experienced a sharp expansion in large-scale forest monoculture, with related pulp mills and transport systems.
rather than partisan politics, many of these movements are challenging the state’s role and its dominant development model (Laraña, Johnston, and Gusfield 1994).

According to postmodernists such as Giddens (1990) and Beck and Ritter (1992), there has been a transformation in the social order—that is, in the nature of society and social relations. Beck and Ritter point out that science and technology have created a society in which wealth accumulation has been overtaken by risk production. As a result, both science and the state are viewed with skepticism. Since neither is able any longer to protect society, a new reflexive society has arisen that questions the legitimacy of the state and science, as well as most forms of expertise. This in turn has transformed consciousness and civil society itself (Giddens 1990; Beck and Ritter 1992). Civil society has developed its own collective expertise, which is now addressing not only class inequalities but also the unequal distribution of risks and power and the people’s marginalization by the ideology of progress. New social movements (NSMs) have begun to intervene in policy debates for the purpose of recasting dominant interpretations of politics and challenging prevailing political practices (Alvarez, Dagnino, and Escobar 1998). As Vanden (2003, 323) notes, “traditional parties and governments are increasingly seen as unable to respond or even comprehend their needs.” As a consequence, new social actors and new forms of collective action rooted in civil society are challenging older, class-based categories. And these new actors and actions encompass other dimensions of identity, both individual and collective. As Alvarez and her colleagues (1998) note, NSMs’ struggles reflect efforts to recast and redefine the political system itself along with the processes that implicitly or explicitly define social power.

The definition of NSMs is still up in the air. Broadly, though, we can say that they have three basic characteristics: (a) they emphasize group or collective identity; (b) they are developing new strategies and forms of organization, including social networks; and (c) their social and political objectives appeal to broader cultural and postmaterialist values. NSMs have opened a space for public participation and public debate that encompasses class, race, gender, the environment, and human rights. These collective identities, however, are not fixed; rather, they are formed through interaction among members of a given movement (and often with other movements).

Latin American NSMs have arisen for two broad reasons: the deteriorating economic and social conditions that are a consequence of neoliberalism; and the increased political space for social and political mobilization created by the fall of authoritarian regimes and the subsequent
processes of democratization. Peasant and labour movements can now be viewed as “conventional” in the sense that they focus on community needs and resources and are usually left-tilting; indigenous, ecological, women’s, gay, and human rights movements have arisen as an alternative to political parties and class-based movements. NSMs are also injecting themselves into the state and NGO establishments and from those locations are striving to redefine the very notions of citizenship, development, and democracy (Alvarez Dagnino, and Escobar 1998, 4). For instance, women's movements have made great efforts to advance women's political, social, and economic rights (Rocheleau, Thomas-Slyter, and Wangari 1996). Women’s movements have played a key role as political and social change agents: they have been credited with bringing about a series of women’s rights: to vote, to work outside the home, to divorce, to be educated, and to seek legal redress for sexual violence.

Similarly, indigenous movements have generated new forms of resistance (Jackson and Warren 2005). In the 1960s and 1970s, Latin American countries were ruled by military regimes. During those decades many indigenous movements allied themselves with peasant, miner, and labour unions (Nash 1992). However, in the 1980s and early 1990s, new patterns emerged wherein political struggles became closely linked to other issues such as the environment and land rights—especially in the Amazon, where the fight to preserve the rainforest garnered international attention as a result of collaborations among international environmental NGOs (Turner 1993; Fisher 2000; Kearny and Varese 1995; Conklin and Graham 1997). Indigenous groups also organized against the neoliberal model and the intrusion of trade liberalization and capital investments such as those provided through the World Bank. Some examples: the struggle by the Mapuche against large forestry companies; the struggle of the Kayapo against development megaprojects in the Amazon (Fisher 1994); national strikes in Ecuador against IMF policies; the struggle against water privatization in the Cochabamba (Postero 2005); and the Mayan (Zapatista) resistance to NAFTA (Gossen 1998). These new social actors mobilize collectively on the basis of interests far different from those of traditional social movements. Some NSMs have produced institutionalized social actors and legitimate spokespeople, especially at the level of local and national governments, thereby creating new spaces to express citizens’ demands (Yashar 2005). For instance, when the Zapatistas launched their rebellion in 1994, they were not just claiming a right to land; more broadly, they were also contesting economic modernization and neoliberalization for its impacts on indigenous groups.
The political shift from peasant movements to indigenous ones, from class to identity, and from individual human rights to indigenous collective rights has been apparent in the Zapatista movement (Collier and Collier 2000). Zapatismo began to symbolize not only indigenous rights movements in Mexico, but also peasant, indigenous, urban, and labour movements beyond national borders. As such, the Zapatista movement can be considered both an NSM and a “transnational global movement” (Olesen 2005). On behalf of the indigenous and non-indigenous poor, it has demanded land, work, housing, liberty, democracy, peace, and justice. NSMs such as the Zapatistas and their supporters reflect an analysis of society based on identity and plurality, a new kind of social critique that aims to bring into being a new kind of society that might better serve the demands of minority groups for representation and rights (Collier and Collier 2000, 2).

The Origins of the “Mapuche Movement” and Its Early Demands

The Mapuche movement has gained public attention only recently; even so, its demands are not new. The Mapuche first organized after the “pacification” of the late 1800s (Bengoa 1985). Ever since, the Mapuche have adopted various political strategies, from a radical indianist and ethnocultural one, to one that seeks assimilation with the Chilean state and its modernization projects. Such was the burden of long-standing assimilationist and racist ideas in Chilean society that a number of Mapuche groups came out in favour of assimilation. As noted by Foerster and Montecino (1988), they fought against Mapuche traditionalists and thus against polygamy, illiteracy, and technological backwardness, in favour of Christianity and private property. This is reflected in the Araucanian Union's slogan of 1916: “God [Christ], the State [Chile], and Progress [the capitalist paradigm].” For integrationist groups such as Sociedad Caupolican (1910), the aim was to merge the two societies, Chilean and Mapuche (Mariman 1997). Taking the opposite tack, in 1931 a fundamentalist group calling itself the Araucanian Federation sought to establish an indigenous republic in which the Araucanians (the Spanish term for the Mapuche) would govern themselves and in which progress and culture would be self-generated (Bengoa 1985). However, this utopian experiment was soon abandoned, in part because of anti-Mapuche actions linked to conservative groups and large landowners, in part because young Mapuche were assimilated into political parties (Foerster and Montecino 1988). This organization had strong links to the Socialist and Communist parties but little support from other Mapuche organizations.
Not until 1987 did Mapuche aspirations of autonomy again develop. Yet they did not adopt the indianist strategy\(^\text{77}\) followed by other indigenous movements in Mexico, Guatemala, and Peru. In 1989 the PTI (Partido de la Tierra e Identidad) was formed. This organization defined itself as an Indian party, not a Mapuche party, and it comprised all indigenous groups of Chile; but it, too, failed to prosper (ibid.). At a more regional level, also in 1987, Mapuche organizations gathered together under the Futa Trawun Kiñewan Pu Mapuche (United Mapuche Grand Parliament).\(^\text{78}\) Through that organization, they issued a public statement denouncing the government’s manipulation of the Mapuche for the benefit of private industry.

One of the most influential organizations today is ADMAPU, founded in the late 1970s. This national organization brings together 1,350 communities and Mapuche cultural centres (CCMs). It was created to oppose Pinochet’s agenda and the indigenous policies that the military regime had established to divide up Mapuche reducciones. This organization, however, was forced to redefine itself in order to meet the junta’s legal–constitutional constitutional requirements. As a consequence, it fragmented during the 1980s, spawning other Mapuche organizations such as Nehuen Mapu, Callfulican and Choin Folil Che.

**From a Class–Based Movement to an Ethnic One**

As happened elsewhere in Latin America, Mapuche organizations were overshadowed by political discourses framed by issues of class and party. Historically, Mapuche groups have been linked to peasant and labour movements; as one consequence, their organizational capacity has been largely confined to rural communities. Most organizations in the broader Mapuche movement have emerged in response to immediate problems such as land reform, working conditions, or political repression; and usually they evaporate once these issues take precedence over problems that are solely indigenous. However, since the 1990s, the fragmenting of most leftist parties, the shift from authoritarian to democratic government, and the government’s (at least token) embrace of the ethnic question have opened new possibilities for indigenous political actors. Strategic alliances with other groups continue to exist, and these are playing a significant

---

\(^\text{77}\) While the ‘indigenist movement’ is a manifestation of the colonists, creolle and meztocso ideas about “Indians”, the ‘indianist movement’ emerged as a reaction to the Indian image created by the dominant culture. Indigenous leaders tend to use the latter term in order to differentiate “top-down” ideas about indigenous peoples from those which arise from indigenous people themselves.

role (as noted above); increasingly, though, the Mapuche been trying to develop an independent position distinct from that of environmentalists, political parties, and indigenists—as well as anthropologists, for that matter.79 Quite pointedly, they have shifted from a class-based movement to an ethnic one with a focus on ethnic difference and recognition. As a result, new forms of resistance and political discourse have become possible.

In particular, their discourse no longer evokes their proletarian and campesino (peasant) identity, but rather their ethnic identity:

“We share many of the problems that campesinos and workers have, but for us it’s not just about poverty or working conditions or environmental problems, for that matter. It’s also about revindicating our ancestral rights to the land and our resources. While environmentalists reside in comfortable houses in the city, they try to protect nature, and peasants don’t have a shared history like us because they move from one place to another depending on their jobs or what is being produced. But for us it’s our ancestral territory and culture that is at stake … We have different objectives, and what are we going to leave for our children if we don’t fight? … If other groups want to help us, they’re welcomed, but this is our fight and it should be led by our own people”. (Personal interview with Victor, Mapuche leader and spokesperson)

Now we also see urban-student and gender-based Mapuche movements, with the leaders all having or claiming Mapuche origins. These movements, however, are shaped by the different spatial (i.e., urban–rural) and historic contexts in which they have evolved. This is also reflected in the internal dynamics within the various movements. In fact, as I observed during fieldwork, most Mapuche movements are constantly questioning their internal mechanisms, including their leadership, identity, and gender relations. Contestation is not just directed at dominant positions; these groups are highly self-reflexive in ways that deeply affect every given group’s structure and objectives.

79 Indigenists typically involve themselves in sovereignty struggles, land claims issues, ecological activism, and cooperative communities. Guillermo de la Peña (2005) describes indigenismo as an ideological movement that denounces the exploitation of aboriginal groups and that strives for cultural unity and for the extension of citizenship through social integration and acculturation. Indigenismo was coined to refer to the various discourses, categorizations, rules, strategies, and official actions whose express purpose is to create state domination over groups designated as indigenous, and to instil in them a sense of national allegiance.
The current political discourse of the Mapuche focuses not only on land claims but also on the state’s recognition of them as a people within the Chilean nation. The movement’s general aim is to recover Mapuche territorial autonomy as a step toward reconstituting Mapuche culture. Note well that they do not seek simply to prove that a Mapuche nation exists; they want to establish their rights as a *different* culture.

As part of this new ethnic politics, the Mapuche have been aligning their culture and values with influential segments of the non-indigenous public in such a way as to appeal to the imagination of that public. Authors such as Jackson (1989) and Handler (1994) emphasize the instrumental role played by ethnicity discourses. The Mapuche movement, however, is rather different from other indigenous groups in Latin America. It uses essentialist discourses, including the ethnicity discourse, yet its land claims and autonomy demands point to the Mapuche’s historical rights to land rather than to an essential vision of Mapuche culture. As explained by Pedro, a Mapuche journalist, these are the rights they want to see “legitimized” or “authenticated” as ancestral rights, not their rights to an indigenous authenticity per se. Essentialism refers to cultural essences tied to, for example, common roots, language, and cultural practices that bind the people together as a homogeneous group. However, these essentialisms are generally linked to fixed categories that are often antithetical to change and that subject people to counterproductive criticisms, such as “the past is too long ago” or “you are no longer traditional.” Essentialist conceptions are especially problematic for urban Mapuche. Mapuche identity is tied to place of origin, but since more than half of them have been compelled to migrate from their home territories to less fertile lands or urban areas, this sense of identity must constantly be renegotiated.

In contrast to the Amazonian case (Conklin and Graham 1997), the cultural identity of the Mapuche (as perceived by non-indigenous Chileans) extends beyond essentialist discourses and does not constitute their most effective source of political power. What counts more is that they are claiming intrinsic rights as a different ethnic group, one that occupied Chilean land before the conquerors and colonists arrived. They had not embraced the symbolic politics of indigeneity that are oriented toward international values and notions of ecological nobility and authentic Indian-ness (Jackson and Warren 2005). Carlos, a Mapuche activist from Temuco, told me,

“our struggle has not gained much international attention like other groups [referring to the Zapatistas and indigenous groups in Brazil] because we don’t want to be represented
by non-indigenous and we don’t want to dress like ‘Indians’ to make it more folkloric
and appealing to the media.”

Bacigalupo (2003, 39) points out that traditionally, the various Mapuche groups determined
membership based on local bioregional criteria and sense of place. They named other Mapuche
groups according to their geographical position in relation to themselves: Picunche (people of the
North), Huilliche (people of the south), Lafkenche (coastal people), and Pehuenche (cordillera
people). Those belonging to a specific group were those “born of a place” or those that were
incorporated into the kinship system through exogamous marriage and adoption patterns. Current
perceptions of a “Mapuche identity” are the result of nationalist and colonialist notions of racial
difference and exclusionary boundaries. During fieldwork with the Mapuche, I often heard it
asserted that “this need to prove indigeneity” has been exacerbated by funding agencies and
government programs, which require “accreditation” of indigenous status in order to negotiate
land or participate in particular benefits intended for “Mapuche communities.” In many cases
this has resulted in divisions and conflicts among communities and individuals, when these are
accused of being “inauthentic” and non-Mapuche (ibid.).

Current Organizations and the “Territorialization” of the Movement

Up until now, the principal demands of the Mapuche nation have been for constitutional
recognition and territorial integrity. Then there are other claims that are peripheral to these: debt
 renegotiation, health services, running water, rural electrification, technical assistance, bilingual
education, university scholarships, and so on. Only after the return of democracy in 1990 was it
possible to seriously address these issues.

Indigenous organizations and associations were legally recognized in 1993, through an
indigenous law that mandated the promotion and development of the indigenous population and
that recognized the Mapuche condition (Indigenous Law 19.253). Yet the Mapuche still lack
constitutional recognition as a “pueblo.” Under the Chilean Constitution, all are considered
Chileans, notwithstanding that some have been extended indigenous status. Jose Aylwin told me
that legal recognition should include more than legalistic rhetoric. When I asked him about the
reform that would grant constitutional recognition to the country's aboriginal peoples (introduced
nearly fifteen years ago), which had not yet been approved, he told me:
“If constitutional recognition doesn’t include the recognition of collective rights, it will not help reivindicación the rights of Chile’s indigenous people … However, if recognition is linked with land rights, control over their resources, and the political rights to participate in decision-making, that could make a real difference.”

Several organizations have emerged as part of this process of reivindicación.\textsuperscript{80} Most have similar ideas and goals in relation to autonomy but have been criticized for not providing a cohesive proposal that would be appropriate for negotiating with the Chilean state. Some of the most recent organizations (pertinent to my case study) include the following:

- \textit{Centro de Estudios y Documentación Mapuche CEDM—LIWEN} (founded 1992) focuses on Mapuche demands for recognition of a plural-ethnic space and territorial autonomy in IX Region.

- \textit{Consejo Interregional Mapuche} (CIM) (founded 1993) is an umbrella NGO that coordinates all Mapuche NGOs, grassroots organizations, and community chiefs. CIM has tried to represent the voice of the Mapuche nation in dialogue with the Chilean government and international organizations. It has represented the nation at the UN Working Group on Indigenous Peoples in Geneva and has joined the Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization (UNPO).

- \textit{Asociación Nancucheo} (founded 1997) aims to recover the lands stolen by the timber companies in Malleco region. This regional group is demanding the return of more than 15,490 hectares belonging to eleven indigenous communities. According to Millaman (2000), this association has launched internal debates on diverse topics and problems, which have fostered a discourse that has integrated the most important demands at the local level. Among these demands is one for local political autonomy. Thus, for example, each community could establish its own development priorities, and any political actions would first have to be discussed with shamans and traditional authorities.

- \textit{Aukin Wallmapu Ngulam—Consejo de Todas las Tierras} (Council of All Lands). This organization emerged from ADMAPU. Its goal is to establish an administrative nation within the Chilean state, with 10 percent of political representation. To this end, it is calling for a constitutional reform that would recognize Chile as an ethnically plural country and that would

\textsuperscript{80} By “reivindicación” I mean the process through which subjugated people attempt to reclaim and retrieve some elements of their lost cultural, territorial, political, and economic rights.
include a new political constitution for the Mapuche Nation. That constitution would acknowledge the Mapuche right to self-determination, restore their lands to them (including the right to their use), and control access to resources on those territories. This organization generates a great deal of media attention and is demanding political representation in the National Legislature (two representatives in each chamber). It is led by Aukan Wilkaman, a representative at the UN and an articulate spokesperson who has run several times for president of Chile.

- **Asociacion de Identidades Territoriales** (Territorial Identities Association) has made it a goal to rebuild ancestral territorial spaces within the Chilean state. During a political protest in May 1999, its members announced their key demands, which they then presented to the Chilean government in a proposal titled “From the National Historic Debt to the Recognition of Our Territorial Rights” (Millaman 2000). This group is troubled by factionalism, but less so than many. It wants to resurrect the traditional Mapuche political system of lofs (lineage clans), rewe (altars), and butalmapu (allied clans during wartime). Its position is moderate and institutionalist; its principal demand is for autonomy. It promotes the economic and cultural rights of lafkenche through a variety of projects and national and international assistance programs. A suborganization within this group is Identidad Mapuche Lafkenche (Lafkenche Territorial Identity), which represents the Mapuche people of the coast and lakes. Lafkenche demands are for local autonomy; they hope to exploit and protect natural resources according to traditional cultural norms of each “territory.”

- **Coordinadora de Comunidades en Conflicto Arauko-Malleko** (Arauco-Malleko Mapuche Organizing Committee) was founded in 1998. It led a locally based demonstration involving several Mapuche communities in the southern region. Its aim has been to strengthen local communities in conflict areas by taking over lands in dispute and obstructing private companies’ activities investments. As the spokesperson expressed during a personal interview:

  “We are consolidating and strengthening our political organization … the ‘Coordinadora’ is including in their negotiations the other communities that have been marginalized by the Consejo de todas las Tierras and the Territorial Identity Lafkenche. The last one will stop their mobilizations after a possible negotiation with the State and the leader of the ‘Consejo’ will accept a position in UN at the end of this year. Therefore, the road is free and we will continue with the mobilizations.”
In contrast to the Council for All Lands, this group claims Mapuche rights to land, bypassing the state’s conventional channels. It does not want to negotiate under the terms imposed by the Chilean state. Its main demand pertains not just to land claims but to “territoriality.” It wants the Mapuche to be recognized as a distinct ethnic group in a different nation. The Arauco Malleco Coordination has been covered by the media as the most radical of all Mapuche organizations. This organization is blamed for example, for cutting bridges leading to plantations and logging sites. The leaders are Victor Ancalaf (IX Region) and Jose Huenchunao (VIII Region). The latter has declared in the media

“Our people are more aware of the problem, which is the territoriality of the Mapuche community … We still recognize ourselves as a different culture and we still have in our collective memory the consciousness that we were and we are a first nation.”

In 2000, after internal bickering, the organization fragmented into spin-off groups such as Communities in Conflict of Collipulli, one of the key groups interviewed for this study.

Leadership Dynamics and the Use of Different Political Strategies

Besides shifting from a class-based movement to an ethnic one, today’s Mapuche movement is characterized by (a) a new leadership dynamic, with young urban Mapuche rethinking Mapuche history while reconnecting with life in rural areas, and (b) the use of political tactics that focus on reconstructing traditional Mapuche territories. The emergence of locally based Mapuche groups and organizations has helped Mapuche in marginalized areas (both urban and rural) reaffirm their sense of identity.

Mapuche relations with non-indigenous actors, NGOs, and government agencies have also changed greatly. Within the Mapuche movement itself, young, Western-educated leaders are serving as intermediaries between communities and the state—a relatively new form of leadership. Also, negotiations can and do now occur across a full spectrum of media, from the kultrun (traditional drum) to the cellphone. Even in isolated areas far from the capital that lack electricity, many Mapuche leaders carry cellphones and are often seen in local cybercafés. Kearny and Varese (1995) note that technology has become indispensable for coordinating

81 La Segunda, March 18, 1999.
protests and has strengthened indigenous movements as a political force. Indigenous demands are today leading to agreements on monetary compensation, local economic development, and political representation.

Many of today's Mapuche leaders gained their initial experience during the 1980s, when Mapuche cultural centres and NGO projects flourished to combat the military regime (Bengoa 1999). When democracy returned in the 1990s, they participated in various government training programs (technical and managerial), which fostered their assimilation into government institutions. This new, educated generation has increased the country’s general awareness of the downtrodden status of most Mapuche. These Mapuche leaders have acquired the skills to negotiate broader land claims, to identify valid spokespeople, and to apply political pressure as necessary. For example, Konapewan is group of Mapuche university-trained professionals who work with their communities to address environmental conflicts associated with tree plantations and land claims.

The Nancucheo Association, the Arauco and Malleco Coalition, and Territorial Identities (i.e., the Association of Lafkenche Communities) share certain characteristics. First, each comprises various indigenous communities; and each community in turn has a local representative group to speak on its behalf. These community leaders live on site, and their political contributions tend also to be local. Thus they are able to immediately confront local matters (arrests, land raids, etc.) as they arise and assert authority over their territorial space. Also, these local groups do not have centralized offices; thus they are able to avoid government surveillance. Because so many leaders have been prosecuted, and given current accusations of illicit association, most local meetings are held semiclandestinely, and delicate issues are discussed in Mapudungun.

*Machis* (shamans), *lonkos* (community chiefs), *toquis* (warrior chiefs), and *werkens* (spokespeople) are adjusting their strategies to the realities beyond their traditional boundaries. The *reduccion* system drastically changed Mapuche society, culture, and economics, and these changes only accelerated under the military regime’s privatization policies (Berdicheski 1975). The power of the *lonkos* was weakened and was often supplanted by that of the *machis* or of some other community member whose economic position was more advantageous. Since the early 1990s the *machis* have been performing their harvest, fertility, and rainmaking ceremonies not only in their own communities but also on journeys to the capital. (I witnessed a *ngillatun* [a *machi* ritual] while visiting prisoners in Temuco.) In doing so, they are helping mobilize
communities, a process that often involves appropriating traditional cultural forms as a political strategy. As Bacigalupo (2003) notes, “machis play an important role as intermediaries between the Mapuche and the dominant culture in recreating the Mapuche self with foreign elements and in defining the boundaries with ‘the other’” (2003, 43).

Another characteristic of the Mapuche movement relates to political strategies. Some groups prefer local activities; others, international networking. Some approve of violence; others do not. These different approaches, and the lack of common goals, have fragmented the movement. Note, though, that most organizations are not rigid; generally, they support one another in the sense of sharing two general goals: constitutional recognition and the restitution of ancestral lands. That said, their strategies vary widely: some strive for political representation in the state’s institutional framework; others are more radical and prefer to organize local communities in order to achieve customary rights.

According to Millaman (2000), contemporary indigenous movements tend to share two key elements: unity, and cultural diversity. During fieldwork, I found that organizations, communities, and political leaders do try to support one another and are working together to create a united front. Nonetheless, the state has criticized the Mapuche movement for its loose structure and absence of common proposals (Mariman 1997; Lavanchy 1999). This coordination has been difficult to achieve in part because historically, the Mapuche were scattered across many small communities, which meant that leadership (and politics) was predominantly local. Some Mapuche leaders today recognize the need to negotiate as a single voice; others see the fragmentation as an advantage.

Victor, a Mapuche leader from Collipulli, told me:

“We call on all the Mapuche communities to embark on a process of regaining back their territory … Whether they decide to do it with or without violence is a decision of each community.”

Most Mapuche organizations have not resorted to violence; however, they do support those who see violence as an effective tactic. When asked about recent arsons against logging trucks, one Mapuche leader told me:

“If it hadn't been for the actual mobilization of the communities, including more violent strategies, the government wouldn't even be listening to our problems.”
The Revival of the Mapuche Movement: Resistance and Subsistence

The Mapuche movement’s revival is fostering new ways of organizing around identity. But new resistance strategies will also be necessary if they are to survive as a distinct people. Land seizures dramatically affected Mapuche life; even so, the communities were able to preserve most of their cultural practices, which today serve to reinforce a sense of being Mapuche, even among those who live in cities. As Bacigalupo (2003) notes, “a sense of belonging to the group is defined by the notion of a place of origin as well as their capacity to recreate their identity, engage in transcultural dialogue, and effectively negotiate between realities to serve the community” (2003, 51). However, the effects of neoliberal economic policies on the landscape and the encroachment of tree plantations are having far-reaching consequences for these communities. Most “places of origin” in rural areas are being dramatically transformed.

Early treaties relegated the Mapuche to reducciones, much like what happened to First Nations in North America (Aylwin 1999). In Chile in 1884, land titles were awarded to clan chiefs, with 4 to 6 hectares allotted per clan member. This forced sedentarization transformed these lands into “regions of refuge” (Clapp 1998a; Bengoa 1996). From the perspective of colonists and the state itself, reducciones were meant to open lands to settlement (Informe Comisión Verdad Historica y Nuevo Trato 2003). They were meant to dissolve the Mapuche social structure and transform their territories into homogenous spaces that could be absorbed by the state. However, these marginal spaces, besides the rest, served to isolate Mapuche communities from modernization, capitalism, and colonial expansion, and thus, to some extent, from assimilation (Bengoa 1996). The reducciones evolved into transitional spaces in which a new, resistant Mapuche culture emerged. Bengoa’s hypothesis is that young parents leave these communities to find work; the grandparents and grandchildren stay at home. The grandparents then raise the children and in so doing transmit their traditional culture to the new generation. This process has helped reinforce Mapuche identity. These “refuges,” then, serve a double function: they are autonomous spaces capable of reproducing Mapuche culture, as well as places of transition where Mapuche learn ways to adapt to the modern economy. Ironically, then, the state’s efforts to assimilate the Mapuche have reinforced the Mapuche’s capacity to define themselves as separate from the state.

---

82 This concept has been also used by the Mexican anthropologist Gonzalo Aguirre Beltran.
And that is the situation that changed so drastically when the forestry industry began expanding onto traditional Mapuche lands. In contrast to agriculture, forestry is an invasive activity, one that eliminates space for culture. According to Badilla, “History is repeating itself. In the past it was the indigenous peoples who suffered the rape of their lands; and now we are seeing the same with peasants (Equipo de Pastoral Campesina 1993 in Carrere and Lohman 1996). While a factory model of monospecific industrial plantations is being promoted, native Chilean forest resources, which are of benefit to the majority of both present and future Chileans, continue to be ignored or pillaged, since managing them in a sustainable way is not in the economic interests of a small, powerful minority based both in Chile and abroad. To Chile’s rural people, the advance of pine and eucalyptus plantations seems to constitute the ‘advance of a green army’ (ibid).

Guha (2000) notes that tree monoculture has had far-reaching effects on local agriculture. In traditional Mapuche communities, forest use was regulated by informal arrangements based on kinship, seasonal harvests, weather conditions, and so on. Now that non-wood forest products and pasturelands have fallen into the hands of forestry companies, these traditional practices have been curtailed. Commercial plantations divide landscapes into blocks, which are then closed to the local people. The industry views this approach as key to successful production, especially with regard to fire protection. One result is that Mapuche families are now forbidden to use fire for their agricultural practices. Also, the Mapuche typically walk from one property to another to hunt and to harvest fuel, mushrooms, edible and medicinal herbs, nuts, and berries. These practices, which are especially important during lean times, have also been restricted by the regulatory conditions now being enforced by the private sector.

The consumption of forest edibles is an adaptive strategy for periods of food shortage (Etkin 1994). Various studies of agricultural systems refer to wild plants as a “hidden harvest,” a concept that embraces the cultural, ecological, and nutritional roles that traditional foods play in regional and local food security (Scoones, Melnyk, and Pretty 1992). Pimentel (1997) and Hoskins (1990) also note that forest foods represent important supplements to agricultural staples, in that they increase dietary variety for local people and provide foods during emergencies. When people gather wild foods they learn about their local ecology; they also supplement their diet and often their income. This adaptive strategy becomes part of their subsistence economy. In the case at hand, Smith-Ramírez (1994) refers to the Mapuche “silent economy,” wherein harvesting non-wood forest products is vital to survival. Access restrictions
imposed over the years—most recently by plantations—have had a devastating impact and have met with stiff resistance from Mapuche communities. In some cases these restrictions have led to organized actions, as noted by Camilo, a program officer, in reference to a local conflict:

“I don’t think this conflict was triggered by the agitation of a few. This is not merely political … The Mapuche people were certainly encroached by tree plantations, marginalized, and forbidden to use their resources. Forest companies are in fact blameworthy, because they slowly built a hostile relationship with the locals, fencing their woodlots, placing guards and dogs, prohibiting the entrance of people to gather fuel wood or herbs … They alienated people from their land.”

The Mapuche organized to resist but also to subsist. One interesting case pointing to the symbolic and material character of these strategies relates to “productive occupations.” These are pacifist strategies whereby community members (including women and children) take over the land, cut plantation trees, then cultivate the fields and plant them with traditional crops such as potatoes, maize, and wheat. Some families move onto these lands during the day and leave them at night; others take them over permanently. According to movement representatives, this is a way of proving that these lands belong to them and that they have traditionally harvested and cultivated these terrains. It is a symbolic protest that simultaneously meets families’ subsistence needs. This use of traditional (i.e., symbolic) crops and emphasis on Mapuche agricultural practices has been accompanied recently by environmentalist discourses relating to food security and the protection of biodiversity. Some communities have endorsed new projects that aim to recuperate endangered native seeds and maintain “organic forms of production.”

**Mobilizing Collective Memory**

When people undergo dramatic changes, they need to find ways to bridge the gap between past and present, to assert continuity and identity as well as difference. In this sense, our awareness of the past has ethical and political consequences. Conflicts over the past, the present, and the future are entangled with relations of power; thus, remembering the past becomes a tool for contesting dominant discourses and imposed histories. Hodgkin and Radstone (2003) note that “ideas of restitution and reparation, evoking both financial or political justice and more abstruse compensations such as recognition of wrong done, or readiness to hear and acknowledge hidden
stories, all draw on the sense that the present is obliged to accommodate the past in order to move from it” (2003, 1).

Collective memories are variously defined, though the term usually refers to the making of a group memory so that it becomes an expression of identity and is accepted by the group as the “truth” of experience (ibid.). The concept of collective memory is employed here in the tradition of Halbwachs (1980), referring to those images of the past in a particular social context, such as meaningful events in people’s family, neighbourhood, community, or nation. During my fieldwork with the Mapuche, I found that memories of the past and historical events are not restricted to individuals; they are also shared by the communities, which constantly revive these collective stories. For example, though younger generations of Mapuche may not have direct experiences with collective harvests, they remember stories told them by older relatives who lived those experiences. These “memories” and histories are retained by the younger generations and become a part of their collective identity. These memories or narratives about the land are influencing current struggles for land and rights and are helping maintain a sense of what it means to be Mapuche.

The emergence of a self-aware group identity has “thickened” (Holland 1998’s term) the Mapuche movement, especially in relation to the reconfiguration of collective memory and the rapidly approaching future. This, despite strong urban migration (50 percent of Mapuche are now urban dwellers); indeed, such migration seems to have strengthened Mapuche people’s sense of belonging to a homeland and to have renewed their ties to the land. Yet their ability to maintain material relationships and experiences with the land has been profoundly compromised by the rapid transformation of the rural landscape. As a consequence, a new and culturally productive urban–rural identity has emerged, one in which both lost land bases and imagined land-based futures are critical.

Memories of social life are vital to Mapuche cultural reproduction. Even though the Mapuche have become economic migrants—many of them end up as manual labourers in Santiago—the maintenance of ties to the community is a constant for them. They usually send money to their relatives and often receive food packages from the south. They sporadically travel or leave their children with their relatives. And even though they are far from their homeland, submerged in the urban metropolis, they keep alive the stories, the local narratives, and elements of religion and cosmology, as well as memories of the land. According to Montecino (1990), the constant
preoccupation with those still in the countryside is not simply about sending money and goods; these practices also symbolize a presence in the stories and dreams of rural life—a presence that in turn guides their conduct in the city.\footnote{Sonia Montecino, “Transformación y conservación cultural en la migración Mapuche a la ciudad: invisibilidad del Mapuche urbano,” \textit{RULPA Dungu} \textit{7} (1990).} Such collective memories are crucial for the identity of groups such as families, religious communities, and social classes (see Halbwachs 1992).

Identity is often located in a specific physical landscape. Thus when landscapes are transformed, memories of earlier times also change, and so do the ways people perceive themselves. Imaginary landscapes are also important in the construction of identity—in particular, images of the lost homeland are passed down generations. Specific places in the landscape form a secret and sacred geography where people share their knowledge about food, medicines, hunting grounds, fishing streams, and so on.

Josefina, an elder from Collipulli, described how the Mapuche had become isolated as the plantations took up more and more of the land:

“Since Mininco [one of the largest forest companies] arrived we have lost part of our culture. Before then we had many friends and could walk freely through the area to gather wood, medicines. We used to visit our neighbours and relatives to carry out rituals and work together. Now we are separated by plantations everywhere. Many people have moved away and some of the rituals have been lost.”

Especially for young urban Mapuche, landscape transformation has produced a powerful identification with their parents’ lost environment; they yearn to go back and reclaim what was lost. A Mapuche women who works in the city as a domestic told me:

“I live in the city and have always avoided to talk about my Mapuche ascendancy for fear of being discriminated but when I heard the news about how my brothers and sisters [referring to other Mapuche] were fighting to gain back their land and how they’ve been attacked by the police I felt that this was also my own struggle, that I could and must do something, even from the city.”

In this sense, their resistance, linked as it is to nostalgia, reflects longing for a home that no longer exists or that has been sharply disrupted. This should not be seen as false memory or strategically constructed memory; either would be a severe misrepresentation. Rather, a society
cannot remember in any other way than through its constituents’ memories. Memory is not individual; it is constructed within culture and within specific historical contexts and moments. The Mapuche share their landscape and history through stories, poems, songs, mingas (collective work), trawuns (meetings), ngillatuns (ceremonial meetings), and rituals. In the Mapuche world, a nütram is a conversation that interweaves the myths, medicine, recipes, and stories of relatives and neighbours, both living and dead. During fieldwork, I often observed how in all these social activities the Mapuche share their history as relates to food, herbs, territorial boundaries, and so on. Their links to the land, even when they are far from it, constitute the medium through which memories return to them. And those memories take the form of fragments relating to particular parts of their history and landscape.

Avaria (in Harvey and Thompson 2005) describes how thousands of Mapuche have migrated from rural areas to Santiago for school or a job. According to this Mapuche author, people carry places with them wherever they go. Today, many groups live in close proximity in urban areas far from those places by which they are known (Pehuenche, Lafkenche, etc.). These people have not disappeared; rather, they have joined others of their group to create a new indigenous identity that is a collection of memories, rituals, and languages from a variety of places. Sees this as a strength, as holding open the possibility for new creativity and change, for a “reterritorialization of time and space.”

Women in the Mapuche movement have done much to reconstruct memory and thereby revitalize the movement. In Collipulli, for instance, when planning their activities or trawuns, Mapuche women always emphasize the need to schedule meetings in emblematic places and the importance of preparing Mapuche traditional foods and beverages (which involves the participation of older women). One young woman named Alejandra told the group during a meeting:

“Can I add something? … We can’t have hotdogs and soft drinks in our trawun [meeting]. We need to bring catuto [wheat bread] and mudai [a traditional fermented wheat drink]. I can ask Doña Rosa, she knows a good recipe. And the trawun should be on the banks of the river, where they were traditionally held.”

While the men focused on land negotiations and political agendas, the women were against the idea of limiting political mobilization to land negotiations. Said Karina:
“My husband is in jail because he was fighting for the rights of the Mapuche, not just because he wanted land … You can’t stop fighting just because they give you a piece of land. We need schools where they can teach our children in Mapudungun and we need to involve the whole community.”

**Young Leaders with Old Memories: Reminiscences of a Lost Nature in Industrialized Landscapes**

The links between identity and place memory are key to understanding Mapuche political mobilization today. Even though most Mapuche today are economic migrants, they have long (re)created personal connections with rural and “natural” landscapes and in this way have perpetuated a sense of belonging to their homeland that serves to constantly strengthen their cultural ties. However, the drastic transformation of the rural landscape has resulted in what Pyle (1993) calls “the extinction of experiences”84—experiences that are vital for Mapuche cultural survival. This relationship between nature and belonging is well described by Nabhan (1997). He illustrates the importance of interactions between people and their surroundings, between plants and pollinators, between animals and weather. Each particular case shows how people are connected to nature and what it means to belong to one’s landscape.

At the beginning of my work I was surprised by the absence of environmental concerns linked to land claims. I later realized that far from being absent, a sense of lost nature is what first fuelled their uprising. Most organized Mapuche communities are led by the younger generation. These leaders were raised in cities or were raised in Mapuche families that worked for large landowners. A sense of loss, dispossession, and injustice is precisely what is driving many activists to reclaim their lands and rebuild their territories. Jose, a Mapuche activist in Collipulli, told me:

“It may be hard for the Mapuche—removed from the rural lifestyle—to notice what is happening in the southern region, but being deprived of our land and our territory means that more Mapuche are being forced to migrate to the city, and this is contributing to poverty and family disintegration, which affects especially women and children.”

84 He describes this phenomenon as a cycle of impoverishment initiated by the homogenization and the reduction of local flora and fauna, that results in disaffection, apathy, and isolation from nature.
Young Mapuche leaders and activists have emerged to denounce the present situation of their people: their poverty, but also their need to reclaim their ancestral lands in order to preserve their sense of community. Yet many of those I interviewed did not remember the traditional practices of natural resource management and had no strategy for linking identity discourses to the use of the lands the return of which they were seeking. Nonetheless, their stories and narratives evoked strong images and metaphors and reflected a profound nostalgia for their landscape—the mapu—both physical and metaphysical.

Most young Mapuche lack the knowledge of nature that is encoded in their forebears’ land practices and native tongue. When I asked people in Collipulli about the landscape, they often spoke in past tense about wildlife (especially birds), insects, and medicinal plants. Dario, the oldest son of dona Josefina, was working on a traditional Mapuche textile:

“We used to see pudu [Pudu pudu], quique [Galictus cuja], chingue [Conepatus chinga], guiña [Oncifelis guigna], and puma [Felis concolor], but you don’t see them anymore.”

It is noteworthy that most of the people I interviewed told me they did not know much about the forest. Yet in fact they did still hold a large body of knowledge of their environment. While walking through a field in Collipulli, two local women pointed out to me huallizadas (vestiges of native forest) were they picked herbs and mushrooms, as well as a few hidden springs. They also mentioned several pollinators, birds and insects in particular. Many plants and insects (dragonflies and fireflies) were known by them to be markers of ecosystem health. Some plants indicated relative humidity; some birds indicated coming weather changes, such as drought or heavy rainfall. Thus, the loss of traditional plants and animals meant the loss of natural signs—signs that are important to Mapuche life. Juana, an elderly woman, told me that birdsongs had specific messages—that a visitor was approaching, or that it would rain soon:

“Most birds and animals have left for the mountains. The only ones that abound now in our houses are the grey mice. They used to live in the forest but they had to escape when pesticides were spread on the plantations.”

Antonio is a young Mapuche in the community of Antonio Paillacoi in Collipulli. He was working for a forest company at the time. When I asked him about medicinal herbs and edible fruits, he told me:
“Now it’s difficult to find herbs. We have to walk long distances, and some herbs have simply disappeared … We also used to collect lots of gargales \(\text{Ramaria ssp}\) and changles \(\text{Clavaria coralloides}\), which grow underneath the \text{huallizadas}^{85} \ldots \) They’re delicious.”

The gradual disappearance of traditional spaces as a result of environmental degradation and industrial and urban expansion does not mean a parallel loss of indigenous conceptualizations of nature, but rather a relocation of these spaces. These new conceptualizations are embedded in the political discourses of indigenous leaders and organizations; they are also reflected in the continuous changes in their symbolic systems. For instance, when Mapuche people refer to environmental degradation, this encompasses cultural loss as well, because when rivers are polluted, wetlands dry out, and forests are cut down, the spirits that inhabit those spaces are also affected. Yet it would be inaccurate to view this as solely an ecological concern, or solely a spiritual one. For many indigenous groups, “nature” has little to do with either the “natural” or the “supernatural,” largely because nature is not perceived as external to society and human activity. As Descola and Pálsson (1996) note in their analysis of Achuar’s natural symbolism: “All of nature's beings have some features in common with mankind, and the laws they go by are more or less the same as those governing civil society. Humans and most plants, animals, and meteors, are persons \(aents\) with a soul \(wakan\) and an individual life” (p. 93).

**Rebuilding the Land, Rethinking Their Identity**

This ongoing process of reweaving memory is crucial to identity as well as to the territory-based nature of Mapuche claims. This process is playing a role in the rethinking and renarration of Mapuche history and their environment. The historic memory of the Mapuche is linked to their rights as a “pueblo” or nation; thus territorial rights are crucial to their cultural reproduction. As Stavenhagen (1996, 142) notes, “one of the fundamental elements of indigenous identity in the Americas is its territoriality. Indigenous people have different meanings of place which define the way they organize themselves and the way they redefine their relationship with the state.” Sack (1986, 1–2) refers to territoriality as “a spatial strategy to affect, influence, or control

---

85 These are usually remnants of deciduous forests such as roble \(\text{Nothofagus obliqua}\) and raulí \(\text{Nothofagus alpina}\).
resources and people, by controlling area … [as a] basis of power … related to how people use the land, how they organize themselves in space, and how they give meaning to place.”

For the Mapuche, then, to belong to an indigenous group is to be conscious of possessing a territory and of maintaining special ties to the land. Yet their ethnic identity does not depend exclusively on their direct material relation to land; it also depends on their sense of belonging. Indeed, half the Mapuche population lives in Santiago, where an ethnic revival is evident (Valdes 1997) and where they share other dimensions of territoriality such as religion, language, and common history. The urban–rural Mapuche movement is organized in a strategically complementary way. Some Mapuche intellectuals are talking about a “return plan” to their ancestral territory (Naguil 2005). If they succeed in their demands, there will be a huge indigenous urban–rural migration unlike anything previously witnessed.”

According to Pinkney, Williamson, and Gomez (2004), the destabilization of rural Mapuche communities under neoliberalism has fostered a return from Santiago, Temuco, and other cities, back to the rural communities of origin. This is creating a new demographic and a related phenomenon: cultural “encounter and re-encounter” between rural and urban Mapuche. Rural families often receive money from their relatives in the cities. There is now less of that money, and at the same time, the returnees are increasing the demand for arable land and adding to the workloads of those who never left it.

Indigenous people belong to an ethno-cultural minority and want to be recognized as distinct. The dilemma they face is that they generally have to negate this distinctiveness in order to become part of a broader identity movement with greater political representation. As Dean and Levi (2003) note, ethnic relations determine and maintain indigenous identity, but not all ethnic groups are indigenous. The Mapuche, like other indigenous people, share a collective name, a collective homeland, and collective beliefs relating to an ancestry, culture, language, and religion; what differentiates the Mapuche from other groups is that these traits are quite deliberately summoned as emblems of connectivity and are mobilized, at least in part, to develop a sense of political solidarity that transcends local models of identity formation.

For instance, the Mapuche of Chile and Argentina have launched their own newspaper, Azkintuwe\(^{87}\) (Mapudungun for “viewpoint”), to represent their interests and to provide a counterweight to the state-monopolized media (Amolef 2004). Through that paper they hope to reference their cultural space—a previously “invisible territory”—and thereby affirm that they existed before the nation-state. Pedro Cayuqueo, the paper’s editor, told me that this was especially important given the largely pejorative portrayals of Mapuche in the national media. He told me that alternative methods of communication—cyberspace, conferences, and protests—besides raising the profile of Mapuche demands, were a means to exchange ideas among communities. These spaces of interaction then became opportunities to improve the standard of dialogue about the Mapuche and to rethink and renarrate history in more relevant ways. As Boccara (2006) notes, contemporary Mapuche movements have attempted to denationalize Chilean and Argentinean histories and to resignify the Mapuche homeland within a supranational space. Those same movements are seeking to reindigenize spaces by applying new forms of knowledge production (e.g., by redrawing the Chilean–Argentinean national border and demarcating indigenous territories) and by organizing a transnational mobilization. They are also substituting Spanish place names for Mapuche ones.\(^ {88}\)

The mobilization of Mapuche organizations, especially among young people, is also fuelling discussions about past and present-day Mapuche institutions. The trend is clearly toward more democratic, participatory institutions, ones that differ considerably from past institutions, which supported polygamy, authoritarian and largely patriarchal governance, and inherited leadership. As Marimán (2004) notes, the Mapuche society of the past was hardly noted for its participatory and democratic institutions; rather, it was a hierarchic society in which power was clearly inherited. At stake, then, in the Mapuche debate over institutions is this question: What do they want the future to be like? Should it be an autonomous future rooted in the past, or an autonomous future with a democratic, pluralist, and tolerant Mapuche society?. I attended several meetings were Mapuche (men and women, old and young) discussed the role of the

\(^{87}\) Azkintuwe [http://www.nodo50.org/azkintuwe](http://www.nodo50.org/azkintuwe)

\(^{88}\) Naguil (2005), for instance, in his paper on Mapuche self-determination, substitutes place names as follows: Kollerewe for Padre Las Casas; Chollcholl for Cholchol; Traytrayko for Nueva Imperial; Ralko for Alto Biobío; Mayulafken for Villarrica; Pukon for Pucón; Mariñena for Mariquina; Kurarewe for Curarehue; Mewin for Mehuin; Likanray for Licanray; Longkoche for Loncoche; and Konarüñü for Coñaripe.
church and NGOs in the movement and just how representative certain leaders were. Rural Mapuche often debate the pro and cons of working with academics and with urban Mapuche groups. Debated as well are the benefits and risks of letting outsiders (like me) participate in their activities.

For a time during my fieldwork I was joined by America, a young Mapuche woman working on gender issues. On our trip to the communities she told me:

“I am working with Mapuche women on seed exchange networks and we have campaigns to protect our native crops and raise awareness about the risks associated with the use of pesticides and fertilizers. But for us it is also about bringing women to the centre of Mapuche political mobilization.”

I asked people how they saw the contradictions in Mapuche discourses: To what extent were those discourses reproducing essentialist images? Pedro, the editor of Azkintuwe, made this observation:

“We need to make a more ‘qualitative jump’ as a movement, internally but also in relation to the state and Chilean society. The media have always portrayed the Mapuche as poor farmers and the only discussions are about conflict issues … How many terrorist attacks are committed, or how many lands have been occupied. We need spaces of debate where we can also discuss key topics like constitutional recognition and the educational system, and participate in debates about regional development, educational reforms, health programs, and so on. Otherwise we’ll continue to be subject to the state paternalist programs and the distorted images from the media.”

Young Mapuche have been educated in Western schools. They live in cities, immerse themselves in computers, eat fast food, and carry cellphones. The question remains: If the past is what legitimates their demand for autonomy, what do young Mapuche tell us about the future?

**The Transformative Politics of the Mapuche Movement**

The revitalization of the Mapuche movement may involve resistance, but it also involves reappropriation, reconstruction, and reinvention of identity and agency. As Mallon (2005) notes, what began as an effort to protest the privatization of community lands under the military dictatorship has evolved into a broad movement for cultural and political recognition and for
social justice. The process of negotiating with the state and other sectors (e.g., the forestry sector and NGOs) has revitalized Mapuche organizations. According to CONADI (see Comisión Verdad Histórica y Nuevo Trato 2004), more than 2,300 communities and roughly 1,000 indigenous associations have been given legal status—and this does not include non-formal organizations. Today there are more than thirty distinct Mapuche websites (Salazar 2004). Most of these are vehicles for “rebellious communication” (Downing 2001) and mobilization at the community level.

Neoliberalism has spread to almost every country in the world. It has done much to revitalize many pre-existing social movements by expanding old networks and creating new ones. The Mapuche network today has achieved a dynamism that reaches beyond specific objectives of the past. It has become a phenomenon in its own right, one that is revitalizing its members and empowering them to make new demands. For instance, some Mapuche are advocating organic farming, ecotourism, GMO-free farming, and biodiversity conservation; others are campaigning against neoliberal policies and free trade. Some Mapuche organizations have launched a campaign against the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) and have held alternative meetings in opposition to economic globalization. Alfredo, a member of Konapewan, told me that “Mapuche communities and organizations are working to recover their territory but this movement is not just political. It’s also a social, cultural and religious struggle.”

The revitalization of Mapuche culture is visible in other ways as well. For example, the Mapuche language was beginning to die out but is now being preserved. Alejandro Herrera, director of the Institute for Indigenous Studies in Temuco, noted during an interview that until recently, Mapuche parents avoided using their native language and encouraged their children to speak Spanish, because a Mapuche accent was a sign of backwardness. Now, on the contrary, young Mapuche are establishing Mapudungun language classes.

In Temuco, Mapuche university students have taken over abandoned properties and established communal homes. They have also founded movements to demand more access to education. Activists have opened a Mapuche pharmacy in Temuco to dispense traditional herbal remedies, which had been disappearing as a result of changes in land use and the impact of tree plantations. In the past few years, Mapuche have won mayoral and city council elections. The first presidential campaign by an indigenous leader, Aucán Huilcamán, was thwarted by strict electoral laws. Mapuche communities have formed tribal councils to modify local statutes and
are lobbying local governments for the return of communal lands. The movement’s revitalization is also reflected in the increasing number of Mapuche local and regional organizations working in the south and in Santiago.

**Conclusions**

This chapter began by introducing the Mapuche movement as a “new” social movement, one in which their discourses and demands reflected a shift away from class issues toward ethnic ones. The different Mapuche groups follow various political strategies but share the same general aims: constitutional recognition as a distinct group and the return of their traditional territories. Memories of the landscape and understandings of the past have emerged as central to the revitalization of the Mapuche movement. Memories of the past are used to legitimize indigenous claims to lands and resources; in that way, they empower Mapuche communities as they pursue territorial reconstruction. Processes of spatial and political consolidation have helped strength Mapuche culture and identity. As Hale and Millaman (2006, 302) note, the “return to the local” is a strategic move to enter spaces where the terms of struggle over representations of indigenous culture and rights are more advantageous. Nevertheless, Mapuche culture transcends the confines of territoriality to encompass a broader social space in which both rural and urban Mapuche have their place. Those who migrate to the city maintain close links with their communities of origin, frequently returning to join in activities and rituals of the life cycle (marriages, feasts, ceremonies). Identity is linked to this sense of belonging to a homeland. The drastic transformations in these traditional and transitional spaces have united the Mapuche in projects to reconstruct and rethink their identity and their relationship with the state.

While maintaining some strategic alliances with other groups, today’s Mapuche movement has distanced itself from political parties and claimed an independent agenda that highlights its own identity and demands as a separate ethnic group. The movement is in effect a network of local, national, and international organizations, which are differentiated by the strategies they follow and by the *caudillismo*[^89] of their leaders. The government and other sectors view this as a disadvantage for the movement, which clearly is fragmented and lacks a cohesive set of

---

[^89]: *Caudillismo* emerged within revolutionary movements in South America. Indigenous, mestizo, and creole leaders took on the role of *caudillo* at different times and in different places, developing local alliances into broader regional movements. See Mallon, 1995: Peasant and Nation, p. 143–46.
proposals; but this structure has also been strategically useful in the repressive circumstances the Mapuche must face (most Mapuche leaders have been imprisoned under antiterrorism laws). In some ways, the movement’s dynamism is a result of its multitude of resistance and political strategies.

Some organizations, such as Consejo de Todas las Tierras (Council for All Lands), played an important role in Chilean affairs during the return to democracy and successfully entered the political arena during the late 1990s. These groups focused on “recovering lands in conflict” and on speeding up negotiations with the government. Similarly, Coordinadora Arauco-Malleco focused on recovering lands, mainly by taking over those in the hands of forestry companies and large estate owners. Unlike Consejo de Todas las Tierras, this group has not been open to dialogue with the government. Meanwhile, local groups have been gaining much support in recent decades among Mapuche communities. A good example is Asociacion de Identidades Territoriales. Instead of promoting a unified ethnic discourse, this organization has embraced the principles of territoriality as these are linked to traditional organizational forms on ancestral territories.

So, Mapuche organizations lack a unified political position (Lavanchy 1999). That said, they all emphasize ethnicity and its territorial links instead of aligning themselves with peasant- or class-based movements. They also share the goal of regaining their lands on the basis that they are a distinct ethnic group with a right to self-determination.

Whatever strategies Mapuche organizations follow, they do not focus on particular isolated hotspots in the south of Chile; rather, their goal is to mobilize Mapuche throughout Chile to assert their identity as well as their territorial rights as the country’s original inhabitants. Their resistance strategies are generally political, but with a practical goal, which is to improve the daily lives of their members. For the Mapuche, land claims are not simply political; they also reflect the need for the Mapuche to control and develop their own resources. In that sense, they are contesting their marginalization and economic backwardness in both symbolic and material ways. An example is the “productive occupations” described earlier.

The Mapuche ethnic revival has arisen from a series of encounters and confrontations with the “Other.” As Handler (1994) puts it, identity is a cultural construction that is reinvented and reshaped in response to particular contexts. Some groups are more aware than others of
challenges to their identity and make deliberate choices to resist some changes and accept others; in this way they participate actively in processes of redefinition. Identity, for these groups, is always being transformed; it is constantly interacting with the past and the present as well as with the future and all its economic, social, and political challenges.
Chapter 7. Government Responses to Indigenous Demands: A New Deal with Old Rules

This chapter focuses on how Mapuche mobilization processes, and the consequent state responses, are shaping the social and environmental livelihood of indigenous peoples. I start by examining the conventional emphasis on “resistance” in studies of social movements and resource conflicts. I suggest that the political strategies followed by indigenous movements should be understood not solely as resistance to oppression but also as responses to changes in prevailing political and socio-economic conditions. I address some of the challenges that indigenous movements and nation-states are facing today with regard to embracing multicultural politics in a neoliberal context. This will provide a better lens for considering contemporary Mapuche land claims and development politics. I offer some ideas about how to rethink environmental conditions and about the significance of natural resource management for the land question.\(^90\)

Often, land granted by the government to Mapuche communities has not been developed owing to lack of resources. As a result, occupants practise subsistence farming or simply abandon their new plots in search of better opportunities. I will examine this problem from three perspectives. First, I analyze current policies adopted as part of the Chilean governments program on land restitution for indigenous people and the relationship of those policies to emerging indigenous subjectivities. Second, I analyze the effects of globalization and state intervention on indigenous resources, especially as this pertains to the principal obstacles preventing the government from integrating the social, economic, and cultural needs of indigenous groups into its programs and policies. Third, I discuss how government policies have focused on a land restitution program in tandem with a kind of “project-ism.”\(^91\) At no point are concerns for long-term environmental and cultural sustainability addressed through strategic planning.

\(^{90}\) My intent here is not to reduce the land question to a single issue, but rather to emphasize the importance of situating land struggles in specific historical contexts, taking account of the way various stakeholders and interests come into play, and impinge on one another, as people seek to access, control, defend, and exercise claims on land.

\(^{91}\) This idea of “proyectismo” has also been described by Latta (pers. comm) in his analysis of local politics in the Pehuenche communities of the Alto Bio-Bío. He uses the term to indicate how structures delivering state development assistance reshape the conditions that define political organization in...
Employing Foucault’s notion of governmentality (Foucault et al. 1991), I argue that the Mapuche have widely contested the state’s neoliberal policies and that, despite this, they have been drawn into a new set of governing strategies that are fundamentally neoliberal in character. This has encouraged the planting of exotic species (pine and eucalyptus), which very often have supplanted native forests. As a consequence, the Mapuche people’s relationship with the state, NGOs, and foreign aid donors has been reconfigured. This new mentality of government, which operates at both formal and informal levels of social and political interaction, employs coercive and co-optive measures to encourage Mapuche participation in the modernization project; meanwhile, long-standing problems of inequality and injustice with regard to land and resources continue to be neglected. I end the chapter with a discussion of the repressive nature of state responses to indigenous demands. The state’s indigenous policies have been coupled with heavy-handed police and legal actions against Mapuche individuals and organizations that oppose the occupation of their ancestral lands by large farm and forest owners.

**Understanding Resistance in the Broader Context of Resource Policy**

Upon reviewing both the state’s perspective and that of indigenous groups, the mechanisms for resolving land conflicts have failed to address either their historical evolution or the future implications of present-day policies. First, the Chilean state’s policy responses to Mapuche demands often involve land restitution programs, yet those programs are designed without regard for the shared identity and history of the Mapuche. The government has been returning lands to indigenous people for more than ten years, yet the Chilean Congress still has not approved a reform that would extend constitutional recognition to indigenous people. Second, indigenous communities, by reorienting leaders toward the exigencies of competing for and administering short-term projects.

As Brown has observed (1998), “resistance” is appearing more and more often in the titles and section heads of essays, dissertations, and articles. Worried that an emphasis on domination and conflict may soon overwhelm other facets of social life, such as cooperation and reciprocity, Brown questions the hegemony of resistance theories, which have monopolized the anthropological imagination. But I would note that this sort of attention to resistance is simply a mirror of the contentious political struggles that characterize our time.

92 As Brown has observed (1998), “resistance” is appearing more and more often in the titles and section heads of essays, dissertations, and articles. Worried that an emphasis on domination and conflict may soon overwhelm other facets of social life, such as cooperation and reciprocity, Brown questions the hegemony of resistance theories, which have monopolized the anthropological imagination. But I would note that this sort of attention to resistance is simply a mirror of the contentious political struggles that characterize our time.

people’s demands and their resistance strategies have not been taken into consideration, indicating little understanding on the government’s part of resource conflicts and their effects on local environments. I have also observed in the field that when land is restored to communities, it is not accompanied by the additional resources (be they economic, legal or technical support) required to sustain their social and natural livelihoods.

Most analyses of conflict and power (Pelusso & Watts, 2000) have focused on causal relationships between members of an oppressor group and people who are oppressed; not considered are the internal dynamics of social movements. Power does not operate in only one direction; rather, it circulates in such a way that subjects can also effect state policies. Hence, the political strategies followed by the Mapuche and the government’s subsequent responses, and so on, should be viewed as a continuity. In this regard, Ortner (1995, 176–77) points out that “resistors are doing more than simply producing a virtually mechanical re-action … They have their own politics.” I embrace the conclusions of those scholars who have found that indigenous resistance strategies and discourses reflect ongoing processes of construction and negotiation—processes whereby identity becomes a form of resistance to the cultural, economic, and political impacts of colonization, discrimination, modernization, and globalization (Handler 1994; Kearney and Varese 1995; Nederveen 1996).

I define indigenous resistance as the constant and permanent will of a people to systematically protect the unique aspects of the culture with which it identifies. Indigenous resistance involves rejecting domination and refusing to accept its imposition. It is an attitude of creative defence, one that encompasses overt and covert acts of defiance against marginalization, discrimination, and displacement imposed by local elites (Korovkin 2000). Resistance strategies evolve in response to changes in the prevailing social structure as well as to particular threats to indigenous people’s existence at different points in time. Indigenous groups do not adhere strictly to one strategy; rather, they use tactics that are neither fixed nor predetermined nor limited and that take a multitude of forms. These tactics can be legal (institutional), insurrectional (occupations, marches, strikes), or violent (armed attacks, arson campaigns, self-defence actions) as well as accommodative (operating within Western political structures) or negotiative (working within state institutions). As shown in Figure 7.1, conflict, negotiation, dialogue, and accommodation are all part of a complex process by means of which the dominating power has long maintained practices and beliefs that have come to seem normal and natural.
Figure 7.1. The relationship between objectives and political strategies

**Accommodation**

Mechanisms of co-optation (compensation, bribes)
Creating alliances.
Lobbying.
Discussion/documentation of indigenous situation
Exchanges between different Indigenous and non-indigenous groups
Global actions and international campaigns
Interference with democratic participatory government

**Peacful**
Education campaigns
Community organization
Creating information systems
Lawsuits, reforms
Participation in local and national public hearings
Participating in general assemblies
Local mobilization\(^{94}\)
Publications
Protests, marches, demonstrations, letter-writing campaigns
Disrupting business and delaying operations
Land occupations
Blockades
Land use changes\(^{95}\)

**Violent**
Arson campaigns
self-defence actions
Armed attacks
Open revolts

**Refusal**
That is, remaining in the same region after a threat. In other words, instead of fleeing to a city, a threatened group, leader, or community would travel to a safer community in the same region. Doing so would enable them to continue their organization work and strengthen their links in the region, besides addressing the immediate threat to them (to some extent).

\(^{95}\) Cutting woodlands to plant crops (productive occupations).
As Scott (1985) notes, excessive attention has been paid to unusual incidents of open revolt by peasants, and too little to ordinary, everyday forms of resistance and their symbolic and ideological underpinnings. Moreover, I would add, that insufficient understanding of social movements and resistance strategies may blind people to the micropolitics of specific situations. Most Mapuche leaders recognize the importance of following diverse political strategies with regard to both communities and governments (international ones included), but they also realize how hard it is for Mapuche families to survive in a system that is biased so strongly in the ruling elite’s favour. Rural Mapuche, as a matter of simple survival, may well embrace priorities other than forest conservation, agro-forestry, or soil and water conservation. It has often been asserted that these people’s priorities become hospitals and schools so that their children can be healthy and educated and by this means escape the dead end of subsistence farming. Rural-to-urban migration can easily be viewed as silent testimony to the fact that rural people cannot be expected to adopt programs whose outcome will be the institutionalization of subsistence farming (Anderson and Catterson 1996).

As I will explain in the following sections, this is reinforced especially by those indigenous development programs (including agricultural and credit programs) that further the interests solely of the forest industry. The resistance strategies followed by indigenous communities and the government’s responses to them are the result of ongoing negotiations that reflect a genuine democratic opening and persistent authoritarian practices (Karl 1995).

**Resistance Movements in the Context of “Neoliberal Multiculturalism”**

Across Latin America, democratization and political liberalization has provided new opportunities for civil society actors to participate in and contest state processes (Yashar 2005). At the same time, neoliberal policies have significantly altered the economic and social contexts in which those actors are struggling. Most neoliberal states have embraced a new process of democratization, as a result of which indigenous rights have become part of the agenda of most Latin American countries—hence, the opening of new spaces of participation. But at the same time, discourses and practices of multiculturalism may place a glass ceiling on the aspirations of indigenous groups, by influencing their political participation in ways that imbue them with rationalities that have to do mainly with free-market integration (Postero 2005).
There is no logic fault in the fact that Latin American governments are turning towards multicultural politics even while embracing neoliberal economic policies. As Hale (2005) notes, neoliberalism’s cultural project entails proactive recognition of certain cultural rights and the concomitant rejection of more sensitive ones. This process revolves around the contradictions inherent in what Hale calls neoliberal multiculturalism, which involves promoting cultural and ethnic diversity at the same time as neoliberal state restructuring. Hale (2002, 2004) criticizes government strategies that support multiculturalism and that endorse certain indigenous demands but that do not take more radical approaches to contradict broader processes of neoliberalization. In his view, powerful political and economic actors use “neoliberal multiculturalism … to affirm cultural difference, while retaining the prerogative to discern between cultural rights consistent with the ideal of liberal, democratic pluralism, and cultural rights inimical to that ideal” (2002, 491). By compromising on indigenous rights, I would add, neoliberal states are able to facilitate and advance their own political and economic agendas. It is not neoliberal reforms and policies but neoliberalism as an ideological system that predominates today; furthermore, the authoritarian democracy with which that system corresponds has caught resistance movements in the dilemma of neoliberal multiculturalism. In the Chilean case, indigenous rights are permissible under the rubric of multiculturalism, but only insofar as they do not threaten national development or a unitary national identity. This explains why the government has acknowledged cultural diversity through a series of multicultural social policies—especially through health and education programs—but is refusing to reform the constitution to bring about what Van Cott (2000) refers to as “multicultural constitutionalism.” Since 1992, Chile’s Congress has repeatedly rejected proposals for a constitutional amendment that would recognize indigenous peoples as a “pueblo”—a term that would legitimate their territorial political rights and not simply their rights as an indigenous group. Congress has also resisted pressure on this point from the international community including a refusal to sign the International Labor Organization’s Convention 169 with regard to indigenous rights (ILO 1989).

Hale (2002, 2004) discusses the inherent drawbacks of “neoliberal multiculturalism.” First, he notes that it allows indigenous organizations only as long as they do not acquire enough power to undermine state authority and the privileges of political elites. Second, it cedes rights to indigenous people, but does so in ways that remake them as subjects less likely to frontally challenge neoliberal economic and political policies (see also, Postero 2001). The new subject
created through neoliberal multiculturalism is the “indio permitido,” that is, the “authorized Indian” (Hale and Millaman 2006). This concept reinforces the idea of “good” Indians, who do not contradict broader socio-economic policy frameworks and who seek integration with the dominant system, and “bad” Indians, who claim ancestral rights and resist assimilation. As the authors note, “the ‘indio permitido’ is a rights-bearing collective subject, a negotiated space with prerogatives, but also with clear limits that make effective governance possible” (ibid., 284).

Another problem with neoliberal multiculturalism is that it tends to benefit and empower some indigenous groups while marginalizing the rest; put another way, it controls indigenous collectivities by dividing them. As Postero (2005) notes, indigenous people respond to all this in different ways: sometimes they cooperate with neoliberal governments, taking advantage of the political openings provided by new programs; other times, they simply endure the changes along with everyone else.

The Mapuche movement is an example of this pattern: the movement has fractured politically and will likely stay fractured. The Mapuche lack a united organization to address their common demands, and as a result, the state has been able to co-opt certain leaders and negotiate selectively with certain organizations. This situation has been contested by some Mapuche organizations, which in turn has led to a revival of their culture and traditional political structures. One interesting result is that some indigenous organizations are shaking off state control and developing a more clearly articulated indigenous identity as they work with other indigenous cultural organizations (Dietz 2004). This process has been helped along by international NGOs and the global discourse about indigenous rights (Brysk 2000). The new indigenous movements are aware of the pitfalls of ethnic essentialist discourses and are developing new ways to intervene in local governments. Even so, whatever their demands for self-determination and recognition as ethnic groups, they find themselves compelled to address conditions that have been imposed by the state and the global markets in ways that affect community life.

The plight of the Mapuche and indigenous groups in Chile more broadly is in held back by the absence of any formal recognition of indigenous rights in Chile; that is, the constitution does not recognize indigenous people as a discrete people whose rights are constitutionally protected. The government has responded to indigenous land claims in contradictory ways. For example, it has established the Indigenous Land Fund Program (FTAI), whose budget increased by 40 percent in
2007, yet it continues to support private sector investments in megaprojects in the IX Region and is taking repressive measures against indigenous resistance (Mella 2007).

While constitutional recognition has not been forthcoming, indigenous groups have benefited from a limited set of new legislations. These include the signing of the Pacto de Nueva Imperial in 1989, indigenous groups have made progress. October 1993, for example, saw the promulgation of Law 19.253 (on the Protection, Promotion, and Development of the Indigenous People of Chile). However, as stated in the report “The Chilean Commission on Truth and the New Deal,” most government bodies are interpreting that law in ways that prioritize the country’s economic interests over those of indigenous people. One of the best examples of the Chilean government’s unconditional support for investment projects detrimental to indigenous rights is the Bio-Bio Dam (see Johnston 2004). Here, the energy company ENDESA (owned by Enersis, a Spanish consortium) has built and is operating a large-scale hydroelectric dam on the Bio Bio River. The project was launched with the construction of the Panguile Dam; ENDESA then began building a second dam, the Ralco. A group of Pehuenche families and NGOs challenged the second dam in the Chilean courts, arguing that the 1993 Indigenous Peoples Law stated that indigenous people’s lands could not be sold without their freely given consent. ENDESA countered by referencing the 1984 National Energy Law, which allows the sale of all lands for the purposes of energy development for country’s benefit. In 2002 the Chilean Supreme Court supported the ruling of the Court of Appeals of Santiago in rejecting a resources protection claim made by the Pehuenche families. The court favoured ENDESA even though both CONADI and CONAMA had rejected the project’s initial proposals. Several Pehuenche families continued to live on the land, defying government orders to evacuate. Having exhausted all legal avenues within the Chilean legal framework, the attorney for the Pehuenche families brought the case before the Inter-American Court of Human Rights. According to two lawyers I interviewed

96 http://www.conadi.cl
97 http://www.origenes.cl
98 Informe Comisión Verdad Histórica y Nuevo Trato 2003.
(Rodrigo Lillo and Jose Aylwin), there is evidence that the Pehuenche families were pressured into negotiating.\textsuperscript{99}

The project was beset with political pressures and administrative irregularities.\textsuperscript{100} Government officials assigned to review the Ralco project opposed it on the basis of environmental and social impact assessments; they were soon dismissed. The dam project was launched without the consent of the Pehuenche families who were legally entitled to the land, and it continued despite constitutional provisions protecting indigenous land rights. To accelerate the land exchange process, in conformity with the 1993 Indigenous Development Act, the government of Eduardo Frei Ruiz-Tagle forced two directors and other board members of CONADI to resign (personal interview with former director of CONADI).

The Ralco Dam and the compensation mechanisms arranged by ENDESA amounted to yet another violation of indigenous people’s rights. This was one of the cases condemned by Rodolfo Stavenhagen, the UN special rapporteur for Chile’s indigenous peoples. ENDESA is responsible for the anomalies relating to this megaproject, for which indigenous people have borne the costs. For example, Victor Ancalaf, a Mapuche leader and spokesperson (interviewed for this project while still in jail), was convicted of “terrorist” attacks on ENDESA’s machinery and was sentenced to ten years’ imprisonment.

The Project Dependency Dilemma: Coerciveness and Co-optation of Assistance Programs

Negotiations regarding indigenous policies in Chile are ongoing at every level of government (be they about consultation with minor level state agencies or discussion about macro level land rights). One result of this is that more and more indigenous people are being co-opted by the state’s development bureaucracy (discussed in detail below). Some negotiations focus on compensation—for example, indigenous people are offered schools or farm equipment in return for ceasing their political mobilization. In some cases, NGOs and consultants with pro-

\textsuperscript{99} For more details, see Roberto Morales Urra, \textit{Ralco: Modernidad o etnocidio en territorio pewenche} (Temuco: Instituto de Estudios Indigenas, Universidad de la Frontera, 1998); and Domingo Namuncura, \textit{Ralco: ¿Represa o Pobreza?} (Santiago: LOM, 1999).

indigenous mandates become agents of the state, in that state programs recruit “community members” who are willing to working within the state's agenda so as to procure the available development funds. However, this process is controlled by bureaucrats, and as a result, indigenous community members (and especially the powerless) have said they benefit only in limited ways. Several study informants mentioned, for instance, their perceptions that the current state-indigenous recruitment actions were co-optive, paternalistic, and manipulative, as well as counter to goals of autonomy.

Recent critiques the state inspired by Foucault’s concept of governmentality¹⁰¹ (Foucault et al. 1991; Shore and Wright 1997) suggest that there are two sides to the participatory discourses used by development programs. The essence of these critiques is that discourses have a coercive power that encourages subjects to accept the legitimacy of the state’s institutions and strategies. Miller and Rose (1993) suggest that governmentality is apparent in the way the state institutions operate. Thus, the term is not just about how the government operates or which governing strategies it uses; it also encompasses how and what people who are governed think about the way they are governed (Dean 1999). The governmentality lens is especially useful for analyzing transformations of the welfare state linked to "neoliberal" forms of subjectivity associated with welfare-to-work policies that target disadvantaged social groups—in this case, indigenous people. As Cooke and Kothari (2001) have noted, the rhetoric of participation and empowerment used in development programs—rhetoric that promises empowerment and appropriate development—has a strong tendency to coerce people into participating in a predetermined agenda.

Over the past decade, Chile’s indigenous people have become increasingly dependent on government funding (Haughney 2007). When reviewing government policies relating to indigenous people, one soon gleans that elements of these programs and practices combine to result in the exercise of a particular kind of power over people and natural resources. An “indigenous elite” is funded through salaries and grants, and families are supported through welfare policies and assistance programs. This sort of exercise of power can come to pervade development programs. Ferguson (1994) suggests that many of these policies work to extend

¹⁰¹ Foucault, Morris, and Patton (1979, 20) describe “governmentality” as the ensemble formed by the institutions, procedures, analyses, reflections, calculations, and tactics that allow the exercise of this very specific albeit complex form of power, which has as its target population, as its principal form of knowledge political economy, and as its essential technical means apparatuses of security.
bureaucratic power over new state “subjects” precisely by avoiding issues of power. Power is exercised in the guise of assistance, which renders its operations invisible.

Policies towards indigenous people in Chile are tied to a public assistentialism\textsuperscript{102}, a term amongst Latin American scholars, which refers here to widespread political patronage system embedded in indigenous development programs. In the case of the Mapuche, these programs—including the FTAI—are expected to reduce conflict by improving communities’ living standards. However, as also discussed by Castro (2005), the provision of assistance often conceals the broader political utility of such programs, in that they help inculcate the ruling national ideology at the local level while dividing grassroots movements.

My research suggests that political alliances and negotiations have become part of survival strategies. Often the result is various forms of co-optation and a consequent reduction in the capacity of grassroots organizations to influence social policy. Negotiations between indigenous groups and the Chilean government have come to be characterized by passive forms of paternalistic clientelism;\textsuperscript{103} machinery, technical supports, schools, or community centres are exchanged for the demobilization of radical political elements. Durston (2002) describes this form of clientelism as bureaucratic and technocratic; yet it often has clearly political impacts—among other things, it sows conflict among communities, the state, and private landowners in the forestry and agriculture sectors.

In the Mapuche case, political power is also exerted through interventionist state policies and development programs. These interventions are based on rules, norms, and procedures that empower bureaucrats or technocrats to design programs that benefit indigenous communities (as “personal favours” to clients) and that at the same time reduce political tensions.

Interventionist and assistentialist programs often distract participants from more crucial issues, such as the constitutional recognition of indigenous people. Moreover, those programs tend to

---

\textsuperscript{102} Assisting is a practice of giving assistance, generally in the form of development programs, which foster dependency instead of providing the tools for individuals and communities to achieve self-determination and the ability to overcome their problems. This term is widely used by Latin American scholars but does not have an English equivalent.

\textsuperscript{103} According to Forewaker (2001, 845), “clientelism” refers to the relationship between patron and client, and by extension to systems of political power that are constructed and reproduced through webs of patron–client relationships, which depend on individual exchanges of protection and favour for loyalty, support, and votes.
focus on attracting funds for still more programs and projects. Little (2005), referring to state projects in general, describes this as a fever of “projectism”, that is, as a specific modality of development wherein the daily activities undertaken by indigenous people, such as the defence of their territory, the production of food, and political organization, need to be “translated” into “project format” before a government program will finance them. Even so, it is important to note that empowerment and co-optation processes are nothing new for indigenous leaders and that they need to be understood as a matter of give and take. During the interviews I conducted, I found that indigenous people’s willingness to apply for project grants reflects a desire to participate in development and gain direct access to its benefits. To succeed at this, though, they have to play by the rules of projectism.

This sort of co-optation happens in many communities. Furthermore, development programs have the potential to create an arena in which relations of power are worked out and reassessed instead of being depoliticized (Doolittle 2003). Most of the Mapuche leaders I interviewed recognized the importance of following diverse political strategies—including a community-based front, the government front, and the international front (see Chapter 6). They were also sensitive to the social and economic difficulties faced by many Mapuche families.

Rural Mapuche, recognizing that they will never achieve prosperity on crowded and overexploited lands, may increasingly embrace other priorities, such as access to education and health, in the hope that their children will escape the dead end of subsistence farming. As Haughney (2005) has noted, assistance programs have not ameliorated Mapuche poverty. Rural-to-urban migration is silent testimony to the fact that rural people cannot be expected to show interest in programs whose outcome will be the institutionalization of subsistence farming. As I explain below, indigenous development programs, credit programs, and farming assistance only reinforce the interests of the forestry sector.

**Politics of Land Restitution and the Development Agenda**

According to Aylwin (2005), between 1994 and 2005 the FTAI purchased 75,722 hectares and transferred more than 180,000 hectares of public land to indigenous communities, benefiting 9,021 families in all. In addition, 6,350 families were able to obtain legal title to their property (119,748 hectares). Thus the total land purchased and transferred to indigenous people was
384,150 hectares, most of this in VIII, IX, and X Regions.\textsuperscript{104} This amount included purchases of private lands as well as the transfer of public lands through “regularization” processes.\textsuperscript{105} Over the past decade, through the FTAI’s Indigenous Water and Land Fund, the government has invested more than US$50 million in buying land and creating special programs for indigenous people. Despite these promising statistics, the FTAI program is advancing slowly relative to demand and is still underfunded. So it has not been possible to extend it to some of the greatest areas of need. This has led to discontent among Mapuche organizations and sometimes as well to conflicts within communities. The problem is exacerbated by the mismanagement of funds by CONADI, especially as it relates to anomalies in land purchases for Mapuche communities. Corruption among CONADI agents, lawyers involved in the land transactions, and real estate agents has been widely reported by the media.\textsuperscript{106} According to two lonkos (chiefs) of the organization Communities in Conflict of Collipulli interviewed in 2006,

“Mapuche individuals have been contacted by CONADI’s personnel and asked to illegally occupy certain ‘fundos’ (land properties) in order to accelerate the purchases. In return, they are offered 10 percent of the selling price, while another percentage goes to other parties involved in the transaction.”

Mapuche organizations have also contested the mechanisms by which the government program allocates resources. The lands in question have not been expropriated, even though forest companies and large farmers obtained title to them during the years of the military regime. Instead of restoring them legally to communities, CONADI has bought land at above-market prices—sometimes at twice the original value—and allocated these expenditures as operational costs.

The FTAI bureaucracy has been accused of mismanagement; at the same time, the expectations of communities are high. Also, because the FTAI is an external fund, its finances are managed by two government agencies—CERPLAC and MIDEPLAN—which leads to task duplication

\textsuperscript{104} CONADI, August 2005. \url{http://www.conadi.cl}
\textsuperscript{105} “Land regularization” generally refers to the legal and administrative process of delivering land title to communities. This includes identifying and surveying the lands in question, completing the necessary administrative requirements, and ensuring meaningful, enforceable recognition of the land title. See Andrew Crain, (2004).
(personal interview with CONADI’s director). For example, the program requires that assessments be made of community needs, yet other government agencies have already conducted these. Similar problems have been encountered with fresh funds arriving from the European Union, which are earmarked for environmental projects in IX Region. According to MIDEPLAN personnel (personal interview), more than US$2 million of EU money will be spent on needs assessment processes even though thousands of reports already exist detailing the needs of IX Region. In addition, approvals for expenditures have to be signed by multiple government offices, causing further bureaucratic delays.

So funds for purchasing lands are in short supply. To make things worse, beneficiaries are selected in an arbitrary manner. Political rather than technical criteria drive the distribution of land to indigenous communities. This works against the development of self-sustaining social policies that correspond to local needs. Accordingly, a CONADI program officer closely involved with the land restitution program and whom I interviewed told me that political negotiations over land are influenced mainly by three factors:

- **The conflict profile of the community.** The objective is to appease those communities that initiate conflict and that in so doing threaten the “internal security of the state,” producing instability for regional investments, especially for the forestry sector. The government has emphasized in the media that there will be no negotiation with communities that resort to violence in land disputes; in practice, though, the most radical communities are the ones prioritized in land negotiations (which are usually conducted in secret).

- **The political affiliation of Mapuche leaders.** During the military regime, the various Mapuche community organizations became affiliated with various political parties and party factions. Mapuche organizations tried to maintain their own agendas but were often forced to tow a party line. Only a handful of Mapuche organizations played a significant independent role during the democratic transition, which was a highly politicized time. For example, the National Council of Indian Peoples of Chile, comprising twenty-seven Indian groups, exerted considerable pressure for constitutional change. Five other Mapuche NGOs played a more developmental role. According to Marimán (1994), towards the end of 1989 those NGOs began bringing together the existing Mapuche organizations with the goal of educating and mobilizing the Mapuche nation. A different CONADI official that that mentioned above reported to me during an interview that Mapuche political activists and communities that
worked together with the current government (the Concertación coalition) against the military dictatorship were at the top of the list of beneficiaries of CONADI’s Land Fund Program.

- **The symbolic meaning of land.** Communities do not always demand lands that they inhabited in the past. Instead, they seek to claim emblematic sites where a long-standing conflict between the community and large landowners has gone on for decades—Fundo Rucananco, Fundo El Rincón, Fundo Alaska, and Fundo Santa Rosa, to mention a few. As land is often endowed with cultural significance, its recovery can be an important means to reassert lost patrimony. This reclamation process is motivated by the desire to reconnect with an *idea* of the land as guarded in collective memory.\(^\text{107}\) Land compensation is an outlet for restorative nostalgia, a means to reconstruct symbolic spaces, conquer time, and break the territorial hegemony that forestry companies have imposed on ancestral territories. The symbolic meaning of these lands seems evident in the fact that after a transfer, the recipients immediately change the name of the site—usually from a Spanish Catholic one to a Mapuche traditional one—and hang a wood-carved sign at the entrance.

### Limitations and Obstacles of State Responses to Indigenous Demands

In addition to the irregularities in land purchases, there are more fundamental problems with the government’s response to indigenous demands. In particular, the state has shown a significant lack of willingness to integrate the social, economic, and cultural needs of indigenous groups into its programs and policies. Below, I outline the main weaknesses of the state’s responses to indigenous demands and explain how its ongoing resistance has led to a number of outcomes, both predictable and not, that are affecting people’s environments and livelihoods.

First, the homogenizing character of Chile’s constitution and the state’s refusal to recognize indigenous populations as distinct peoples—as a “pueblo”—is perpetuating a political climate that facilitates and even promotes assimilation. Efforts to develop effective policies are hampered by the Chilean government’s inability to truly integrate Mapuche ideas about development, family, education, production, and so on. Jaime Andrade, MIDEPLAN’s subsecretary and a former director of CONADI, has commented that

\(^{107}\) See also Gordon, Gurdian and Hale, 2003.
“the problem is that public institutions are not ready for these matters … Governmental instruments are too rigid to look after indigenous issues; the instruments are not pertinent. People from INDAP work with the communities the same way they work with any other campesinos [peasants], therefore they can’t take action in a pertinent manner.”

A second problem is the state’s centralized approach to social policy. In the south, both communities and local government agencies feel geographically distant from the government’s headquarters as well as politically marginalized. Policies are developed and implemented in Santiago, with little room for local variations in program delivery. Community leaders are usually compelled to travel to Santiago to seek resolution of their demands. This is exacerbated by negotiation processes that lack openness and transparency. And tied to all of this is the exclusivity of many government policies, which target certain types of communities for aid at the expense of others. A common result is competition among communities for government money, which explains why many Mapuche leaders view state initiatives as the state’s own tools for dividing communities.

With the Origenes program,108 which is financed by the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), the government seems to have tried to address some of these problems. Program officers were appointed to link the program to communities and to foster effective participation. The hope was that communities would articulate their needs and aspirations, which in turn would serve as the basis for assistance. However, many communities felt cut off from the program, while others developed too high expectations of the financial support they would receive. As a consequence, the program became “monetarized,” with discussions turning into negotiations over what each community member would get. A crisis soon developed within the program—relating to its goals, participatory mechanisms, management, and logistics—that led to conflicts within the participating communities. According to some who benefited from the program, negotiations over funding stimulated rivalries among potential beneficiaries, which led to divisions within communities:

108The program “Origenes,” which supports Aymara, Atacameño, and Mapuche peoples in rural Chile, was launched in 2001. The objective of this US$133 million program is to “promote development ‘with identity’ by attempting to improve quality of life through initiatives and projects proposed by the communities themselves that seek to rescue their cultural traditions. The program includes intercultural health care, bilingual education, productive development, creation of new job opportunities, and reinforcement of community institutions.” http://www.origenes.cl
“We were all working together in the movement as an organized community but now many people don’t even talk to each other. I think that was exactly the purpose of this program--make us compete against each other for money and projects.”

The conditions imposed by state programs have also disrupted traditional Mapuche organizations. As Castro (2005) notes, rural communities and their networks have been weakened or divided as a consequence of the Indigenous Law, which extends CONADI the right to designate communities as “indigenous”—a legal status that is a prerequisite for receiving “special credit plans, capitalization systems and aid grants” (Article 23, Indigenous Law) from the development fund. The same law requires that an indigenous community comprise at least ten people of legal age (Article 10). This is an attempt by the state to define indigenous identity and to shape subjectivity according to its own interests. As indigenous people acquiesce to this process, they become indigenous subjects of a particular kind. Members of rural communities who oppose government policies are in effect refusing to let themselves be labelled as part of a “rural community.” Meanwhile, those who do acquiesce receive benefits, and this generates deep divisions within the community. Indigenous associations, which according to the law are “voluntary groups [of] at least twenty-five indigenous people” (Article 36), operate in the same way. Moreover, before land negotiations can begin, the government requires that the community appoint a president, who will represent the community as a “functional chief” instead of the traditional lonko. This “state indigenism” has resulted in a new leadership structure, one that has replaced traditional structures. As Castro (2005, 120) notes, “this feature has enabled local leaders to assume authority over some lands with historical or fictitious authority, but it has subordinated them to political parties.”

In this way, government programs often seem to encourage intracommunity conflicts. Yet the communities affected do have urgent needs, so most of the time they accept government assistance. Yet at the same time, because of the problems outlined above, they profoundly distrust CONADI, other government institutions, and certain militants in the political parties. Almost everyone I spoke to during my fieldwork expressed significant distrust, which has created significant problems for those indigenous leaders, intellectuals, and activists who are seeking to challenge the dominant political and economic system even as they are compelled to work within it. A number of Mapuche professionals who work with communities emphasized this point: they had little choice but work for the government, but when they did they were
excoriated for it. Other Mapuche called them *yanaconas* ("traitors") or *comepanes* (bread eaters)—a pejorative term referring to Mapuche activists employed directly by government agencies such as clinics, universities, or CONADI offices. Carmen, a Mapuche social worker, described her own situation:

“I work as a social worker in the health service but I also work actively during our protests and marches. We often meet in clandestine places as some of our peñis [brothers] are constantly chased by the police ... I’m often questioned by other members of the movement, especially elders from the countryside, about my position and they often label me as a *comepan* because I work for the government, but I believe many changes can also be done within the system.”

Especially critical of young Mapuche leaders are the older radicals, who make a living from subsistence agriculture and who portray some of the newer generation as disloyal. Even so, young Mapuche activists can usually find ways to apply their education in ways that support the Mapuche movement. They understand the limitations of working “within the system,” but they also see that system as the right place to be in order to make structural changes. The traditional leaders question the younger leaders’ involvement in the public system as well as their political tactics. All of this suggests how heterogeneous local communities and social movements are. A common agenda is difficult to find not only because of differences in age and spatial location (i.e., urban versus rural), but also because of the influence of more traditional networks. A former member of the Coordinadora Arauco Malleco pointed out that

“the break-up of the [CAM] was a consequence of other issues. What happened is that some sectors of the Coordinadora with much more extreme positions took control of the organization and started to make decisions about who will serve and who won’t. They were mainly urban people—from here and from Santiago—rather than from the rural areas. If you notice, most of the traditional *lonkos* of the Coordinadora in Traiguen aren’t with them.”

When asked about other organizations within the movement, most people expressed respect and solidarity. Even regarding organizations that had recently divided, a clear distinction between friendships and political positions was usually drawn. When I asked a former member of CAM why the organization had fragmented, he replied:
“Some people said they betrayed the movement … that they sold themselves. And that’s wrong, because I was also a member of the Coordinadora at that time. We founded it with Victor and other people and we always agreed that the negotiations would be a matter of each territorial area. That means, if land restitution was discussed, it was stupid not to sit down with the government and talk about the transfer of those ‘fundos.’”

A third factor hindering the Chilean state’s response to indigenous demands—which also relates to problems of centralization and non-transparency—is the lack of capacity building and intersectoral coordination among different governmental organizations dealing with indigenous issues. According to an interview with the former subsecretary of MIDEPLAN,

“intersectoral coordination is a drama because each institution feels very competent and therefore not open for suggestions from other agencies. On the other hand, when Mapuche people go to the health service, agricultural agency, or other state agency, they are immediately referred to CONADI as if we were the only ones who have to deal with anything that has to do with a Mapuche.”

The government is addressing some of these issues and is looking for ways to incorporate indigenous needs into other government agencies. The National Institute of Agricultural Development (INDAP), for instance, has committed itself to developing an “Origen” instrument as part of the broader Origenes program, precisely in order to address the specific requirements of Mapuche communities—requirements that are usually different from those of other rural communities.

Land restitution policies established by the government to acquire land for indigenous people provide for private ownership of parcels of land but not for the return of former communal lands. In Chile, private property rights verge on the sacred, and the state has strengthened its judicial system to protect those rights. Private property is viewed as a pillar of sustained economic growth, because for companies to thrive, they need guarantees that their property will not be taken from them. The various sectoral laws facilitate and protect rights over resources that have traditionally been communal property. These issues have been complicated by court cases involving groundwater, subsoil, and coastal resources (Toledo 1996). As noted in the report of the special rapporteur on the rights of Chile’s indigenous people (Stavenhagen 2003), under Chilean law the regulations governing water, the subsoil, and maritime and lake resources are
completely independent of those governing land ownership; moreover, rights to “ownership” and “use” may be granted freely by the state to anyone who applies for them. As a consequence, concessions for most of the springs and streams in indigenous areas have been granted to third parties, including the owners of forest plantations. This has also affected coastal and lakeside communities, which are facing the loss of their traditional right to extract coastal resources. Similarly, many water concessions have been granted for mine production on indigenous lands.

A fourth problem is that the FTAI as implemented by CONADI does not list any environmental criteria. The FTAI has become highly politicized and in the process has failed to establish sustainability-based criteria for the lands being purchased or transferred. Nor has it developed a participative plan for resource management, transfer of technology, or productivity increases. Of the lands restored, 92.6 percent receive no financial or technical assistance; as a result, they are being underutilized. Only 12,000 hectares have received assistance from the Programa de Apoyo Predial (PAP), a technical support program established by CONADI for VIII, IX, and X Regions. Lack of support has made these lands less productive and hindered their economic development for the beneficiaries. As a consequence, many families have been compelled to harvest the remaining forest for commercial purposes or for constructing their homes; others have left the land they have reclaimed in search of work or have rented it to those who do have the necessary technology and agricultural inputs. When assistance is available, it is often incompatible with traditional Mapuche practices. According to documents obtained from Fundación Instituto Indígena, which implements PAP projects, 74 of the 84 properties transferred by CONADI are in IX Region and included in the PAP program; of these, only a handful are being used for agriculture. Almost 40 percent of these lands are considered suitable mainly for forestry or have degraded soil. Though these lands may be productive for agriculture, harvest cycles may take up to twenty years; this runs counter to Mapuche practices, which generally are based on annual agricultural cycles and are oriented towards self-consumption. The lands earmarked for crops and grazing often turn out to be unproductive because of other variables such as soil quality, water scarcity, and lack of irrigation.

An additional problem faces those Mapuche communities that have been selected to participate in the state's land redistribution program: communities are not necessarily offered land close to the areas they already inhabit; they may be required to move to a different climatic or topographic zone and to leave behind important social networks. In many such cases, families
delay moving because of difficulties arranging transportation, productive resources at the new site, and access to clinics and schools. The difficulties families experience in adapting to a new environment are especially severe when conditions force them to change their forms of production (e.g., from cattle raising to wheat planting). Many of CONADI’s field agents are aware of these problems and want to help, but their mandate does not permit it. Budgets and workloads revolve around purchasing land; they do not address the need to gather relevant ethnographic data (to ensure that the purchased land matches people’s needs) or to provide support after the purchase. Only after MIDEPLAN’s last report, which concerned the FTAI program and productive development in transferred lands, did CONADI stop buying deforested lands. Such lands have high costs of production, which most communities cannot afford.

“Miracle Projects” and the Professionalization of Development

Indigenous people have to deal not only with regimes imposed by nation-state policies but also with multilateral organizations such as the World Bank, the IDB, and transnational corporations. The latter often approach indigenous communities seeking consent to carry out local investment and resource exploitation projects (MacKay 2004). Because of the asymmetrical power relations in play, indigenous communities are being subjected to new forms of governance in which multinational institutions hold great influence over policies and initiatives. Frequently, infrastructural and extractive projects arrive coupled with coercive programs that are masked as aid and loans. In this way, indigenous communities are absorbed into a relationship of dependence, indebtedness, and unbalanced business agreements.

When their plots offer low yields, Mapuche farmers aren’t able to rotate crops to prevent soil exhaustion and erosion. They then have to purchase inputs such as improved seed and fertilizers, or take out special loans when new production techniques are required. Low commodity prices for traditional crops are a serious problem for farmers, because it means they have to purchase food that they were once able to produce by themselves. This was explained by Rafael, a Mapuche farmer from Collipulli: “Many government programs come with aid, but what they are actually doing is transforming our subsistence systems according to the needs of the market … and that doesn’t solve our problems in the long term. They encourage the use of improved seeds

107 Personal interview with FTAI department in Temuco and former Director of CONADI; see also Ministerio de Hacienda—DIPRES, “Evaluación en profundidad del fondo de tierras y aguas indígenas,” Universidad de Chile, Departamento de Ingenieria, Santiago, 2001.
and fertilizers until the land gets used only for those products and then we need to borrow money
to buy more and more agricultural inputs, otherwise the land doesn’t produce.”

NGOs, both national and international, also influence development policy. NGOs duplicate the
patterns established by government policies: they inject themselves into existing political and
economic systems and build on pre-existing governance models (Brosius 1999; Ferguson 1994).
Development programs tend to be constrained by organizational structures, international donors,
knowledge premises, project designs, and budgets. Often during the process, access is limited to
certain locations, employment on project activities is controlled, and local political organizations
are transformed. Below I discuss some of the impacts of all this.

To obtain funding, NGOs have to build strong ties with donors; in the process, local initiatives
are often co-opted and NGOs have to adjust their own agendas to reflect those of institutions in
developed countries (McDaniel 2002). Concepts such as forest certification, sustainability,
gender equity, and community-based development have been embraced by international aid
agencies; aid-receiving communities are then compelled to embrace them as well. In the
Mapuche case, many of these programs are tied as well to religious endeavours such as the
international evangelical community’s Serving in Mission (SIM). Since 1995, SIM has been
working with Mapuche communities through “community-based programs” in health care, water
development, education, small-scale enterprises—and bible studies. Another example is the
Vancouver-based forestry consulting firm Timberline, which has launched a joint venture with
the Mapuche corporation Lonko Kilapang to help Mapuche landowners reforest marginal
farmland, albeit mainly with eucalyptus. This partnership was originally part of the Indigenous
Peoples Partnership Program (IPPP) funded by the Canadian International Development Agency
(CIDA) (personal interviews with representatives of Timberline and Lonko Kilapang). Timberline is also proposing to manage 150,000 hectares of public forests in southern Chile.

As Fisher (1997) points out, what began as a protest against top-down development practices has
led to the paradoxical situation of top-down participatory and community-based development
projects, which are forced on communities by NGOs that rely on outside funds. The imposition
of international agendas has been exacerbated by a crisis that Chilean NGOs have faced ever
since the return to democracy. Before 1990, the primary role of NGOs was to resist the military
regime. When democracy returned, NGOs were required to shift their focus to poverty
alleviation, local economic and social development, and environmental sustainability. Their
legitimacy and efficiency have been questioned ever since, because they are not structured and staffed to perform these roles effectively. Furthermore, democracy has not automatically solved many of Chile’s basic institutional and political problems; yet at the same time, the nation is viewed internationally as a successful example of neoliberal economic policy, and as a result, flows of international aid have fallen off rapidly. Many local NGOs have had to adapt to sporadic international funding. Also, government approval for projects has become harder to get, and that approval is necessary before international funding is forthcoming. Some NGOs have had to change their agendas; others have evolved into regulated financial intermediaries or government contractors. The dangers of underestimating the impact of democratic values on the decisions of international donors such as the Global Environmental Facility (GEF) and the UN Development Program (UNDP) is outlined below.

International loans filter down to local credit programs, which face their own strictures. The credit and assistance programs offered by INDAP, SAG, and CONAF are aimed at increasing yields of basic agricultural commodities and at improving “traditional agriculture.” These programs encourage the intensification of agriculture through the use of fertilizers, herbicides, pesticides, and hybrid seeds. It has often been asserted that the credit agencies determine which seeds are planted, which fertilizers are spread, and even which contractors and suppliers are used. Also, Mapuche farmers often fall into debt to credit agencies. Because of poor soil quality, production levels are often low, which makes it hard for Mapuche farmers to repay their loans. As a consequence they find themselves sucked into a vicious cycle of dependency: they take out loans for seeds and chemical inputs, and when prices for their crops fall, they tumble into debt. Farmers are required to sign contracts before government subsidies are forthcoming. Those contracts assign INDAP the task of directing, monitoring, and controlling the services provided by consultants and of paying the consultants accordingly. Two of the program officers I interviewed (one worked for INDAP, the other for a local NGO) told me that the “extension worker” is usually paid in accordance with the number of activities to be carried out over a specific time frame. These activities are supervised. A consequence of this system is that little attention is paid to key issues such as the impact of technical assistance on production and income, or the sustainability of these projects.

Budgets are constrained by need for approval from Santiago, and funds have to be released before the end of the administrative year. One result is that the conditions imposed by donors,
credit programs, and program officers are unsustainable in the long term. Those conditions also increase administrative costs, which means there is less money to spend on helping communities. One example of several examples evident during fieldwork is a project that involved purchasing equipment. The negotiations between MIDEPLAN and a community in Collipulli specified the acquisition of agricultural machinery. This purchase was financed by INDAP and Orígenes and administered by a local consulting firm, which had prearranged the transaction with particular dealers at inflated prices. In the same district, another project was established under the auspices of PAP, which mainly involved offering financial assistance for development projects on recently acquired plots. Here, one of the communities applied for funding to reforest with native species. The extension worker arranged for tree nurseries outside the area to deliver seedlings. These plants were transported in small compressed bags and did not survive the transplanting. The program’s beneficiaries had wanted to reforest with local plants, but the consultant had struck a deal with the nursery in advance and without their input. In sum, the trees were planted, but without any monitoring of the project, and they died.

In general, beneficiaries of this program reported to me that reforestation with native trees has not succeeded. There are many reasons why. The government has focused on planting exotic trees and has paid little attention to native ones. Little research has been done on the conservation and economic viability of native forests. A body of myth has developed around native forests: that there is no market for their products; that little is known about native species; that the costs of managing native forests are higher than for mono-plantations; that long-term rotation leads to uncertainty; and that native forests have low quality, productivity, and profitability.

The government has gradually increased funding for reforestation programs for small landowners.110 In 2006 it earmarked more than US$30 million.111 CORMA intends to incorporate 2 to 3 million hectares into its program. In Chile, subsistence farmers control 1.48 million hectares of forest in 279 family units (Peña 2000); in IX Region alone, small landowners own 400,000 hectares of forest. CONAF has more ambitious plans; it has judged that more than 2 million hectares in the hands of small landowners are suitable for forestry.

110 Individuals categorized as small farmers; also, peasants and indigenous communities that emerged during the land reform.
111 http://www.agricultura.gob.cl
Chile is developing a program, referred to as “forest securitization,” to bring small landowners into the formal economy. In 2003, US$13 million was allocated for forestry security bonds\textsuperscript{112}. These financial instruments were created by Fundación Chile together with CORMA, the Development Corporation CORFO, and the Ministry of Agriculture. Forestal Mininco, owned by Empresas CMPC, and Millalemu, owned by Forestal Terranova, will administer the Fund’s forestry assets and acquire the harvested logs under long term administration and off-take contracts. Basically, this program encourages more “efficient' industrial-scale production and encourages the planting of exotic species (pine and eucalyptus). The program has also been entitled as “trámite fácil” (easy business) and is operated in connection with INDAP. It offers credits by establishing contractual relations between small owners and either large forest companies or the bank. CONAF determines which land is suitable for the program and then arranges the credit. Of the 76,162.2 hectares afforested through this program, more than 13 percent are owned by indigenous people.

The program will work as follows\textsuperscript{113}:

- A company will be created to manage the project.
- Small and medium-sized owners will hand their land over to the project under a “deed of usufruct.”
- The management company will strike deals with forestry companies whereby the latter will afforest the land and agree to buy timber at market prices.
- The management company will provide annual payments to the landowners. Those landowners will also receive subsidies for afforestation and land rejuvenation. Also, they will have a say in how the plantations are run, be preferred for forestry jobs, and receive part of the income from timber sales when the forests mature for harvesting.

\textsuperscript{112} For more information see “SIF S.A. y la Securitización Forestal” accesed at: http://www.sif-sa.cl

\textsuperscript{113} This project was initiated by Fundación Chile, an autonomous, publicly and privately funded organization that undertakes technological transfer. The project is at an experimental stage on over 7,000 hectares. These lands do not involve usufruct rights with independent owners; rather, they were acquired directly by the managing company. In addition, the management company is already negotiating to incorporate the financing of carbon transactions to enhance the project.
• In return for managing the plantations, the forestry companies will be paid for part of the harvested timber and enjoy the right of first purchase. Because they control the timber, they will be able to “grow” their companies without having to purchase land.

Indigenous organizations[^1] that are concerned about the impact of forest plantations view such programs and policies as another way to introduce exotic plantations to indigenous communities and farming areas. They see these programs as benefiting only the forestry companies. A member of Konapewan put it this way:

> “Forest companies have already exhausted the land and they are aware that expanding in Mapuche territory is not possible anymore, so they are searching now for new land in Argentina or trying to establish partnerships with small forest owners. This way they can exploit the land without having to buy it. The government is now defining all lands as land suitable for forestation purposes and government agencies come with financial and technical packages that only promote the interest of forest companies.”

Moreover, those interviewed with Konapewan view these programs as a stealth strategy for encouraging large companies to annex small owners’ lands. Yes, the state will be providing incentives and subsidies for small landowners; yet the harvests themselves will continue to be controlled by all-powerful corporations on the international market. As a result of all this, the buying power of large forestry companies will only increase. According to one Mapuche farmer I spoke to,

> “this is a win–win situation. They got our land for free and depleted it with plantations. Now when the soil is exhausted and the land market is limited, they sell it for ridiculous amounts to the government [CONADI] and on top of that, they try to convert small peasants into their forest suppliers.”

As McDaniel (2002) has noted, conflicts over budgets and agendas as well as the professionalization of development have led to a dampening of concern about grassroots problems, and to more pursuit of self-interest among developmental organizations. Moreover, the Chilean state—especially those agencies involved in social investment and socially oriented productive investment—has encouraged the professionalization of community development. A

significant number of former NGO professionals now work in government agencies, and this has only strengthened the ties between NGO and government agendas. These professionals—extension agents and program officers—become caught up in the competition for new donors and the prestige those donors bring. A race has begun for new development projects—projects that do not necessarily address communities’ interests but instead reflect the personal idealism of project developers. One program officer I interviewed noted that

“NGOs are always in search of the ‘miracle project’ and they experiment in these communities. First it was the flowers, then lupine grains, ecotourism, berries, and so on… They all want to bring their own panacea.”

The bureaucratic culture and personal idealism involved in development projects is tied to a market logic that rarely works for the communities they are meant to help. Camila Montecinos, of the Centre of Education and Technology (CET), points out that

“when projects do take hold, it is generally in marginal ways or only in the short term. A key problem is that the logic underlying market-oriented resource management does not serve indigenous communities well”.

Mapuche communities generally rely on diversified modes of production that help them cope with the poor quality of the small plots they have been left with after two hundred years of dispossession. The plots allotted to them by the state during the 1980s after their communal lands were divided averaged only 5.36 hectares per family (with nothing extra for sons or daughters); the average number of people living on each of these plots at the time was 6.3 (Bengoa and Sabag 1997). In addition, VIII and IX Regions are suffering from severe erosion, often a result of the topographical conditions (i.e., steep terrain) and the intensification of land use owing to poverty. This is making it much more difficult for Mapuche communities to maintain their subsistence economies. Yet at the same time, the state’s agricultural policies and the technologies related to them discourage both diversification and traditional farming practices.

Current policies and programs are based on privatization (in other words, the carving up of communal lands into individual plots). This has been accompanied by systematic and intensive exploitation, the goal of which is to modernize and commercialize Mapuche agriculture. INDAP’s policy, for instance, includes mechanisms for supporting “specialized business.” Those mechanisms have supported a series of “miracle projects” that are generally cast as the solution
to rural indigenous poverty. Examples include the production of flower bulbs in Tirua, the commercialization of prefried potatoes in Temuco, and the commercialization of legumes in Lumaco. These above projects (which I visited while in the field) have proven to be unsustainable. One extension officer I interviewed told me that

“when government agents reach the communities the message is, ‘You have to specialize, you need to do business’ … Today you can’t choose if you want to enter the market, they require you to and on their conditions. If you want credit you need to intensify your crops, use fertilizers, hybrid seeds, pesticides, and so on. If we had laws regarding administrative and political responsibility, I’m sure we could have millionaire lawsuits against all public agencies, because what they’ve done is terribly irresponsible. There’s no miracle project in agriculture, neither with strawberries nor with the flower business.”

NGOs have followed the same trend—engaging communities in “miracle projects”—and have faced similar problems: the products are difficult to harvest, process, and market. A Mapuche farmer from Nueva Imperial told me:

“They said we should plant quinoa, which was a traditional Mapuche crop of high nutritional value, and we did, and it worked, but now we need this special machine to clean the grains and the NGO has only one machine for all of the communities, so we depend on the availability of the machine and the program officers to bring the equipment to start the treatment.”

Most agricultural funding comes from Europe, especially Germany (German Agency for Technical Co-operation, GTZ), the Netherlands (Projecto Holandes), and Belgium (Belgian Development Agency). However, as a program officer for a local NGO pointed out, “projects have lasted only during the project intervention period and failed in general.” In addition, the “projectism” associated with indigenous development programs risks generating internal conflicts within and between indigenous communities because it injects huge amounts of money without a participatory strategy. As a result, social and economic programs are not equally distributed within a given community. In the long term, this can destabilize communities. The application processes for these projects, especially those managed by the Origenes program and governmental agencies such as INDAP, and the approaches to managing them, can provoke major changes in cultural values, leadership patterns, organizational structures, and political
relations. According to Feliciano Cayul from the community Ignacio Quepil II, “CONADI has played a role in the division of the communities, giving preferential treatment to groups that create problems, to the detriment of families that peacefully try to meet their needs.”

Similarly, one local NGO officer contended that this sort of community fracturing is a deliberate government policy:

“This mechanism [Origenes] divides the community and generally benefits one extended family and their relatives, leaving the less empowered families without a take after negotiations are done.”

During my fieldwork I visited several communities involved in Origenes and the FTAI and indeed encountered some of these problems. Sandra, a Mapuche woman in Collipulli, told me that communities were subject to the will of those who had led land negotiations or who arranged project funding:

“What was accessed and used communally is now taken by one family, owners of a new large farm [terrenientes] who negotiated in the name of all of us but later became like dictators. The president of the association now owns the manor house; he has the truck and keeps control of all that we obtained during negotiations. He decides who can use the machinery, who can harvest and what can be harvested, who can take wood, water … He leaves us with nothing but more work to feed our families.”

Given the internal conflicts that can arise as a result of land negotiations, some communities have actually opted to hire outsiders (including non-indigenous people) to work and harvest their land for them, avoiding this way any possible organizational conflict among themselves.

**Dealing with Indigenous Demands: The Carrot-and-Stick Approach**

The era of dictatorships in Latin America has come to an end, yet repressive public and private violence against peasants and indigenous people continues to be a principal means of sustaining state structures. This is impeding the advance of democratization on the continent (e.g., Kay 2002; Kearney and Varese 1995; Mendez, Pinheiro, and O’Donnell 1999). The situation of the Mapuche in Chile has continued to deteriorate in this regard. As stated in the most recent studies

---

conducted by several human rights organizations, the Chilean government continues to show a lack of political will regarding the recognition of indigenous people and (above all) their rights. In 2003 the UN Special Rapporteur for the Human Rights and Fundamental Liberties of Indigenous People reported on the economic and social marginalization of indigenous communities in Chile and the criminalization of indigenous social protest movements through the Anti-Terrorist Law. The government has replied weakly to this report, and Congress has repeatedly refused to ratify ILO Convention 169 on the rights of indigenous peoples and refused to approve a draft bill for a constitutional reform that would recognize indigenous peoples.

In Chile, as in many other nation-states, indigenous groups that contest power relations are subjected to persistent violations of their fundamental rights. Too often, Latin American governments respond by criminalizing indigenous people for making legitimate and historically rooted demands. Indigenous/state relations are often marked by violence and counter-violence. However, whereas the state’s violence is legitimised as peacekeeping, any act of protest or even self-defence on the part of indigenous groups is labelled terrorism. Indigenous struggles are frequently represented as threats to national security, as with the Landless Peasants' Movement (MST) in Brazil and the Zapatistas in Mexico (The economist 2004). In Chile, the National Intelligence Service and the Chilean Military Research Centre have identified “a new challenge to internal security”: the indigenous threat, which extends from Mexico to Tierra del Fuego.

The many attempts by communities to regain their lands are complicated by the authorities’ systematic refusal to take the issue seriously and by the absence of any genuine resolve to find lasting solutions. Indigenous movements have been linked to drug traffickers, left-wing parties, and environmentalist groups. Governments and the media characterize these movements as

---


119 This is especially evident in media coverage, which almost always referred to events of this kind as ‘terrorist events’ or to those involved as terrorists. Several examples of this can be found especially in El Mercurio group of newspapers. For an analysis of “The Mapuche and the Chilean media” see Mariqueo 2003.

radical, anticapitalist, and race-based (ibid). In this climate, any call for territorial autonomy and collective rights is viewed by those in power as a potential threat to neoliberal democracy.

That is the context in which I discuss (below) the Chilean state's legalistic responses to indigenous demands. I will be making use of the observations I made directly while carrying out fieldwork for my PhD in 2003. At the time, I attended several protests and followed the first “oral trial”\(^{121}\) in the region against two Mapuche lonkos. I will be including in my analysis reports from the Historical Truth and New Deal Commission (Informe Comisión Verdad Histórica y Nuevo Trato 2003) as well as reports by the Programa de Derecho Indígena (PDI) on the present state of indigenous rights in Chile.\(^{122}\)

**Revisiting the “Mapuche Conflict” and Applying the Antiterrorist Law**

The Mapuche movement has a long history, but not until 1997 did it come to be referred to as “the Mapuche conflict.” In October of that year, two logging trucks were burned. This act was blamed on Mapuche residents of Collipulli. In December of the same year, the government decided to enforce the “internal state security law” in IX and VIII Regions. This law, promulgated under Pinochet’s regime, allows security organizations to forcibly enter homes and to imprison and interrogate any suspect person. In this way, freedom of association was suspended and the authorities were extended the right to invade the private homes of Mapuche and to detain them without a probable cause (Habeas Corpus). This was discrimination: the state was depriving indigenous people of their constitutional rights, including freedom of conscience, freedom of religion, and freedom of association. Since then, police squads have invaded several Mapuche communities.

Mapuche protests and the increasing number of arson attacks have been heavily reported in the media, and the authorities have exploited these events to their own advantage. However, it has recently been reported that terrorist actions against logging companies in southern Chile—attacks blamed on Mapuche—were in fact self-inflicted.\(^{123}\) Senator Alejandro Navarro, a

\(^{121}\) Under Chile’s new code of criminal procedure, approved in October 2000, oral, public, and adversarial hearings protecting the due process rights of the defendant have replaced written, inquisitorial procedures.

\(^{122}\) These include testimonies by indigenous people (to the Senate Commission for Legislation, Constitution, and Justice); as well as the Report of Rodolfo Stavenhagen, Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms of Indigenous People.

supporter of Mapuche rights, has made public an expert report\textsuperscript{124} conducted by the Forest and Ecological Department of the Concepción police regarding forest fires on four properties (Las Tejas, El Manzanito, Llanos de Charrúa, Unihue). The report confirms that four forest guards of Forestal Santa Ana Ltda—a security firm employed by the forest companies Mininco, Celco, Bosques Arauco, and Bio-Bio—coerced a third party to set fires on the companies’ forest properties. The guards did so in order to justify their own employment and underscore the need to hire forest guards. According to one Mapuche leader, forest companies’ woodlands are insured; often, those firms can bring in more money from insurance payments than from the harvests themselves.

Twenty Mapuche organizations have asked the government to investigate similar cases.\textsuperscript{125} They contend that Mininco hired armed guards to attack the Mapuche, then burn three company trucks so that Mapuche could be accused of criminal damage. Employees of the company that provides security for Forestal Mininco have admitted to participating in a spate of attacks that led to application of the Anti-Terrorist Law (one clause of which offers compensation to informers). Mininco filed a lawsuit against Pedro Cifuentes Alvarez after he claimed that a Mininco supervisor offered him a US$1,000 bribe to falsely accuse Mapuche activists Victor Ancalaf and his brothers of destruction of company property.

Faced with growing Mapuche protests, in mid-December 2000 the police declared parts of VIII and IX Regions to be under special police control. This meant that any public demonstration or protest was classified as a “threat to the state” and that police were entitled to invoke state security laws and employ antiterrorist measures against protesters. The police employed military vehicles and helicopters to restrain protesters; they also searched Mapuche properties, intimidated the occupants, and arrested people under the internal security laws. The operations of logging companies proceeded, under the protection of those same antiterrorist measures (see pictures below).


\textsuperscript{125} \url{http://www.mapuexpress.net}
The state, the police, and large landowners formed a strategic alliance to counter Mapuche demands. The landowners, for their part, began organizing a group called Common Front for the Defense of the Land (FCDT). They established and armed a private police force to counteract the Mapuche movement; most of its leaders were recruited from security forces founded during the military regime, including the National Information Center (CNI) and the National Intelligence Directorate (DINA). A brutal irony is that these people, through the FCDT, then asked the state to apply the Internal Security Law against illicit association and terrorist threats.

Throughout all the years of the so-called Mapuche conflict and the application of antiterrorist laws against Mapuche leaders, no landowners have been harmed. The only victims have been Mapuche. In 2000, Edmundo Lemun—a seventeen-year-old Mapuche—was shot and killed by a Chilean police officer during a demonstration. A court martial rejected the case, having found that this shooting of an unarmed boy was an act of self-defence. Yet again, the Chilean courts had allowed the military and the police to act with impunity. Pablo Ortega, the lawyer representing Lemun, declared that “the government has tossed out the opportunity for a political solution to the Mapuche conflict.”

**A New Deal with Old Laws**

While the dictatorship’s abuses are well documented, the “democratic” governments that followed it have neglected and violated Mapuche rights without any serious national inquiry
being conducted. Most fatefuly, the Pinochet regime established a apparatus of repression that its democratically elected successors have lacked the will to dismantle. The Mapuche no longer believe the promises of the Concertación administrations (Aylwin, Frei, Lagos, Bachelet.) Each has used the police against Mapuche protesters and has created new policing policies in the name of “national security.”

Most Mapuche prisoners have been judged and sentenced by one of two means: common justice (i.e., civilian courts) and military tribunals. Many of the cases linked to the Mapuche territorial conflict are tried by military courts, even when the events involved the carabineros (the national police force). Jaime Madariaga, a Mapuche lawyer, notes that this happens even when a strong legal case can be made that carabineros or members of the armed forces committed offences against civilians and should be tried by the civilian justice system. This treatment also contravenes the principle of double jeopardy, which declares that no one shall be tried twice for the same offence.

Yet most Mapuche prisoners have had two trials: they have been accused of breaking the penal code and the military code, and they have been judged under the Anti-Terrorist Law, the law controlling the use of arms (Law 17.798), or the State Security Law.

Trials by military tribunals violate Article 14 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which states that “all persons shall be equal before the courts and tribunals. In the determination of any criminal charge against him, or of his rights and obligations in a suit at law, everyone shall be entitled to a fair and public hearing by a competent, independent and impartial tribunal.” For that reason, the law ought to be amended to restrict the jurisdiction of the military courts to trials only of military personnel charged with offences of an exclusively military nature.

In addition, most Mapuche who are now in prison have not been given proper access to a lawyer they can trust, nor have translators been available to them when necessary. Chilean justice has not allowed the accused to ask for legal representation. According to lawyers for the Observatorio de Derechos de los Pueblos Indígenas, some prisoners have been held without charge and brutally interrogated before being brought before the justice system. Given that Mapuche are accused of being terrorists and are judged as such, they have been denied bail or
and are kept in custody as a matter of course. And while in prison they are subjected to extremely harsh conditions and to intimidating and racist treatment from the prison authorities.

Furthermore, Mapuche are being indicted under the New Penal Procedure Code, which came into effect in 2000. That code has provided yet another charge for the Chilean legal system to apply: “terrorist illicit association.” This is similar to the “Patriot Act” established by George Bush after the 9/11 attacks on New York and Washington.

**And the Trial Proceeded …**

The emblematic trial of two lonkos (Mapuche chiefs), Pascual Pichún and Aniceto Norín, began in April 2003 in Angol. This was the first trial to take place in IX Region under the Pinochet regime’s Anti-Terrorist Law. The lonkos were charged with “terrorist threats and arson” carried out in 2001 on various disputed lands in Traiguén in Malleco province. They were accused of destroying by fire the house of the former agriculture minister, Juan Agustín Figueroa, as well as more than 80 hectares of pine forests in San Gregorio.

This trial drew the interest—and attendance—of the local, national, and international media, as well as observers from Amnesty International and other human rights organizations. I attended as well. The following is based on my own observations of the trials and on coverage in the Mapuche press.

During the trial, the prosecution challenged Mapuche history, identity, and land claims. The prosecutor made the following arguments. First, he challenged the history of the Mapuche people, suggesting that a small group of radicals had manipulated the public and pointing out that “it is not the Mapuche people who are on trial here, but rather certain people who have taken a radical stance which has led them to commit the crimes set out in the investigation.” According to the prosecutor, this manipulation consisted of making people believe that Mapuche are different from Chileans and that the prosecutors, judges, and the Chilean state are racist. Second, he challenged Mapuche identity by suggesting that the accused did not represent the Mapuche people and in fact “constitute[d] elements that have taken the path of crime in the name of

---

126 A custodial sentence is a judicial sentence consisting of mandatory custody or restriction of liberty. The prisoner has not been convicted of any offence and is usually detained in custody until the charges have been heard.

reclaiming land … They spread the idea of the reclamation of land as a right in order to then bring up the idea that in these activities they do not acknowledge the rule of law and so any action, including committing crimes is valid in order to achieve its objectives.” Third, he challenged the idea of victimization, pointing out that “they call themselves ‘Mapuche political prisoners’ and as a consequence they do not accept that they have committed any offence. They consider themselves victims of the racist Chilean state and therefore, in spite of how serious their actions, they cannot be subject to the law.” In his fourth argument he referred to “declared disputed territory.” Here he argued that “Mapuche activists” had unilaterally decided which territory or estate would cease to belong to its owner. They had then declared it disputed territory. At that point they began threatening and harassing not just large proprietors but many small ones as well; these actions then evolved into serious crimes such as the arson at San Gregorio. Fifth, the prosecutor declared that “there is no respect for the decision of the community. If an indigenous community takes a vote on something, it doesn't matter whether the violent faction wins or loses, since they impose their will in any case, by means of violence and intimidation and threaten the rest of the community that doesn't share these methods.” Finally, the prosecutor suggested that the Mapuche had linked themselves with terrorist associations: “Mapuche organization is infiltrated by people who do not always belong to the Mapuche ethnic group, like the accused Troncoso Robles, who is not Mapuche.”

The Mapuche leaders’ defence lawyers contested the prosecution’s arguments—in particular, they asked whether the accused should have been charged under the Anti-Terrorist Law in the first place. They told the court that the prosecution was making accusations without offering any facts pointing to a crime. During the trial, the accusations of terrorism were never supported with concrete evidence.

The prosecution asked the court for “a verdict that was appropriate and in proportion to the charges”; the defence called for the accused to be found not guilty “since the offences cited are not covered by the Anti-Terrorist Law and it has not been proven that the lonkos and Patricia Troncoso took part in them.” According to the Article 1 of Law 18.314, terrorist offences are those that affect, or are intended to affect, the whole of the population. That was not the case here, since only one private estate had been affected.
Behind the Trial

In the run-up to the trial, the Ministry of Internal Affairs had been trying to disband the Coordinadora Arauco-Malleco (CAM), one of the more radical Mapuche organizations, which is based in Temuco. To that end, it had targeted its leaders and portrayed CAM as the axis of terrorism in the region. This explains why vice minister Guillermo Subtle applied the Anti-Terrorist Law.

Under the Anti-Terrorist Law, most of CAM’s leaders and members were detained, arrested, and imprisoned. The state’s investigators provided “witnesses without faces” (i.e., secret witnesses), recordings of intercepted telephone conversations between the accused and their lawyers, slanted newspaper clippings detailing the government’s accusations, a supposed “terrorist organizational chart” drawn up by the government intelligence agency (with the help of mainstream journalists), and other pieces of so-called evidence. In total, the prosecution filed with the court with more than five thousand pages of this evidence.

The Mapuche accused the government of aligning itself with the region’s most powerful landowners—in particular, with Juan Agustin Figueroa (the injured party in the trial), the Matte group (owner of Forestal Mininco), and the Municipality of Temuco.

An additional irregularity was that the *lonkos* Pascual Pichún Collonao and Aniceto Norín Catrimán were being tried for the third time. They had been found innocent at the first trial, which had lasted twelve days. However, on July 2 the Supreme Court had annulled the local tribunal’s verdict and ordered a second trial. In December 2003 the chiefs were once more incarcerated, mainly through the influence of Figueroa. The *lonkos* were facing five-year sentences in the prison at Traiguén.

That same year, Pascual Pichun, Aniceto Norin, and sixteen other Mapuche faced a new hearing. They had been charged with “illicit terrorist association” and were facing five- to fifteen-year sentences. However, the hearing had been suspended several times. The defendants’ lawyers questioned the judge’s right to hear the case, pointing to her lack of impartiality. Especially controversial was that 44 of the prosecution’s 140 witnesses were “without faces.” Moreover, the presiding judge had authorized wiretaps of the defence lawyers in 2002.

Meanwhile, the accused turned down their right to a defence, maintaining that in the circumstances, a guilty verdict had already been “arranged.” According to the defence lawyers,
the state’s heavy use of faceless witnesses had made a fair trial impossible. How could the
defence lawyers raise objections if they did not know the identity of the witnesses? And how
could the defence question the motives of the prosecution witnesses and offer evidence to
undercut them?

All of this presented the court with a dilemma: How could it try eighteen people who lacked
legal representation? In the end, the court appointed public defenders for the accused, given that
the Mapuche could not afford private counsel. According to Rodrigo Lillo, a lawyer for the
human rights NGO Noralinea,

“the attitude adopted by the Mapuche is completely reasonable, since the accused face a
discriminatory and aggressive policy on behalf of the government, which has violated
their human rights and the guarantees of the process.”

The Normalization of Fear

As a result of disputes with local landowners over land ownership, the state has come down hard
on Mapuche communities, which now live in constant fear. Those communities view themselves
as the targets of an intimidation campaign carried out by the state and the landowners. Local
farmers and large landowners have long been disputing property lines. Mapuche farmers have
complained about landowners’ efforts to chase them off their land and restrict their access to
paths and water sources. The authorities have not acted on these complaints. Since May 2000,
Juana Calfunao Paillalef, a founding member of the NGO Ethical Commission Against Torture,
has been the target of political persecution. Repeated efforts have been made to burn down her
house. On another occasion she was jailed for three days after a man attacked her on the street in
Temuco. While in custody she suffered a miscarriage after being beaten by the carabineros.
According to Amnesty International, there has been no progress in this case, which is still on the
desk of the military prosecutor in Valdivia.

Constant fear has become part of life for the Mapuche. Women, children, and old people all
suffer as a result of police raids. When I visited the home of Karina (my main informant), the
first thing that caught my eye was a note attached to her door:

“If I’m arrested, my sons should stay with my sister-in-law and my youngest daughter
(who is 5) with my mother. After my older sons finish boarding school, I want them all
with my mom in Collipulli. My brother-in-law will look after my belongings. And if necessary he can use them to pay for my children’s expenses. I write this in case this happens. My neighbor will sew two uniforms for school for each child and I’ll pay her back later.”

Karina is the wife of Victor, the spokesman for Communities in Conflict, who was released in March 2007 after five years’ imprisonment, accused of terrorist acts. She had had to sell most of her livestock in order to look after her family and visit her husband regularly. For a time she moved to the capital to find work, leaving her family with her relatives in Collipulli.

Now that Mapuche protests have been criminalized, the police are resorting to violence and maltreatment, especially during demonstrations and when Mapuche groups are being evicted from the lands they occupy. According to recent testimonies, when the police enter Mapuche communities in large numbers to make arrests, they physically insult and mistreat the inhabitants, including women, children, and old people (Human Rights Watch 2004). A 2004 report released by the Health Service of Araucania Norte (in IX Region) states that Mapuche children are developing severe psychological and physical stress as a result of midnight raids by the police and the threats and arrests that come out of them. Children have watched the police break down the doors of their homes and point guns at them.

Mapuche children also suffer from the stigma imposed on them by the state and in the media. They see themselves portrayed as terrorists, arsonists, and violent people. Karina’s eleven-year-old son was bullied constantly at school because his father was in prison: “They bully me asking me if I’m also going to burn the school.” Fortunately, the teachers responded appropriately and the principal offered her family emotional support.

Through its laws and policies the state is criminalizing indigenous people instead of trying to improve their lives. In all of the cases described above, the Chilean courts have selectively applied laws that are holdovers from the military dictatorship—in particular, the state security

128 “Chile: Undue Process. Terrorism Trials, Military Courts, and the Mapuche in Southern Chile.” This sixty-page report indicates that Mapuche defendants charged with terrorist acts face unequal trials for crimes that do not pose a direct threat to life, liberty, or physical integrity. Extraordinary procedures, which are part of the antiterrorism law and which are intended to address the most extreme political violence, are wholly inappropriate in relation to crimes attributed to the Mapuche, which are mainly against property.

laws and the Anti-Terrorism Law. These legal mechanisms and the New Penal Procedure Reform, all of which violate the rights of indigenous people, can be summarized as follows:

- Trials are not impartial. Charges are initiated by a military judge, who then assigns the case to a state judge, who can be from the same military division as those involved in the case.
- Penalties are higher than for general offences.
- While the judge is deliberating, the accused can be detained longer than would be the case under other laws.
- Open-ended investigations may result in the accused being detained without trial for years.
- A judge can postpone the trial without discovery—that is, without allowing the defence counsel to see the evidence. Thus, the defence is unable to prepare a rebuttal or appeal the defendant’s custody.
- The prosecution is allowed to call faceless witnesses and offer them protection.
- The state is allowed to tap telephones, including those of defence lawyers.
- The accused (including women and children) face violence while being detained.
- The accused while detained face torture, mistreatment, and neglect.
- The police raid Mapuche homes.
- Prison conditions are dangerous and discriminatory. Mapuche who have been imprisoned under the Anti-Terrorist Law are considered high-risk criminals and as such are not allowed to work or study.

The “Mapuche conflict” has stigmatized the Mapuche movement. This is evident in media reports and in the ways the state is applying the Anti-Terrorist Law against the Mapuche as they struggle to regain their lands. The state is applying its laws in ways that are jeopardizing the political and land rights of the Mapuche, who face long and harsh prison terms as a result. Individual rights that are recognized and protected by the Chilean Constitution (such as the right to justice, freedom, and physical and psychological integrity) and that have been ratified by international human rights treaties have become vulnerable. Furthermore, Chile is denying the Mapuche people’s political right to participate in resolving their issues with the rest of Chilean
society. Without political rights, they will not be able to regain their lands and resources or determine their own future.

Recent events highlight the gravity of the situation. By continuing to ignore indigenous people’s demands, the Chilean government is contravening its own civil law as well as the broadly accepted principles of international law. Yet little national or international attention has been paid to the serious human rights violations that are occurring in an ostensibly democratic country.

**Final Discussion**

The results from my fieldwork show that the resistance strategies used by indigenous communities and the government’s responses to those strategies are relatively unstructured and are mainly responses to political pressures. The Mapuche movement and the government have become entangled in conflicting political agendas, with unanticipated consequences for policy development and for the communities.

First, the Chilean government has focused on aid programs and the provision of farming plots and has not recognized the underlying injustices faced by the Mapuche. As a consequence, the land question has been approached as a monetary one, with no account taken of the cultural rights of indigenous communities—specifically, their right to develop according to their own ways. For the Mapuche people, land has a use value rather than an exchange value, which means that money cannot be the solution to present-day grievances. They emphasize the importance of regaining their “territoriality”—that is, their cultural and socio-political space—rather than the transfer of parcels or land plots.

Second, both the state and the Mapuche organizations have focused on the land question, and this has left some gaps in terms of finding means to sustain Mapuche social and environmental space. Territorial rights have always been a key issue for Chile’s indigenous people, especially the Mapuche; but issues involving access to and the management of natural resources are also important, and have been overlooked. Government programs have yet to focus on the sustainable management of natural resources. Most land programs lack the resources to ensure that the beneficiaries will be able to use the land productively once they acquire it, and there is little coordination and cooperation among the various government agencies. It should be clear by now
that land restitution cannot be reduced to a technical process of land transfers; it must also entail a multidimensional program of integrated sustainable development.

The past five years of land negotiations and development programs provide an opportunity to assess, evaluate, and strengthen Chilean policies from an indigenous and state perspective. CONADI recently commissioned a study to evaluate all aspects of land restitution programs; its findings point to some of the problems. However, other issues still need to be considered in order to achieve these programs’ long-term objectives, particularly with reference to external pressures and the intrusion of global markets into recently reallocated lands.

As a result of pressure from the forestry sector and the decline of agriculture, most of the lands in Mapuche areas have been classified as only “suitable for forestation purposes.” As explained earlier, most of the productive forest is privately held. The rest is claimed by indigenous communities. Overall, then, the forestry companies have limited room to expand. One result is that if the government wants to expand the country’s forestry sector, it will have to allow those companies to take over the lands being held by small farmers and indigenous communities. During a visit to Vancouver, the former director of CONADI stated “their interest in implementing joint venture systems between indigenous communities and forest companies, similar to the Canadian experience” (personal interview). One consequence is that the state is encouraging indigenous communities and farmers to plant exotic species without considering the long-term impact on those same people.

Finally, both state’s response to indigenous land claims and indigenous development programs reflect a double standard as well as elements of racism. State policies are generally “carrot and stick.” On the one hand, the government has developed new policies and programs to address indigenous demands, but on the other hand, most of these initiatives are ignored when they clash with current economic policies. The state’s responses to indigenous land claims have been coupled with sustained (often violent) police and legal actions, especially when Mapuche individuals and organizations actively oppose the occupation of their ancestral lands by large farm and forest owners. The state has responded to its conflict with the Mapuche by systematically injecting the police into the daily life of communities and by treating Mapuche protests as criminal acts rather than political ones. The application of the Anti-Terrorist Law to common crimes is unjustified and disproportionate. Since the return of democracy, the National State Security and Anti-Terrorist Laws have only been applied to Mapuche people, and mainly in
relation to land claims. These prosecutions have raised serious concerns about due process. The
government’s resort to the Anti-Terrorist Law has intensified the conflict and made it more
difficult to resolve. Overlooked is the impact of all this on Mapuche activists and political
prisoners, on their families, and on those who support the Mapuche cause.
Chapter 8. Summary and Conclusions

Most research on the political ecology of forests has focused either on the impact of neoliberal policies or on how states encourage the commoditization of forests at the expense of ecological sustainability (Bryant 1997; Emanuel and Greenberg 2000; Guha 2000). Some research has focused on land use changes and forest conversion (Hecht 1993, 2005). Though relevant for analyzing forest degradation, this focus is perhaps too expressly political, in the sense that it confines itself to the role played by states in international market expansion. Little attention has been paid to social movements and how they contest neoliberal policies. So an understanding of indigenous groups’ political strategies and practices can contribute to contemporary research on political ecology.

In this thesis, I have tried to approach nature–society relations from a new perspective, by examining indigenous political struggles and how they unfold both nationally and locally. Chile is experiencing a resurgence in indigenous movements, especially Mapuche ones. These movements are employing various political strategies to defend their territory, their cultural identity, and their natural resources. I have been especially concerned to understand how Mapuche communities have reacted to the rapid growth of the forestry sector and how indigenous subjects shape contemporary rationalities and strategies of governance. Mapuche organizations have resisted neoliberal policies; yet at the same time they have been caught up in new rules of governance that aim to incorporate them and their resources in a national development model. Thus, Mapuche political strategies and the government’s responses should be viewed in terms of their continuity. As explained in the introduction of my thesis (figure 1.1) that continuity is both “upward” (i.e., indigenous groups organize and affect all that surrounds them) and “downward” (i.e., the government persuades indigenous people to internalize state control through self-regulation, which in turn triggers social change in the direction the government desires) (see also Bryant 2002). O’Malley (1993) makes a pertinent observation: according to Foucault’s theories, power is not exercised by one on another; rather, it involves an interaction in which resistance is a key player. O’Malley also points out that indigenous populations have a strong influence on the science of government, for all interactions and negotiations with indigenous groups in recent decades have led to an acknowledgment that governments must work in conjunction with indigenous people’s cultural frameworks.
My aim has been to explore indigenous political mobilization in order to explain the social dynamics and political trade-offs inherent in that mobilization and how these influence land and resource programs at the local level. I hope this project has contributed to political-ecological studies as well as politico-cultural ones and in so doing provided new insights into the impact of indigenous movements on present-day environmental struggles.

I have examined the relationship between indigenous movements and environmental changes in Chile in the context of the neoliberal economic model practised in many Latin American countries. I began, in Chapter 1, with a conceptual model that sought to understand processes of environmental change. This included examining the transformation of landscapes at multiple levels. At the macro level, I considered the political and economic processes driving the conversion of Chilean agricultural lands and native forests to tree monoculture, as well as the social and ecological consequences of this. At the local level, I looked at how indigenous movements both resisted and adapted to the intrusion of neoliberal forestry models on their territories. This was in an attempt to identify the expected and unexpected consequences of the political strategies followed by the Mapuche movement as well as the state’s responses to indigenous mobilization.

This led me, in Chapters 4 and 5, to analyze the various ways in which landscape transformations and environmental changes (a result of the expansion of tree plantations) have affected natural ecosystems and local communities. Although exotic tree plantations were being introduced in Chile as early as the 1930s, today, environmentalists, local farmers, and indigenous people are concerned mainly about the local consequences of the rapid expansion and scale of production of these monocultures. As a result of incentives for this rapid growth introduced by the military regime, industrial forestry underwent radical technological changes, which had severe social and ecological impacts, including (but not limited to) the following: the substitution of native forests, the fragmentation and homogenization of landscapes, the loss of biodiversity, water scarcity and contamination, and deteriorating soil quality (through acidification, erosion, and the leaching of nutrients). At the same time, the excessive use of pesticides, fertilizers, and herbicides led to the contamination of watercourses. There is also uncertainty regarding the impact of transgenic tree species: Will they “contaminate” native species and soils?

Chapter 5 also discussed the social impacts of industrial plantations; for example, the rapid expansion of forest activities in the VIII and IX regions has resulted in the displacement of
indigenous populations and higher rates of unemployment in these areas. Increased mechanization in the forestry sector has reduced workforces and contributed to specialized production; most of the timber harvested is now being turned into pulp or chips. Because the land is being converted from crop agriculture to tree plantations (with the encouragement of state policies), rural people are being forced to migrate to urban areas. This has also led to the feminization of the rural sector: because plantations do not require local labour, the men migrate for work while the women remain behind. The concentration of tree plantations in these regions has also resulted in unequal tenure systems and power relationships. Most forestry companies and pulp mills are owned by a handful of conglomerates, and local governments have little control over resources and little capacity to enforce environmental regulations.

Given the steady increase in demand for forest products, especially pulp and paper, plantations are likely to continue expanding for some time, and so too the debate over them. During my fieldwork I interviewed various stakeholders; in this work I have tried to explain the various positions and arguments for and against forest plantations. Tree plantation owners have resorted to a conservationist discourse in arguing that pine plantations help protect watercourses by reducing the pressure on and exploitation of native forests and by mitigating soil erosion. Forestry companies and associations emphasize the economic and ecological benefits of plantations; they also invoke a populist discourse that highlights their contribution to Chile’s development and their role in reducing unemployment. Very different perceptions are expressed by local communities, for which the consequences are immediate. This rapid industrialization of the forestry sector cannot be sustained, not socially and not ecologically. Plantations are, after all, commercial enterprises, and thus they are oriented toward timber extraction at the fastest possible rates. In such a climate, social and conservation issues are marginal at best.

As discussed in Chapter 4, the debate over the future of Chile’s forests does not revolve around scientific evidence or the economic pros and cons of the present forestry model; rather, it is being driven by economics and politics. Marginalized as a result has been any dialogue about the science involved, or about the validity of competing knowledge systems. The development of tree plantations in Chile reflects what Agrawal has described as the “strategies of knowledge and power that created forest environments as a domain fit for modern government” (2005, 6). The vegetation survey and the national forest survey of 1998, in tandem with the blocking of reforms to the forest law, have resulted in new (often controversial) forms of representing and
conceptualizing forests; this in turn has opened the door for new ways of managing forest resources.

Chile’s forestry boom has resulted in drastic transformations of the landscape as well as the substitution of native forests by exotic plantations. Decree 701 allows the substitution of “unproductive land covered with shrubs.” As a consequence, forestry companies are permitted to establish these plantations on degraded land, yet there is no consensus on what constitutes “degraded forest” and “native forest.” This lack of consensus has, in effect, deregulated the forestry industry. Forest management plans are reviewed by the government, but there is no clear law or regulation to review them against. Rulings in this regard are not based on science, but on the capacity of interest groups to influence government decisions.

The present (i.e., democratic) government has to somehow find a way to reconcile property rights with indigenous rights. It is expected to uphold free market principles; yet it is also expected to uphold a progressive political agenda, one that recognizes indigenous rights, so as to differentiate itself from the oppressive years of the military regime. This task has not been easy, especially for a country that has been portrayed as a successful example of economic and political neoliberalism, and whose transition to democracy has been relatively smooth in Latin American terms. Overall, the Chilean government has firmly supported an export-oriented economy; those who challenge the social and economic impacts of neoliberal modernization are largely perceived as radicals or even “terrorists” (a label assigned to some Mapuche). Yet Mapuche opposition to neoliberal projects, including industrial forestry, should not be understood as opposition to modernization. What the Mapuche are contesting is a discriminatory economic model that disadvantages them economically and culturally. At the root of this is unequal power relations among the various actors involved in the debate over what the forest is, who owns it, what the risks of managing it are, how to manage it, and for whom.

The state and the forestry sector are promoting Chile’s forestry model as a successful approach to economic growth and as a way to reduce the pressure on native forests. This obscures the negative impacts. For the Mapuche, the overlaps between forest plantations and Mapuche lands are no coincidence; indeed, they reflect structural and institutional racism. The state has prioritized plantations and privileged export-oriented economic growth to the benefit of non-indigenous people and at the expense of the Mapuche, whose claims to the contested lands have been delegitimized. The expansion of tree plantations has had severe environmental and social
impacts, as well as political impacts linked to indigenous sovereignty. Mapuche communities have lost their ancestral spaces, which means they have lost the opportunity to maintain and enrich their culture and solidify their identity.

The vulnerable position of the Mapuche can be linked to institutional racism. Consider here the poverty rates they face. Statistics show that they are more twice as likely as other Chileans to be poor. The poorest parts of Chile are VIII, IX, and X Regions, where most Mapuche live and where plantations are concentrated. Poverty is related to several key issues in this study. First, Mapuche communities suffered considerable shock as a consequence of land seizures initiated by the state, which consigned them to abject poverty. Second, in losing their lands they lost the resources on which they depended for their livelihood. The limited extension, and poor quality of the lands left to the Mapuche makes crop rotation difficult and leads to the exhaustion of the soil and severe erosion. Third, neoliberal export policies had a sharp impact on their agricultural practices. Mapuche and non-Mapuche peasant farmers suffered badly from declines in the prices of their traditional crops, such as wheat, potatoes, and legumes. Fourth, Mapuche communities found themselves surrounded by tree plantations, with serious consequences for their water supplies (both quantity and quality); traditional agriculture was rendered almost impossible.

Nonetheless, the government is continuing to promote private investment in Mapuche territories—plantations, hydroelectric dams, pulp mills, highways, airports, landfills, and so forth. All of these are interfering with Mapuche culture and quality of life. A key problem is that the legal framework is too weak to protect their lands and cultural rights. The country’s environmental and indigenous laws are trumped by other laws, which limits preventative actions as well as possibilities for modifying projects before they are launched. As well, the lack of early and serious public participation in environmental assessments and development plans has diminished the credibility of the state’s environmental and indigenous authorities. It is almost impossible to enforce environmental laws because there are no incentives to do so. Similarly, indigenous rights laws are neglected or ignored, as are responsibilities to indigenous people more broadly.

By and large, there is no clear policy relating to Chile’s indigenous people. Laws relating to them variously divide indigenous lands into individual plots and hold back Mapuche ancestral territories. Indeed, indigenous laws focus more on Mapuche lands than on the Mapuche themselves, as part of ongoing efforts to turn Mapuche into smallholders, who will later sell or
abandon those lands because they can’t produce enough to survive on them. The only indigenous laws to break this pattern were the ones promulgated under Allende in 1972 and Aylwin in 1993. It is doubtful that they benefited indigenous people in concrete ways, but they did, at least, represent a serious effort to address Mapuche grievances by restoring their territories and protecting their culture.

As discussed in chapter 6, recent social movements based on identity and territoriality are challenging not only national governments but also the dynamics within indigenous movements. Mapuche responses to public policies point to a broader trend emerging in indigenous movements, both in Latin America and in other parts of the world. Many new indigenous organizations are growing rapidly and are setting the pace for future changes in the relations between nation-states and indigenous peoples. Many are structured something like Western bureaucracies, complete with non-traditional leaders, lawyers, accountants, and spokespeople; at the same time, they are beginning to embrace the goal of indigenous-centred development.

Since the early 1930s, Mapuche political organizations have been characterized by diversity. That is, some groups favour integrationist policies whereas others aspire for indigenous autonomy. Generally, though, today’s Mapuche groups are different from past ones in that the trend is away from a class-based orientation; more and more, the central organizing principles revolve around cultural identity. This shift has been accompanied by a new leadership dynamic, with young leaders playing key roles and adopting new political strategies. The Mapuche are organizing themselves to address in multiple ways—through resistance, negotiation, and accommodation—their exclusion and marginalization from current political-economic processes. Some groups are forming strategic alliances with political parties or with broader regional movements; others have opted for a local strategies to recover ancestral territories. Some resort to violence, others to negotiations with the state. As well, not all movements privilege the same demands, with the result that different organizations clash over which strategies and goals to emphasize (Mallon and Reuque 2002). Yet even though Mapuche organizations lack a common proposal, they have created a self-conscious identity that has strengthened the movement’s collective capacity to work towards the primary goals, which are to gain back their land, achieve recognition as a distinct ethnic group, and win the right to self-determination.

Without constitutional recognition, indigenous organizations are confined to the government’s political agenda. A key barrier to effective policy is the Chilean government’s denial that its
indigenous people constitute a “pueblo,” or people. A constitutional amendment that would address this has been frozen in the legislature since 1992, because consensus has yet to be reached regarding what constitutes an ‘indigenous people’— be that the population or its territory. Clearly, this is a crucial question for today’s ethno-nationalist movements. At the same time, the Mapuche movement has not been able to square its demands for territory and autonomy with its demands for access to resources. The politics of CONADI’s land restitution program do not favour projects for environmental and culturally sustainable self-development in beneficiary communities. Indeed, many government programs for indigenous people have only marginalized them further and increased their material and cultural dependency.

The government’s core policy amounts to a clumsy and ill-defined land restitution program: parcelled development programs are intended to dampen an indigenous resurgence, and simultaneously, Mapuche are prosecuted for opposing the occupation of their lands by large farm and forest owners. Jose Aylwin, co-director of the NGO Observatory for Indigenous Rights, notes that

“the state’s responses to indigenous demands show how the constitution and the legal system have institutionalized discrimination, all the while depriving the Mapuche of their economic, environmental, and cultural well-being” (personal interview).

Even so, the democratization that has accompanied neoliberal reforms in most Latin-American countries has opened new spaces for indigenous people to participate in their own governance. Twenty years ago, the Mapuche were viewed as an iconic remnant of the past; this was reflected in school texts and in the national discourse more generally. This has since changed; indigenous issues have become part of the government’s agenda. In almost every ministry, new programs and policies are being designed to address indigenous issues. Health and education services are being reformed in Mapuche areas, and some public services in VIII, IX, and X Regions are translating their documents into Mapudungun. Moreover, indigenous political mobilization is changing the perceptions of non-indigenous Chileans. Most people do not support violence, but they are beginning to acknowledge as never before the validity of indigenous demands and the need to address past injustices.

Mapuche political mobilization is also about subsistence, not just resistance. Obviously, land claims are more than political; they reflect a need for sufficient resources for the Mapuche to
survive as a people. As a result of drastic landscape transformations and accelerated migration from rural areas, the Mapuche are losing touch with nature; this has inspired them to reflect anew on their territoriability, a process that is driving a reformation of their identity. Connections to the landscape are a core part of the Mapuche cultural identity. The links forged among memory, place, and identity are what secure the continuity of Mapuche cultural practices; they are what reinforce (and sometimes redefine) their sense of belonging, whether they live in cities or in their rural homelands.

A key finding is that the environmental and social impacts of landscape transformations are shaped not only by economic and political forces but also by political, cultural, and symbolic ones that have their own environmental consequences. The Mapuche have been adapting and resisting forestry expansion on their lands through various strategies; these strategies, in turn, are affecting land allocation and management policies. The political strategies followed by the Mapuche and the government’s responses have both been prompted by conjunctural political conditions (see Chapter 7). Put another way, most negotiations evolve into interim measures with unexpected consequences, which in turn give rise to new processes of environmental change.

For instance, both the state and Mapuche organizations have focused on the land question, and this has left some gaps in terms of the sustainability of Mapuche social and environmental livelihoods. The Land Restitution Program and the development agenda implemented by recent (i.e., democratic) governments have been characterized by interim measures rather than a long-term strategic planning. The state’s land policies resemble assistance rather than restitution; consequently, they do not integrate other issues, such as the constitutional recognition of indigenous peoples, their participation in land use plans, access to natural resources, and the protection of cultural rights—including the right to pursue culturally viable development goals. The government compensates Mapuche people with land, yet it fails to provide necessary technical and financial assistance that would enable them to manage those lands in a sustainable way. The government has purchased more than 230,000 hectares for the Mapuche, but the land fund trust and the various indigenous development programs have been tied to assimilationist policies, which Mapuche organizations then criticize for being underfunded; for selecting participants in arbitrary ways; for the poor quality of the lands being allocated; for relocating families far from their communities of origin; for neglecting to factor in aid or development policies; and for failing to ensure that communities will have the right to the natural resources on
those lands. But it must also be acknowledged that, even while contesting the state’s neoliberal policies, the Mapuche have been drawn into new governing strategies that are fundamentally neoliberal in character. These strategies have reconfigured their relationship with the state, NGOs, and foreign aid donors. At both formal and informal levels, the government is employing coercive and co-optive measures to cultivate Mapuche participation in neoliberal modernization, all the while neglecting much older issues of inequality and injustice on which land conflicts have always been based.

The state tends to favour policies of intensive production and commercialization as part of an effort to incorporate the Mapuche into the global economy. Most indigenous development programs—credit programs and the like—encourage the Mapuche to plant exotic species (pine and eucalyptus), which often involves the substitution of native forests. Generally, these programs come with credit and technical assistance mechanisms that encourage intensive production and increased exports; this reflects the bureaucratic culture and personal leanings of NGOs and government officials involved in development. Innovative projects have been implemented with Mapuche communities as the answer to rural poverty, but most of these “miracle projects” (e.g., the intensive production of exotic flowers) are tied to a market logic that rarely works for these communities, whose economies are still based largely on local consumption.

Processes of empowerment and co-option are nothing new for indigenous leaders. They do, however, need to be understood in terms of efforts to find a middle ground. That indigenous people are open to applying for project grants suggests that they yearn to participate in and benefit from development programs. But to do so, they have to learn and play by the rules of “projectism,” and this has several foreseeable consequences. These programs are usually based on individual rights and competition; the result is rivalries among participants and divisions among Mapuche organizations. Also, “assistentialist” programs tend to pull attention from more fundamental issues, such as discrimination and the lack of constitutional recognition. Also, the state bureaucracy has a tendency to run distinct projects with separate budgets, goals, and objectives; this works against coordination as well as the long-term viability of governmental efforts. In short, indigenous people are caught up in an institutional bureaucracy of social and development programs.
My final reflections on the political ecology of tree plantations and the Mapuche movement derives from the work of Hale (2002, 2005) on multicultural neoliberalism and Foucauldian approaches to governmentality. As explained by Hale (2002), the processes of neoliberal modernization faced by most Latin-American states are not incompatible with indigenous cultural rights. New forms of governance, in which collaboration with indigenous peoples is key, are being adopted by most Latin-American countries as part of the neoliberal package. Instead of completely denying indigenous rights, states may be granting some reforms in order to reduce the pressure for more radical changes. In this way, relations are reconfigured by two political agendas: neoliberal modernization, and cultural rights. This new terrain has helped the Mapuche begin revitalizing their identity and territorial spaces. Both, by nature, are dynamic.

The past five years of land negotiations and indigenous development programs have created an opportunity to assess, evaluate, and strengthen the impact of these policies, from an indigenous perspective and from that of the government. The Bachelet government has recently promised to stop resorting to Chile’s antiterrorism laws to prosecute Mapuche people for crimes against property committed during land protests; CONADI has commissioned an evaluative study of its land restitution programs. However, other areas will need to be considered if these programs and policies are ever to achieve their long-term objectives; in particular, the issue of constitutional recognition must finally be put to bed, and land allocation programs must be reviewed with a mind to reforming them. It is widely expected that the forestry sector will double its assets over the coming years, in the wake of free trade agreements recently signed with China and the United States.

Meanwhile, Mapuche communities and organizations are well aware of their internal differences and of the consequent need to develop new relations with one another as well as with the state. Their demands, fundamentally, are for autonomy and self-determination. But they do not see a common front as the way to achieve them; better, in their view, is a broader and more heterogeneous package of efforts, each of which might allow the Mapuche to participate more actively in economic development, self-determination, and political decision making at multiple levels.
Bibliography


Arroyo, Cavieres, Peñaloza, Riveros, and Faggi. 1996. “Relaciones fitogeográficas y patrones regionales de riqueza de especies en la flora del bosque lluvioso templado de Sudamérica.”
In Ecología de los Bosques Nativos de Chile, ed. J. Armesto Santiago: Editorial Universitaria.


Catalan, Ricardo, and Ruperto Ramos. 1999. “Los bosques nativos del sur de Chile y el pueblo Mapuche. Las causas subyacentes de la deforestacion y degradacion de los bosques.” CET (Centro de Educación y Tecnología) Temuco, Chile.


Cavieres, Aarón & Lara, Antonio.1983. La destrucción del bosque nativo para ser reemplazado por plantaciones de pino insigne: evaluación y proposiciones I. Estudio de caso en la provincia de Biobío, Santiago: CODEFF.


CONAF, CONAMA, BIRF, Universidad Austral de Chile, Universidad Católica de Temuco, and Universidad Católica de Chile. 1999. “Catastro y Evaluación de los Recursos Vegetacionales Nativos de Chile.” Santiago: CONAF.


Cruz, Maria Elena and Rigoberto. Rivera. 1983. “Cambios ecologicos y de poblamiento en el sector forestal chileno” Santiago: GIA.


Equipo de Promoción Campesina. 1993. Revista Pastoral Campesina 8, Autumn


Latta, Alex. 2006 Wilfrid Laurier University, Personal Communications, September/October 2006.


Leyton, José. 1986. “El fomento forestal y su impacto sobre el desarrollo rural en Chile.” Santiago: CEPAL.


Palma, Graciela; Sanchez, Alejandra; Olave,Yohana; Encina Francisco; Palma, Rodrigo; Barra, Ricardo. 2004. “Pesticide Levels in Surface Waters in an Agricultural-Forestry Basin in Southern Chile.” *Chemosphere* 57: 763–70.


Peña, Alberto. 2000. "Tipología de productores y sistemas de producción: elementos para una estrategia de desarrollo forestal de pequeños y medianos productores." Chile: CONAF.


Pinto, Jorge. 2000. *De la inclusión a la exclusión. La formación del estado, la nación y el pueblo mapuche*. Santiago: Instituto de Estudios Avanzados.


ProChile (Dirección de Promoción de Exportaciones) 2000. Análisis de las exportaciones chilenas, Santiago de Chile, Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores.


Villalobos, Sergio. 1992. La vida fronteriza en Chile. Madrid: MAPFRE.


Wilson, Kerrie; Newton, Adrian; Echeverria, Cristian; Weston Chris; Burgman, Mark. 2005. “A Vulnerability Analysis of the Temperate Forests of South-Central Chile.” Biological Conservation 122, no. 1: 9–21.


Appendices

Appendix A

Research Objectives and Guiding Questions

Research Question (I)

How do different social groups, especially indigenous communities, secure their identity and livelihoods under different conditions?

Guiding Questions

1. What are the perspectives and strategies of indigenous people in these regions? How do they adapt to and/or resist the expansion of pine plantations?

2. How do competing practices of territoriality shape the physical and political landscape in which Mapuche claims to specific sets of rights are made?

3. How are identity and territoriality linked through political discourse, and to what extent are forest-resource and forest-management issues embraced by these discourses? Considering that the territorial conflicts are primarily with forest companies, do forests (or plantations) constitute part of Mapuche land claims?

4. What discursive strategies do the Mapuche people use, and how essentialist are they by nature? Are the “essentialisms” resorted to in identity politics a legitimate tool for the emancipatory goals of new social movements (NSMs) such as the Mapuche movement? How are they used as politically empowering counterdiscourses?

5. How is indigeneity, as a reworking of identity, used as a political act in relation to power, be it economic, political, or social? What factors have influenced the current political discourse of the Mapuche movement?

6. Has identity become a form of resistance to the cultural, economic, and political impacts of colonization, discrimination, modernization, and globalization? How are these ideas conceptualized, given the ongoing processes of construction and negotiation in which they take place?

7. Considering the historical context of land seizures, how are territoriality and ethnicity linked...
to local political discourse?

**Research Question (II)**

What are the competing values and discourses underpinning negotiations over rights and access to natural resources?

**Guiding Questions**

1. What are the culturally conditioned attitudes or world views of the various user groups toward forest development (deforestation, afforestation, reforestation) and conservation?
2. Do indigenous communities want to be included in the forestry sector as timber producers, or are they struggling against the prevalent political economy that has excluded them as competitors for land?

**Research Question (III)**

How are mechanisms aimed at negotiation and/or resistance affecting both indigenous livelihoods and forest ecosystems?

**Guiding Questions**

1. From the Mapuche perspective, how effective have been the political strategies they are using?
2. How are negotiations over land affecting gender relations in indigenous communities?
3. What have been the expected and unexpected achievements and failures during the conflict?
4. How have the state and the industry responded to the strategies used by Mapuche organizations?
5. Following concepts of environmental justice (Bullard 1999):
   - Does the current economic and development model in Chile institutionalize unequal enforcement?
   - Does it trade human health for profit, and place a burden of proof on the victims rather than on the polluting industry or activity?
   - Does it legitimate human exposure to harmful chemicals, pesticides, and wastes, and promote risky technologies?
• Does it exploit the vulnerability of economically and politically disenfranchised communities?

• Does it subsidize ecological destruction, delay clean-up actions, and fail to develop pollution prevention?

• Does it prevent environmental degradation and promote waste minimization and cleaner production strategies?

Research Question (IV)

Given Chile’s current forest development model, how has the relationship between people and forest products changed over time?

Guiding Questions

1. How do different user groups value and use forest resources?

2. Who has access to and control over forest resources?

3. How has access and control changed over time?

4. What is the importance of forest products and forest landscapes for the different user groups?

5. What are the potential risks and benefits associated with afforestation processes? How are they perceived and contested?
Appendix B

Definitions of the Cadastre and Evaluation of Chile’s Native Vegetation Resources

The “Survey and Evaluation of Chile’s Native Vegetation Resources” was conducted between 1994 and 1997 in order to quantify various land uses on Chilean territory. Following are some of the definitions applied by the survey that are relevant to this study.

**Native forest.** An ecosystem where the tree strata is made up of native species over 2 meters high with treetop coverage of over 25%.

**Adult native forest.** Primary forest, generally with a heterogeneous vertical structure, treetop size, diameter, and age distribution. The trees are over 8 meters high.

**Mixed Forest.** Forests made up of a combination of adult native forest, secondary native forest, and shrubby, stunted forest.

**Native forest-plantation.** A combination of native forest and forest species planted in proportions ranging between 33% and 66% for each of the categories that make up the forest. The plantations generally correspond to the consolidation of secondary forest or growth of the native species that previously formed the forest.

**Dominating species.** Species that cover most of the dominating treetop canopy and the intermediate canopy in a vegetal formation. For a species to be considered dominating, it must occupy at least 25% of the treetop coverage.

**Plantation.** A forest whose tree stratum is dominated by exotic or planted native species. *Young or newly harvested* plantations are that in an incipient stage of development or that have been recently harvested. Only the species that make up the plantation were determined in the survey.

**Secondary forest.** A native secondary forest resulting from seeds and/or vegetative reproduction after anthropogenic or natural perturbation (fire, clear-cutting, felling). In general, these forests have homogeneous vertical structure and diameters.

**Forest Types.** Classification of forests on the basis of the predominating tree or trees in a determined area.
Appendix C

Legal Definitions of Decree 701 (DL 701)

Article 2. Management Plan: “Instrument that, in compliance with the requirements established by this piece of legislation, regulates the rational use and exploitation of renewable natural resources on certain lands, with the objective of obtaining a maximum benefit from these resources, while at the same time ensuring their preservation, conservation, improvement and growth, as well as that of their ecosystem.”

Article 2. Forest: “A place populated with vegetal formations—with the predomination of trees—that occupy an area of at least 5,000 m2, with a minimum width of 40 meters, and with a treetop coverage of over 10% of the total area in arid and semi-arid conditions and 25% in more favorable conditions.”

Article 2. Land Preferably Suitable for Forestry: “All the land that because of climate and soil conditions should not be permanently plowed, whether or not covered by vegetation, excluding the land that can be used in agriculture, fruitgrowing and intensive cattle raising.”

Article 2. Forestation: “The action of populating with tree or shrub species any land that does not have such species, or that although covered by such vegetation, it is not subject of being managed to form a tree or shrub mass with preservation, protection or production purposes.”

Article 2. Reforestation: “The action of repopulating with tree or shrub species, through sowing, planting or management of natural regeneration a piece of land that was previously covered with forest or that has been subject to extractive exploitation after October 28, 1974.”

Bonus or subsidies under DL 701

The subsidies or economic incentives provided for in Decree 701 are bonuses that are granted according to law and that are grounded in the development of the forestry industry. Therefore, Title III of Decree 701 is called “Incentives to Forestry Activity.” In general, Article 12 of Decree 701 subsidizes the following: forestry activities developed in fragile soils and in areas undergoing desertification; forestation on degraded land, and activities aimed at recovering those lands; and forestation of land suitable preferably for forestry. The percentage of the bonus or rebate is generally 75 percent of the costs of the forestry activity.
Appendix D

Forest Stewardship Council—Principle 10: Plantations

Plantations shall be planned and managed in accordance with Principles and Criteria 1–9, and Principle 10 and its Criteria. While plantations can provide an array of social and economic benefits, and can contribute to satisfying the world’s needs for forest products, they should complement the management of, reduce pressures on, and promote the restoration and conservation of natural forests.

Criteria

10.1 The management objectives of the plantation, including natural forest conservation and restoration objectives, shall be explicitly stated in the management plan, and clearly demonstrated in the implementation of the plan.

10.2 The design and layout of plantations should promote the protection, restoration and conservation of natural forests, and not increase pressures on natural forests. Wildlife corridors, streamside zones and a mosaic of stands of different ages and rotation periods, shall be used in the layout of the plantation, consistent with the scale of the operation. The scale and layout of plantation blocks shall be consistent with the patterns of forest stands found within the natural landscape.

10.3 Diversity in the composition of plantations is preferred, so as to enhance economic, ecological and social stability. Such diversity may include the size and spatial distribution of management units within the landscape, number and genetic composition of species, age classes and structures.

10.4 The selection of species for planting shall be based on their overall suitability for the site and their appropriateness to the management objectives. In order to enhance the conservation of biological diversity, native species are preferred over exotic species in the establishment of plantations and the restoration of degraded ecosystems. Exotic species, which shall be used only when their performance is greater than that of native species, shall be carefully monitored to detect unusual mortality, disease, or insect outbreaks and adverse ecological impacts.
10.5 A proportion of the overall forest management area, appropriate to the scale of the plantation and to be determined in regional standards, shall be managed so as to restore the site to a natural forest cover.

10.6 Measures shall be taken to maintain or improve soil structure, fertility, and biological activity. The techniques and rate of harvesting, road and trail construction and maintenance, and the choice of species shall not result in long term soil degradation or adverse impacts on water quality, quantity or substantial deviation from stream course drainage patterns.

10.7 Measures shall be taken to prevent and minimize outbreaks of pests, diseases, fire and invasive plant introductions. Integrated pest management shall form an essential part of the management plan, with primary reliance on prevention and biological control methods rather than chemical pesticides and fertilizers. Plantation management should make every effort to move away from chemical pesticides and fertilizers, including their use in nurseries. The use of chemicals is also covered in Criteria 6.6 and 6.7.

10.8 Appropriate to the scale and diversity of the operation, monitoring of plantations shall include regular assessment of potential on-site and off-site ecological and social impacts, (e.g. natural regeneration, effects on water resources and soil fertility, and impacts on local welfare and social well-being), in addition to those elements addressed in principles 8, 6 and 4. No species should be planted on a large scale until local trials and/or experience have shown that they are ecologically well-adapted to the site, are not invasive, and do not have significant negative ecological impacts on other ecosystems. Special attention will be paid to social issues of land acquisition for plantations, especially the protection of local rights of ownership, use or access.

10.9 Plantations established in areas converted from natural forests after November 1994 normally shall not qualify for certification. Certification may be allowed in circumstances where sufficient evidence is submitted to the certification body that the manager/owner is not responsible directly or indirectly of such conversion.