Reading Chilean Street Art through Postcolonial Theory:
An Analysis of Subaltern Identity Formation in Santiaguino and Porteño Muralism

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The interviews cited in this work were performed from June through August 2012 in Santiago and Valparaiso, Chile. I would like to thank the artists (who remain anonymous due to the sensitivity of some of their artistic activities) for their gracious assistance in my research. I would also like to thank the many people who gave input and support for my thesis including my family, my friends, and committee members. This thanks is extended especially to my parents Jim and Shelley Gordon, and my friends Kelsey Lanning and Sarah Grimsdale.
ABSTRACT

Contemporary graffiti and muralist practices in Santiago and Valparaiso, Chile reflect their context of postcolonial society and culture. Through ethnographic interviews, iconographical readings of artworks and a survey of historical movements, I demonstrate how street art reveals identity formation of the artists and within their country. Using a postcolonial framework, I attempt to avoid the pitfalls of Western research into subaltern populations. The findings of this research expose the role of Chilean cultural manifestations to address issues of *indigenismo*, syncretism, and imperial political structures. Considering the homogenization of culture and the process of globalization, Chilean street art will continue to respond to external and internal pressures to form a popular and national identity.
INTRODUCTION

Located within the popular tourist hill of Cerro Alegre in Valparaiso, Chile, is a striking mural (Figure 1). When approaching the mural, most viewers first encounter a black bird (Figure 1.1) sketched on the wall in spray paint. Geometric color blocks make up the background, which moves from cooler colors to warmer, left to right across the mural. A detailed bird looking up towards a globe and moon follows the sketched bird (Figure 1.2). The work cumulates with a hummingbird hovering above a nude female figure (Figure 1.3). The hummingbird is brightly colored with fluttering wings, textured by the spray paint. The woman stands upright, holding her elbow out at a ninety-degree angle while her hand presses against her breast. Her body is made up of multicolored streaks that are mirrored in her wind-blown hair. Her lower abdomen is splattered with paint. She is not the idealized feminine form as her ribs are noticeably sharp, and she appears gaunt through her collarbones and neck. Yet her hips and thighs are thick and heavy. Her face is stoic with a hint of sadness seeping out of her eyes. A triangle earring in her right ear balances her hair sweeping to her left. Upon the door are more sketched birds in black that are caged by the bars on the outer security door.

The bright colors and clever use of architecture to cage one of the birds intrigued me. I decided to share the piece with one of my Chilean friends. Being extremely socially engaged, my friend immediately recognized the political and cultural implications behind the mural. He explained how all of the birds within the work are indigenous if not endemic to Chile. The design behind the figures makes up an indigenous textile pattern. The woman herself is used as a symbol of Latin America, a common feature in Latin American muralism. I learned two local
artists, La Robot de work Madera (LRM) and Charquipunk, created the mural. These artists work together to create a communal piece and tend to address themes of Chilean identity through their use of iconography. As my friend continued to describe the Chilean and Latin American iconography within the work, I began to realize these works help create an identity for the country.

Upon my return to the University of Colorado, I found myself continually reflecting on the works I had seen in Santiago de Chile and Valparaiso. Deciding to write an Honor’s Thesis on the murals, I began research into the nature of street art within the country and found it was a flourishing medium. I applied for a grant to return to Chile from the Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program (UROP). Happily, I received the UROP grant and spent six weeks researching in-country from June to August 2012. During this time, I interviewed multiple artists, cataloged murals and graffiti, and spent time in the Biblioteca Nacional de Chile [Chilean National Library] looking at sources unavailable in Colorado.

Chilean street art is a significant part of the national artistic culture. Since Mexican muralists arrived in Chile during the 1940s, the medium has grown to encompass politics, postcolonial social structures, syncretism and popular culture. These images have become ingrained in the artistic expression of the country. Developing from the political ideal of socialism promoted by the Mexican artists, muralism in Chile became increasingly politicized. The movement gained momentum under the political turmoil of socialist Salvador Allende and dictator Augusto Pinochet, leading to an inherent politic still found in contemporary graffiti and murals.

Currently, two main movements exist within Chilean street art: illegal graffiti and aesthetic muralism. Territorial tagging and protest graffiti constitute the illegal graffiti practice.
Although the artistic expression of the muralist movement does not always overtly express political opinions, the underlying iconography addresses issues of *indigenismo*, imperial social structures and postcolonial identity formation. Postcolonial issues continue to present themselves in contemporary Chilean muralism. These concerns manifest through the use of indigenous traditions, collective artwork and public art.

This thesis will explore the motivating factors behind the development of contemporary Chilean muralism and graffiti in relation to postcolonial concerns of the South American country. By researching in Santiago and Valparaiso, interviewing artists and participating in their artistic processes, I argue the remains of coloniality define the country’s artistic manifestations. After explaining my methodology, I address general postcolonial theory and identity development in postcolonial societies in Chapter 1. I use these ideas to examine Latin American postcolonial theory and its impact on Chilean society. In the following chapter, I analyze the historical development of the street art movement, beginning with pre-Columbian and colonial muralism. This chapter continues with the influence of the Mexican muralist movement in Chilean art circuits during the 1940s-1950s, which instigated the Chilean practice. I also address the Chilean fine art schools movement that promoted socially conscious muralism after World War II.

Chapter 3 explains how political movements eventually exploited this medium, creating a long-standing tradition within the country of political murals and propaganda graffiti. After an artistic drought under the military junta of Pinochet, political discontent reinvigorated street art eventually promoting his ousting. Street art once again flourished post-Pinochet and has developed into a strong, aesthetic language throughout the country. I continue my thesis in Chapter 4 discussing the motivations behind contemporary art and the current influences on Chilean muralism. I additionally supplement this section discussing multiple artists who have
become leaders within the community, alternative mediums and a look into the future of the movement. Throughout my thesis, I supplement my arguments with past and contemporary artist manifests written by artist groups and individuals. I conclude my thesis by discussing new directions of street art in a globalizing world.

**Methodology**

The information on which this thesis is based comes mostly from in-depth interviews I conducted during a six-week period in Santiago and Valparaiso, Chile. I had begun my research in the United States; however, I found limited academic writing on the topic. I quickly realized I would need to research in Chile and interview current participants in the street art movement to even begin understanding the medium and its significance. Upon arriving to Chile, I intended to focus mainly on illegal protest graffiti in relation to a current student dissent movement. Through my interviews, I discerned there is a much larger muralist movement that pervades Chilean society, which is the basis of the illegal protest graffiti.

I started by interviewing Chilean artists I knew previously and then asked them to refer me to other artists willing to help with my research. The technique, known as “snowballing,” allowed me to quickly find interviewees. Some artists I found through their murals, which many sign with blogs in addition to their signatures. The group of thirty-three *graffiteros* I interviewed was diverse in socioeconomic background, education and artistic processes. Some of the artists came from well off families, had Master’s degrees in their fields and were widely recognized within the Chilean art scene. Others came from lower classes, had histories in gang related activities and did not have an education past high school. Their level of education and economic success is not linked to their socioeconomic background. The majority of the *graffiteros* were
men, with a few women participating in the informal interviews. The artists ranged in age from eighteen to forty-six, the majority of them in their late twenties or early thirties.

I conducted both formal and informal interviews with the artists. These recorded sessions lasted from one hour to three hours and took place in cafes, private homes, and restaurants. The formal interviews were structured as in-depth ethnographic research into the artist’s backgrounds, their artistic processes and their motivations behind their works. I asked open-ended questions to allow the *graffiteros* to direct the interview and discuss issues important to them. In these formal interviews, we discussed topics such as their politics, iconography and audiences. The informal interview process gave me a context in which to place the artists and understand the socioeconomic factors that pushed their art. I was able to participate in many of the artists’ processes and understand how they create their works in depth. The majority of the informal interviews were in group settings, at cafes, restaurants or while painting. These were immensely informational as artists would contrast their practices against each other and gave different perspectives on the same issues. Other of the informal interviews took place in the streets while artists created murals. Both interview processes were modeled off of postcolonial theories, especially that of Gayatri Spivak, in order to avoid contributing to continuing imperial hierarchies.

One of the most amazing things about my research was the warm welcome I received from all of the artists I contacted. I was surprised how willing these people were to give me their time and allow me to participate in their art. Through openly discussing my research goals with the artists, I developed the postcolonial perspective. Many of the more educated *graffiteros* discussed postcolonial theory in depth during our interviews. Their enthusiasm for this perspective was highly encouraging.
My personal experiences and background influenced the interview process. Being a young gringa who learned her Spanish in Peru had both benefits and drawbacks. I was welcomed as a researcher but not necessarily as an insider. My research was more objective, yet still personal due to the connections I created with these artists. These shared experiences allowed me to comprehend the current muralist and graffiti process in Chile from my identities and perspectives.
CHAPTER 1

COLONIALITY AND POSTCOLONIAL THEORY

The research presented in this thesis is framed within postcolonial theory and literature. I chose this framework due to the pertinence of American identity within the works of the artists I interviewed. Many of the artists themselves have studied postcolonialism and discuss their art within this framework. The postcolonial perspective is a rather recent development in art history. Beginning with the liberation of multiple colonies in Africa and Asia post-World War II, postcolonial studies flourished under those such as Edward Said, Homi Bhabha and Gayatri Spivak. As pointed out by Robert Young, postcolonialism does not have a coherent theoretical methodology, but rather is a collection of politics. The main politic behind the perspective is that universal claims made by art historians are mistaken, as they presume all people fall into a white, Western mold. Postcolonialists attempt to expose this misrepresentation of colonized societies. To do so, theorists address more issues than simply non-Western art; they focus more on the interactions between imperialist forces and their colonies. They explore how both sides of the relationship are affected by each other.

Said, writing about the Orient and western domination of the region, is considered the originator of postcolonial theory. His book, Orientalism, specifically addresses the subaltern depiction of the “oriental” in the Western imagination. His redefining of colonial power as not only physical but also ideological reveals the complete domination of European colonialism. He argues Western and Asian cultures were completely distinct from each other. These cultures, although they interact, are unable to comprehend their differences thoroughly. The relationship
between cultures is always defined by power. Usually this dominance results in a cultural hegemony upon the submissive culture. His development of culture as imperialism is significant to my research. It is through culture that the ‘divine right’ of imperialism is created. The economic, political and institutional power of the colonizers is maintained through culture. iv Culture is both a result and creator of identity, which is why many postcolonial countries return to traditional cultural practices upon liberation. Culture is manipulated by the colonizer to create hegemony of power within the country through the denial of a local culture. This denial in part leads to the use of indigenous culture as a form of resistance. v Contemporary graffiteros turn to indigenous traditions and iconography as a way to reject North American hegemony and create a Chilean identity separate from Spanish domination.

Spivak’s contributions to postcolonial studies helped me to develop appropriate research methods, as I am a Westerner researching in a postcolonial country. Spivak’s most influential work, “Can the Subaltern Speak?” addresses issues of race and power dynamics. vi Deconstructionist and Marxist ideology heavily influence the article as Spivak addresses the reappropriation of Antonio Gramsci’s term “subaltern,” which refers to a group of inferior station. She points out knowledge is never unbiased and reflects the desires of its creator. Therefore, when a Western researcher investigates the “other,” they recreate the “other” within a Western context. Spivak ultimately argues that researchers who speak for and give a collective voice to othered populations enforce colonial hierarchies. This collective voice homogenizes a diverse group and creates dependence upon westerners to “speak for” the population.

Spivak continues this line of thought in “French Feminism in an International Frame,” in which she confronts colonial perspectives in academic practices. She questions the validity of academic works representing “Third World” women and the objective relationship between
researcher and the researched. The researcher can never be “disinterested” in his/her subject and is inherently biased by their background. This is especially concerning when scholars research cultures different than their own as Western concepts are not always applicable in culturally divergent contexts. By discussing her own past, Spivak reveals the Western knowledge system is not applicable throughout the world. Many Western academics feel empowered through their education and thus believe that they write on behalf of disenfranchised populations. Spivak promotes a shift in this viewpoint and states academics need to question whether their approach is best suited to reading and writing about their topic. She additionally questions the privileged sense of superiority of helping the subject. Instead researchers should question what their topic could do for them.\textsuperscript{vii}

Spivak’s argument is interpreted by some postcolonialists as the lack of ability by Western scholars to ever clearly represent other cultures, especially those of colonized countries with their indigenous population socially othered.\textsuperscript{viii} This perspective threatens to undermine my research; however, I am not attempting to represent Latin American art as a cohesive group, nor do I claim to completely understand the context from which the works derive. Although I cannot pretend I am more than a Western researcher, I believe the information presented in this thesis, and from my interviews in particular, is a valid contribution to the understanding of Chilean street art. As Spivak suggests, I speak to these artists not for them.\textsuperscript{ix}

As postcolonial theory developed, scholars split from Said’s interpretation of cultural difference. Later postcolonialists, such as Bhabha, assert that cultures are a hybrid, and constantly in a state of flux. Bhabha proposes hybridization as a continuing process of interaction and syncretism between cultures in his book *The Location of Culture*. His works have focused on ways in which colonized peoples have resisted the oppression of the colonizer. The main theories
he has developed are hybridity, mimicry, difference and ambivalence. He emphasizes the agency of the colonized peoples, giving them voice outside of their position. In this respect, Bhabha differs significantly from Said who suggests, “colonial power and discourse is possessed entirely by the colonizer, which is a historical and theoretical simplification.” Considering the diversity within the country, I focus on the hybridity of cultures in my thesis. A large social division remains between the cultures in Chile that continues affect society and artistic manifestations. Yet the mixing of indigenous, criollo [Latin Americans of Spanish descent] and North American culture overwhelms many of these social boundaries.

Bhabha is one of the few postcolonialist who directly address issues of art and he does so within the context of its representation in museums. Writing in *Artforum* of the National Gallery of Washington’s exhibition, ‘Circa 1492: Art in the Age of Exploration,’ Bhabha points out the othering of cultures within the show. The exhibition attempted to depict a parallel perspective of a worldwide vision along with individual visions of the historical events. The attempt to create a neutral world history of the time period fails, as the perspective is biased to North America. Bhabha views the exhibition as a manifest of postmodernist society’s desire to consume other cultures to be considered multicultural. Another art exhibition Bhabha explored was ‘Black Male’ at the Whitney Museum in New York. The article, published in *Artforum*, addresses the issue of stereotyped depictions of black males. According to Bhabha, the exhibition grants too much power to the stereotype and fails to recognize the “life outside and beyond the stereotype, even for its victims.” Bhabha furthers his analysis of art and suggests postcolonial art mirror colonial forms, but postcolonial artists differentiate their works to create a narrative countering colonial hierarchies.
The majority of postcolonial theory focuses on Africa and Asia, as their revolutions spurred the theory into existence. This has lead some scholars to argue postcolonial theory cannot be applied to Latin America because of the very different nature of Spanish domination and revolution. Other academics have postulated the use of postcolonial theory in Latin America would homogenize the colonized world and diminish the cultural differences between these regions.\textsuperscript{xv} However, Latin America dealt, and still copes with, the leftovers of colonialism, which requires a postcolonial theoretical framework.

As Latin American literary and cultural studies critiqued the colonialist impact and Eurocentrism before the development of the perspective, postcolonial theory has ignored the region.\textsuperscript{xvi} Traditionally, academia chronologically begins the analysis of colonialism and Eurocentrism by looking at the decolonization of Africa and Asia post-World War II. When scholars ignore Latin America in the postcolonial context, they miss the origin of modernity by two or three centuries.\textsuperscript{xvii} Scholars ignore the beginnings of anti-imperial discourse written by Inca Garcilaso, Guaman Poma, and Bartolomé de las Casas during the colonial period. These three writers addressed similar issues of indigenous treatment and power structures in colonial Latin America. Although these authors start the discourse that leads to contemporary postcolonial thought in the region, their personal theories are not revelatory to this work.

Cuban national hero José Martí continued this discourse during the nineteenth century. Martí contributed to the understanding of cultural differences between North and Latin America during his fifteen years working as a journalist in the United States.\textsuperscript{xviii} He demonstrated his anti-imperial ideologies through his political actions as an active revolutionist. Similar to Said, Martí viewed cultures a completely separated and argued two peoples cohabited the Western hemisphere. His divisions of cultures significantly differed from previous anti-colonial writers.
Instead of dividing the American population into indigenous and colonialist populations, Martí split the population into Latin America and another “America” consisting of the United States and Canada. This “America” was considered alien and particularly dangerous to his concept of Latin America. The categorization of Latin America as a collective group, particularly an indigenous community, eliminated all positive Spanish and European benefits. Martí even went as far to invert the system of *mestizaje* [miscegenation] and pronounce Spanish blood as impure and the reason for the lack of development in Latin America. Martí characterized this new Latin America in the tradition of the noble savage: “America, a giant savage… is shaking off the moral oppression which different powers have left on it, is redeeming itself from its confusion and from the servility of imported doctrines… Feeling is subordinated to thought, and counting its words, upon them it calculates its way of exercising liberty.”

By utilizing the noble savage framework, Martí reveals a naivety to his work that continues to subordinate the subaltern. The last sentence potentially redeems his argument as Martí promotes the use of thought and calculation to overcome these hierarchies. This charge can be seen as the instigating factor for later Latin American theorists and practitioners.

José Carlos Mariátegui and Moisés Sáenz began applying this tradition of anti-imperialist dialogue practical solutions to identity crisis during the early twentieth century. The largest influence in the discourse development of this period was Marxism. Marx asserted colonialism was not a separate phenomenon but a result of the global European expansion and part of the peripheral bourgeoisie. The “trajectory of universal history” required colonialism that eventually spread the bourgeoisie to these “precapitalist” societies. Colonialism was only an instigating factor of modernism and would dissolve upon the implementation of communist society. The creation of a global market through colonialism would thus lead to modernity suggesting
postcolonialism is simply an economic or political matter. Said, Spivak and Bhabha, as mentioned before, disprove this by addressing the subaltern representation as an imaginary archetype of the other (orientals, blacks, Indians, peasants) in order to preserve imperial hierarchies.\textsuperscript{xxii}

In Latin America, José Carlos Mariátegui, a Peruvian journalist, developed Marxist ideals to include issues of indigenous identity. After studying for an extended period in Europe, Mariátegui returned to Peru questioning Peruvian identity and the nation’s relationship to Latin American and the world.\textsuperscript{xxiii} His theoretical concept of the nation challenged the existing Latin American borders. Latin American national borders at this time were not based upon ethnic or linguistic geographies but on military conquests.\textsuperscript{xxiv} Mariátegui argued, “La nación misma es una abstracción, una alegoría, un mito, que no corresponde a una realidad constante y precisa, científicamente determinable.” [The nation itself is an abstraction, an allegory, a myth that does not correspond to a constant and precise reality.]\textsuperscript{xxv} The cultural heterogeneity in Latin American countries led to ethnic and racial conflict, which Mariátegui’s inclusive Latin American identity attempted to dispel.\textsuperscript{xxvi} He came up with a conceptual nation of Latin America based off of the shared experience of Spanish colonization, indigenous patrimony and the subjugation of Northern imperialism. He rejected the Latinity and \textit{mestizaje} as European constructs that limited Latin American singularity. “The Indian,” as a unique aspect of Latin American culture, became the uniting factor for Mariátegui’s socialist utopia.\textsuperscript{xxvii} He labeled this concept of promoting the indigenous concerns politically and socially as \textit{indigenismo}. As Mariátegui was attempting to create a socialist nation, many critics saw his use of indigenous populations as a propaganda tool. In response, Mariátegui attempted to adapt Marxist ideologies to the Peruvian context, comparing Marxist society to the indigenous values of reciprocity and collectivism.
Mariátegui’s ideas quickly spread throughout countries with large indigenous populations, eventually becoming part of their political and cultural systems. His works influenced the Mexican professor Moisés Sáenz, who in turn influenced the Mexican muralist David Alfaro Siqueiros. Sáenz developed Mariátegui’s ideas to work within the Mexican context. Sáenz espoused the development and inclusion of indigenous communities into Mexican society. He studied indigenous populations extensively in Guatemala, Ecuador, Peru and Bolivia to compare the indigenous situation in each country. Upon completing his studies in these countries, he wrote two books, *Sobre el indio ecuatoriano y su incorporacion al medio nacional* [About the Ecuadorian Indian and his Incorporation in the National Medium] and *Sobre el indio peruano y su incorporacion al medio nacional* [About the Peruvian Indian and his Incorporation in the National Medium]. These books addressed the problems concerning indigenous populations and posited suggestions on how to politically and educationally solve these issues. By the mid-1930’s, *indigenismo* had become a common phrase within academic circles. To promote a Pan-American solidarity in face of World War II, national governments adopted the ideology and created projects to achieve this goal of consensus. This is reflected within the Chilean muralist movement, as the government funded educational art programs.xxviii

After World War II, the United States created hegemony of power over the hemisphere, leading young philosophers such as Leopoldo Zea and Francisco Romero to question the hemisphere’s identity. Upon seeing the power of “Hindu thought” to develop identity in India and the surrounding ex-British colonies, these philosophers began to look at their own heritage more in depth to combat North American hegemony.

This tradition of postcolonial discourse has continued in Latin American culture with critics Walter Mignolo, Aníbal Quijano and Enrique Dussel forming the base of Latin American
postcolonialist theory. All three writers agree modernity began with the creation of the Atlantic commercial circuit and the emergence of global capitalism. They call the resulting paradigm from colonialism coloniality. Dussel defines coloniality as “the transhistoric expansion of colonial domination and the perpetuation of its effects in contemporary times.” Each author focuses on different issues in coloniality, and they differ in their interpretations of modernity. Mignolo argues the colonization of sixteenth century Latin America constituted the first modern societal structure with the consequence of coloniality. He points out the concept of modernity is not the same as the modern world-system. The academic image of modernity promotes a continuous progression from ancient Greece to today. However, the modern world-system was founded during the fifteenth century and links to capitalism. Modernity focuses on Europe, while the modern world-system is grounded in colonialism.

Quijano’s works focus on the issues of racial hierarchizing and colonial power. Quijano’s book *Nationalism and Capitalism in Peru* is a case study of his theories in post-dictatorship Peru. The book extrapolates to address the “internal crisis” within Latin America of socioeconomic and political order. He argues the “model of power that is globally hegemonic today presupposes an element of coloniality.” Upon the colonization of the Americas, two historical processes developed and established the modern model of power. The first system was the creation of complicated racial hierarchies based on the false idea of racial biological difference. This model of power eventually spread to the rest of the world and is still seen in the marginalization of minority populations. The second process was the creation of new labor and resource controls. This process consisted of past labor configurations including slavery, serfdom, communal production and reciprocity, eventually leading to today’s globalized capitalist structure.
Dussel is the founder of the philosophy of liberation, focusing on colonial liberation as an alternative modernity to colonialism. He has developed an ethics of revolution based off of a rereading of Marxist literature. Although Dussel agrees with Mignolo and Quijano on the date of modern development, he argues modernity is not inherently European. He views modernity a global phenomenon, which he defines as transmodernity. “Excluded barbarians” contributed significantly to the development of modernity with the formation of capitalism during the sixteenth century. All three of the writers come back together to define the “modern/colonial world-system as a sociohistorical structure coincident with the expansion of capitalism… [and] coloniality and the colonial difference as loci of enunciation.”

Even though their artworks have been widely ignored in postcolonial research, Latin Americans address significant themes related to coloniality. Current artists continue to create Chilean artistic identity and separate themselves from European aesthetics. The main issues addressed in postcolonialist Chilean art are identity, syncretism, mestizaje and colonial social structures. These are prevalent in Latin American art due to the long period of colonialism and the immediate mixing of cultures between Spanish colonialists and indigenous populations. The marginalization of indigenous peoples is extreme in Chile, so while its geography is defined by the Andes, Chile is not considered an Andean country culturally. The two main indigenous groups in Chile are the Aymara in the north, and the Mapuche in the south-central regions. Chile has long been considered a highly Europeanized country because of the large immigrant populations from Basque and Germany during the 19th century. The current artwork of the country addresses many indigenous issues and questions the notion of European identity among Chileans. The Europeanizing of the country has also led to a nationalistic sense of superiority.
over Andean countries, such as Bolivia, Peru and Ecuador. Many artists who identify with Andean culture, such as Yisa and Inti, question this exclusive nationalistic identity.

The influences of the postcolonial theory are evident within Chilean muralism. Mexican muralists attempted to create a Mexican identity separate from European influences. Nationalistic and ethnic self-interest motivated their movement, as well as an attraction to Latin American identity. Their rejection of European aesthetics and motivations is mirrored in Chilean muralism. To comprehend contemporary issues such as neoliberalism, globalization, migration, social movements and cultural hybridity, colonialism must be understood as an implicating factor. What type of “residue” has coloniality left upon Chilean society? I address this question by looking at cultural manifestations within postcolonial countries.
CHAPTER 2
HISTORY OF LATIN AMERICAN MURALISM

Muralism has a long historical tradition within the Americas and Chile beginning in pre-Columbian times. Only a few pre-Columbian era murals still exist due to corrosive environmental conditions. These examples allow us to surmise others existed as well, and in some areas they were a significant part of the culture. Two interesting examples of these murals are the frescos on the Zapotec tomb of Monte Albán at Teotihuacán in Mexico (Figure 2) and the Chanchán tapestries in Peru. The Zapotec fresco figures are outlined in red pigment made from minerals. The ornamental tapestries from Chanchán depict animals, plants and geometric patterns. These examples demonstrate the tradition among Latin American artists to create images on a large scale and to consider their site-specific function.

Before the innovations of the Mexican influence, Chilean muralism was limited to religious settings. These murals held the same function in Chile as in other Latin American countries: the evangelization of the viewer. The best examples of these still surviving in Chile are in the Church of San Francisco de Santiago. These murals (Figure 3), created by multiple artists, are located in the upper part of the cloisters. Also within the church is a collection of fifty-four large-dimension oil paintings. These paintings were more practical than murals to fill the church as constant earthquakes damaged walls. It is unknown whether these paintings were brought from Peru or painted in Chile. Both time periods serve to inspire contemporary artists as they try to form an identity by looking at the local artistic past. Artists mainly draw to pre-Columbian works as a way to form a distinct identity separate from Europe. They do not reject
religious muralism and include some aspects of Catholicism as it had fused with local culture and differentiated itself from European tradition. Depending on their views, i.e. whether they lean towards Said’s separation of culture or Bhabha’s hybridization, they tend to be influenced by a certain period over the other. However, the most significant influence on Chilean muralism as a whole would be the intervention of Mexican artists during the 1940s.

Influence of Mexican Muralism

The muralist tradition in Chile is rooted in the influence of the Mexican muralists of the 1920s. The Mexican muralist movement began after the Mexican Revolution of 1910, which lasted over ten years. During this time period, a significant shift occurred among artists who were influenced by Marxism and indigenismo. The fundamentals of the Mexican muralist movement are outlined in the *Manifiesto del Sindicato de Pintores y Escultores Mexicanos* (Mexican Sculpture and Painter Syndicate Manifesto) written by David Alfaro Siqueiros. The manifesto was published in 1922 signed by Jose Clemente Orozco, Xavier Guerrero and Diego Rivera. The goals of the manifesto were to promote the socialization of art and collective works, diminish individualism and produce monumental public works. The creation of the *Manifiesto del Sindicato de Obreros Tecnicos, Pintores y Escultores Mexicanos*, 1922, would significantly influence early Chilean art movements as well as individual artists.

A Declaration of Social, Political, and Aesthetic Principles

The Syndicate Technical Workers, Painters, and Sculptors directs itself to the native races humiliated for centuries; to the soldiers made into hangmen by their officers; to the workers and peasants scourged by the rich; and to the intellectuals who do not flatter the bourgeoisie.

We side with those who demand the disappearance of an ancient, cruel system in which the farm worker produces food for the loud-mouthed politicians and bosses, while he starves; in which the industrial workers in the factories who weave cloth and by the work of their hands make life comfortable for the pimps and prostitutes, while
they crawl and freeze; in which the Indian soldier heroically leaves the land he has
tilled and eternally sacrifices his life in a vain attempt to destroy the misery which has
lain on his face for centuries.

The noble work of our race, down to its most insignificant and physical expressions, is
native (an essentially Indian) in origin. With their admirable and extraordinary talent
to create beauty, peculiar to themselves, the art of the Mexican people is the most
wholesome spiritual expression in the world and this tradition is our greatest treasure.
Great because it belongs collectively to the people and this is why our fundamental
aesthetic goal must be to socialize artistic expression and wipe out bourgeois
individualism.

We repudiate the so-called easel painting and every kind of art favored by ultra-
intellectual circles, because it is aristocratic, and we praise monumental art in all its
forms, because it is public property.

We proclaim that at this time of social change from a decrepit order to a new one, the
creators of beauty must use their best efforts to produce ideological works of art for
the people; art must no longer be the expression of individual satisfaction which it is
today, but should aim to become a fighting, educative art for all.xlii

By re-reading the manifesto in a postcolonial context, we can see the influence of anti-
imperialist thought. This is not surprising as Siqueiros, a Marxist, was friend and admirer of
Sáenz. Siqueiros appeals directly to the subaltern populations of the time period, especially those
disenfranchised by the 1910 Mexican Revolution. The manifesto follows Mariátegui’s promotion
of indigenous populations and applauds their art as “the most wholesome spiritual expression in
the world.” Like Mariátegui, the manifesto refuses to acknowledge mestizaje in favor of the
“pure” Indian. Siqueiros suggests the creation of a new modernity with the liberation from
colonial social structures, an idea mirrored later in the works on revolutionary ethics by Dussel.
Overall the manifesto is meant as a propaganda tool in the postcolonial politic and identity
creation of Mexico.

Along with promoting social muralism within the country, Mexican muralists also
introduced technological advances. New plasticizers, such as pyroxylin and cellulose, increased
the fluidity of the paint, as well as the mechanical brush, allowed Chilean muralists to create
more complex compositions with decreased drying times. Siqueiros commonly painted with pyroxylin, which allowed him to create texture and depth.

Siqueiros, accompanied by Guerrero, arrived in Chile in 1940. Having participated in the attempted assassination of Leon Trotsky, Siqueiros was fleeing Mexico when he was captured and incarcerated for a year. Eventually with the help of Chilean poet Pablo Neruda, Siqueiros fled to Chile in exile. Desiring to spread collective art and his manifesto beyond Mexico, he began holding informal lectures at the Escuela de Bellas Artes (School of Fine Arts) in Santiago.

In 1941, Siqueiros was commissioned by the Mexican ambassador to Chile, Octavio Reyes Espíndola to paint the Pedro Aguirre Cerda Library in the Escuela Mexico de Chillán, an elementary school. The library’s rectangular room measures eighty feet long along the largest wall. Surprisingly, much of the space was already occupied with shelving, leaving the two short walls and ceiling or approximately two thousand square feet in total available to Siqueiros. Over 1941-1942, Siqueiros painted the mural with the help of Guerrero and local artists. The work, titled Muerte al Invasor [Death to the Invader], shows stages of Chilean history on the south side of the library and Mexican history on the north. Representing the union of the two countries, the work was the first large social mural in Chile. As a collaborative piece, many Chilean muralists, such as Camilo Mori and Jose Venturelli, either worked independently or directly with Siqueiros on the piece. In turn, these artists became part of the Chilean muralist movement following Siqueiros’ return to Mexico.

The south panel (Figure 4), which represents the history of Chile, focuses on the popular fight for national independence and progress. The historical heroes included in the mural, such as Lautaro, Bernardo O’Higgins and Luis Emilio Recabarren, stand over fallen invasores.
The main figure, Galvarino, an indigenous historical figure, shouts out to the viewer. His hands have been cut off as he leaps forward to merge with Francisco Bilbao, a prominent liberal politician of the 19th century. To the right, O'Higgins, one of the revolutionary founding fathers of the country, walks towards the viewer carrying both the old and new Chilean flag. The composition’s left is a mix of fists and spears, above which Recabarren and Lautaro, the leader of the Chilean Worker’s movement and a young Mapuche rebellion leader respectively, stand in flames. Beneath the country’s heroes are the crushed invaders. By depicting important Chilean historical figures, Siqueiros demonstrates nationalistic identity formation.

The Mexican panel (Figure 4) similarly depicts the struggle against imperial power. Hidalgo, Morales and Zapata, heroes of the Mexican Revolution, stand linked together by the popular folk figure, Adelita. A myth of the 1910 Mexican Revolution, Adelita was a young woman who followed a sergeant whom she loved into battle. Adelita has now become analogous with strong women and represents Mexico itself within the mural. Siqueiros often uses women to personify Mexico’s presence, pain and endurance. By placing the Chilean and Mexican national identifiers in direct contrast with each other, Siqueiros creates a stark difference between the two situations. He links the two countries together in a similar plight against domination and architecturally connects them through the ceiling. The mural changes from figural to abstract as the eye looks upward. The ceiling becomes a tormented sky as dynamic colors spread out to join the movement on the walls.

In an article published in the Santiago-based journal *Forma*, Siqueiros emphasized the dynamic, architecturally focused components of the composition. “Esta concebida como la pintura del total espacio arquitectural y no como la organización de varios paños aislados, esto es, de manera diferente a la que usaron todos los pintores del Renacimiento y siguen usando mis
The mural was conceived as a painting of the total architectural space and not as a composition of various isolated panels, this is, different than the composition the Renaissance painters used, which my Mexican muralist colleagues continue to use.

By differentiating himself from the Renaissance painters, Siqueiros places his artistic ability above European influences. He also attempts to raise himself above the other Mexican muralists by connecting them to this European past. His manifesto outlines this rejection of European influence that follows identity creation patterns in which the subjugated express themselves as morally superior to the dominators.

Although now titled *Muerte al Invasor* after the content of the mural, Siqueiros originally titled the work *Oratoria pictórica* [Pictorial Oration]. He intended to demonstrate the “elocuentismo” [elocuentism] that he believed should be the main principal of social art. The work signaled a progression within his career joining together the local folkloric tradition, the “estática” [static] Mexican mural and the “snob” ability of Parisian modern art.

Through the freedom allowed in the project, Siqueiros achieved maturity in his style and iconography. Using pyroxylin paint, which would later require the mural to be restored, he added texture and thickness to surface. This creation of volume augments the sense of impulsive movement and interaction with the viewer.

Siqueiros and Guerrero continued to influence the arts in Chile through their collaborative work with local artists, and participation in conferences, informal lectures and interventions. However, Camilo Mori, who had worked on the Chillán mural, became one of Siqueiros largest critics. Mori criticized Siqueiros political and Marxist manipulation of the indigenous tradition. Artists distancing themselves from Siqueiros eventually formed their own
movement that rivaled the Mexican with their ability to convey their message and propagate communal street art.

**Post-World War II Chilean Muralist Movement**

Although collective muralism would eventually manifest even stronger in Chile than Mexico, the Escuela de Bellas Artes in Chile ardently resisted its expansion. The Mexican artists never formally taught in the Chilean school. It was not until the Second World War that an atmosphere of awareness was created in which muralism flourished both academically and publically. This was partly due to the increased popularity of *indigenismo* within Latin American countries at this time. The need to show solidarity against European fascism led government funding of social projects.

In 1945, Osvaldo Reyes, Carmen Cereceda and Fernando Marcos formed the Grupo de Pintores Muralistas del Ministerio de Educación [Ministry of Education Collective of Muralist Painters]. Their first interventions were completed in the Ciudad del Nino, a public elementary school in Santiago. The group meant to execute murals in all Santiago public schools but was unable to continue after their first few months working due to high costs. The goal of the muralists was to create alliances between the fine arts and education. Of the three murals created, the *Homenaje a Gabriela Mistral y los trabajadores del salitre* [Homage to Gabriela Mistral and the Nitrate Workers] at the Ciudad del Nino (Figure 5) painted by Fernando Marcos is the most famous. Marcos’ use of heroic socialist realism in the vein of Diego Rivera creates a strong political statement. The mural is dedicated to Gabriela Mistral a famous Chilean poet, who addressed Chilean identity within her poetry on workers and family; themes mirrored within the mural. The iconography in the piece elevates the work of the nitrate workers and the working
A young boy sitting in the foreground holds a Chilean flag, alluding to the proud Chilean identity represented in the mural. The Chilean family is represented in the right part of the composition. A mother holding her child reflects the Catholic representation of Mary and the child Jesus (Figure 5.1).

The Mexican influence and creation of the Grupo de Pintores Muralistas del Ministerio de Educación led to the writing of the *Manifiesto de Integracion Plastica* [Manifesto of PlasticIntegration] by Fernando Marcos and Osvaldo Reyes. Funded by the Congreso de Cultura [Congress of Culture] in November 1952, the *Manifiesto de Integracion Plastica* was also signed by Diego Rivera. It put forth the necessity of artistic creation grounded within and accessible to the community. Its publication coincided with the government project that funded the decoration of public and municipal buildings. The *Manifiesto de Integracion Plastica* begins by charging Chilean artists to look towards the Latin American tradition to create their own art that truly represents themselves. Instead of focusing on the art created in Europe, which reflects the cultural needs of Europeans, Chilean artists are asked to create an art addressing local and regional concerns. To accomplish this, the manifest proposes collaboration between all artists and mediums, integrating the *pueblo* into the art process as well. Overall artists should fight against “sectores artisticos retrógrados y cosmopolitas” [backwards and cosmopolitan artistic sectors], which have marginalized local art production.

The influence of the *Manifiesto del Sindicato* is evident throughout the *Manifiesto de Integracion Plastica*. The longer *Manifiesto de Integracion Plastica* focuses less on indigenous populations and more on the *pueblo*. They both demand a change in focus in artistic endeavors although they propose different solutions. While the *Manifiesto del Sindicato* promotes the creation of “monumental expression” and public access to works socializing the arts, the
Manifiesto de Integracion Plastica promotes a rejection of European influence to do so. Chilean artists are beseeched to look at their own country’s heritage as well as all South American traditions. The following is a personal translation of the Chilean manifesto:

Until now, Chile has been permanently nourishing itself upon Europe in the field of fine arts. Some artists, especially those who are well off, take pride in this “civilizing” influence.

The truth is that in Chile there are other artists that while acknowledging art created in other latitudes (beyond the American continent), they can in no way accept, at least in our time, the dependence upon the European present in our culture and art, especially the national plastic arts.

In turn, these artists take into account that our country, similar to other nations of the Latin American continent, has for a long time developed in preparation to produce our own art and culture that is truly self-representative.

The existence of this creative potential is demonstrated in the past, as well as the present; even though it is clear that the cosmopolitan artistic school of thought, more than the universal, has, until now, ashamedly dominated the guidelines of national art.

The artists that appreciate our pueblo’s creative strength certainly do not wait for the latest European or Parisian fashion in order to create. However, this does not indicate they do not recognize the true cultural and artistic contribution that Europe or Paris can provide.

The socioeconomic phenomenon produced in our América is driving all the countries of the continent towards an objective course of action defending their immediate and consequential interests. All pueblos are increasingly interested in the Latin American Union, not only for the fulfillment of essential needs, but for a more profound unity, such as the creative unity in the arts and culture, the result of a mutual comprehension; as the product of a sustained fight, against the negative and slowing forces that deny or fail to recognize what really represents a united America, in all of life’s approaches.

This unity of artistic creation and culture, born of the very core of the Latin American pueblo with all of its rich experience and potential, not only has to serve to express its own contributions on the universal level, but also has to satisfy the needs of this pueblo of América.

Thus, all of the plastic artists: painters, sculptors, architects, ceramicists, recorders, drawers, etc., in our country should unite to develop a conjoined and coordinated labor that is usually reflective of the national plastic arts, the impulse that the pueblo is contributing to national and continental artistic creation.

In this sense, in this proposition of plastic integration and artistic in general, (artists) will be able to contribute coherent and truthful works that surpass the stretched limits
in which some antisocial plastic sectors are currently developing, absent of our reality and faithful to reactionary conservatism and outdated interpretations.

This same unity of action also has to serve to fight for a truthful economic and social justice that benefits the underprivileged creative social sector of culture and art.

Thus we call upon all Chilean artists, especially the youth, to close ranks with the Plastic Integration Movement, with the fundamental objective to fight for the following grounds of this manifest:

1. The push towards the establishment of a National Plastic Art, as much in its creative process, as in the aspects of investigation, formation, and artistic dissemination.
2. That the artistic creation should be born from the very core of the pueblo. To achieve this, the artist has to be in permanent contact with the elements of the working class, and in the same way, in permanent contact with the Latin American pueblos.
3. Stimulate the formation of new artistic values that represent this new reality.
4. The stimulation of popular (egalitarian) art, so that this constitutes the primary creative force of the pueblos.
5. For a Latin American plastic expression on the universal level, that interprets and represents us through our pueblos’ vital forces.
6. For the constant exchange of Latin American artists, with the purpose to strengthen bonds, and to create the necessary conditions for a just understanding and valuation of the continental artistic creation.
7. To fight against the retrograde and cosmopolitan artistic sectors, which have until now kept our pueblos on the periphery of art and the national plastic arts.
8. This Movement of Plastic Integration will fight for the interests and immediate demands of the Chilean plastic artists.

We sign this document: Fernando Marcos, muralist; María Fuentealba, sculptor; Osvaldo Reyes, muralist; Rosa Abarca, painter; Hardy Wistuba, painter; Ximena Cristi, painter; Enrique Rufatt, architect; Fernando Bustos, architecture; Luis Oviedo, drawer-engraver; Luis Guzmán, sculptor-ceramist; Flor Orrego, painter; Daco Maturana, drawer-engraver; Heriberto Alfaro, sculptor…

The Manifiesto de Integracion Plastica is directed to Chilean artists instead of the subaltern populations of the Mexican manifesto. It reads less politically overt because of this change in audience and is softer in tone. The goals of the Manifiesto de Integracion Plastica are also slightly different than the Manifiesto del Sindicato. While the Manifiesto del Sindicato promotes artistic change to benefit the subaltern audience, the Manifiesto de Integracion Plastica focuses more on the artistic benefits of eschewing European influence. The Manifiesto de Integracion Plastica does reach out to a marginalized population through the pueblo. The pueblo
can be read as an alternative to the Mexican “Indian.” Considering the different indigenous populations of the country, the Manifiesto de Integracion Plastica needed to address a different subaltern than Mexico. Both manifestos elevate the marginalized population to a higher moral ground and act as a form of anti-imperial propaganda.

**La Presencia de América Latina**

The other significant Mexican artist involved in developing the Chilean muralist tradition was Jorge González Camarena. González Camarena was a second generation Mexican muralist who arrived to the university town, Concepción, during the 1960s. His work, La Presencia de América Latina (The Presence of Latin America, Fig. 6) in the art gallery of the Universidad de Concepción, promotes solidarity of Latin American heritage and culture. González Camarena mainly used pre-Columbian Mexican iconography to depict the current and past history of Latin America. The three hundred square meter mural confronts the viewer upon entering the art gallery.

The viewer’s eyes are immediately drawn to the large red face on the left side of the composition. Despite this the work’s narrative compositionally flows right to left. The right part of the mural depicts the pre-Columbian period. Along the stairs, González Camarena placed Quetzalcoatl, the plumed serpent. Above, the viewer is an image of Zontemoc, “the sun that falls,” in red. Below a blue-faced woman holds a fish, showing the riches of the ocean. To her side is the green face of Tlaloc, the Aztec god of rain. In the upper right corner, a Spanish conquistador and an indigenous woman represent the first couple. The woman is painted nude with almost see through skin showing the musculature and bones of her right leg. The Spanish conquistador is completely hidden behind his armor. Behind him follows two red-eyed horses, allusions to the
horsemen of the apocalypse. A Mexican eagle rises above a pair of two volcanoes and is mirrored on the far left of the composition as well. Along the bottom of the mural are multicolored women lying trapped in stone. They represent the mineral wealth of the Americas, although their body gestures show the anguish that mining them brings to the American people. The land compresses them and imposes upon their freedom. Above them rises a pyramid, lined with the accomplishments of men. Science and technology are represented through agricultural achievements. Nude women wrapped in vines and ivy show the fecundity of Latin American land. Above the women, the pyramid cumulates in machinery and a forge. The mural is bordered along the top with the flags of each Latin American country. The flags wave in the red sky, overlapping each other. The Chilean flag ends the procession in a prominent position above the pyramid. Large faces interrupt the border of flags. The largest face looks downward at the viewer, frowning and colored red. Other faces merge with the red figure’s face, two profiles look to the left and another face below looks to the right. The faces represent the different races throughout the world, the largest representing the indigenous population of Latin America. The nude woman with multiple hands to the left of the faces is covered with a map of Latin America and represents the Latin experience completely. Her multiple hands show the diversity of this experience. On the far left of the composition is a nopal, the Mexican national tree. González Camarena created a hybrid plant by encircling the tree with copihue, the Chilean national flower. Below it are roots encircling the skeletons of dead conquistadors. Flowers drip from the cactus like blood drops while swords stab into its leaves and sap pours out.

The mural has become part of Chilean heritage and a representation of Concepción, the third largest metropolis in Chile. It was used on a postage stamp in 1994. The work influenced later artists such as Inti, LRM and Charquipunk with its composition and strong horizontality.
González Camarena’s mural began a large tradition of muralism and protest art within Concepción. As a college town, stencils and stickers are used more heavily in Concepción than elsewhere in Chile. The University’s art department also heavily promotes stenciling in the streets. The large Mapuche presence has lead Concepción muralism to be highly politicized.

*La Presencia de América Latina* continues in the line of postcolonial identity development as González Camarena utilizes indigenous Mexican iconography in Chile. He does not differentiate that the iconography seen in the image does not relate to Chile’s own past. He intertwines Chilean iconography into the mural to identify his site; however, representing Chile is unimportant for what González Camarena was trying to achieve. His mural is meant to create a cohesive Latin American indigenous identity. He addresses the issue of *mestizaje* and racism within South American using hierarchical scale. By scaling the indigenous face to be the largest, he gives the disenfranchised population importance over other races within its own context.

González Camarena represents modernity through the pyramid of technological and agricultural advances, showing Dussel’s perspective of the Americas contributing to the development of the modern state.
CHAPTER 3

POLITICIZATION OF CHILEAN MURALISM

Although the murals of Siqueiros and González Camarena hold political tones, the use of murals as political propaganda did not begin until the 1960s. During the multiple election campaigns of Allende, muralism and graffiti were heavily politicized. Mural production especially increased during the 1964 election to promote candidates and their platforms. The first political murals were Allendist painted by Donoso, Carmen Johnson, Hernan Meschi, and Pedro Millar. These artists focused their works on the exterior walls of the Manuel de Salas secondary school in Irarrazaval Avenue, Nuñoa district and in Larrain Avenue, la Reina. The largest murals were large collaborations along the banks of the Mapocho River. The largest (Figure 7) along the river banks stretched 200 meters between Independencia and Recoleta bridges. The mural depicted portraits of progressive Chilean leaders and consciously included many women to offset the primarily masculine leftist iconography. This choice of figures demonstrates the egalitarian ideology of the muralist movement at the time. The open and collective mural process led to the formation of brigadas muralistas, groups of artists and community members who collectively painted murals mainly in Santiago. These brigadas began by holding interventions in public spaces during the third candidacy of Allende.

The most prominent brigada is the Brigada Ramona Parra (BRP). Danilo Bahamondes, an influential communist nicknamed “El Gitano [The Gypsy],” founded the group in 1969. The brigada took on the name of Ramona Parra, a young woman killed during a worker’s rally in 1946. As Parra was a nitrate worker, the brigada characteristically paints in factory jumpsuits.
The first interventions created by the BRP took place during a March for Vietnam from Valparaiso to Santiago. The BRP marched in front of the two thousand protestors painting successive murals along the route.\textsuperscript{lxiv}

Artistic interventions continued within Santiago as they became increasingly popular among youth and student populations. Over 120 BRP collectives had formed by 1970, located throughout the country. Even though these groups of 15-25 people painted separately, the multiple BRPs always maintained a uniform aesthetic style as seen in Figure 8. Characteristically the mural is painted with black outlines that separate colors sharply. This style allowed the \textit{brigadistas} to execute murals rapidly as one person would outline the mural as another filled in the figures.\textsuperscript{lxv} This aesthetic style mirrors the 1960s revolutionary posters of Cuban Raúl Martínez. Martínez drew heavily on popular culture aesthetics and painted with primary colors, especially red and blue.\textsuperscript{lxvi} Similar themes also bound the groups together. The Chilean miner was often used as an archetype for the working class and their struggle.\textsuperscript{lxvii} Copper is a common representation of exploitation of wealth and resources by imperialist forces as seen in González Camarena’s \textit{Presencia de América Latina}.

In response to the communist BRP, the socialist party organized their own painting \textit{brigada}. After going through multiple names, the \textit{brigada} eventually adopted the name of Elmo Catalan, a Chilean journalist who had joined and died with Che Guevara in Bolivia. Originally the group was named “Venceremos” [We Will Win] drawing on Cuban revolution rhetoric. They then took on the name of Pedro Lenin Valenzuela, a teenage revolutionary who attempted to hijack a domestic Chilean flight to fly to Cuba. Chilean agents shot him while the plane was still in Santiago. Eventually the group, realizing Lenin Valenzuela was in reality a terrorist, changed
their name to Elmo Catalan. The process of creating the *brigada's* identity reflects the process of the group to form a Chilean political identity.

Both *brigadas*, along with many other groups, supported Allende and helped him win the 1970 election. Spivak defines this collective strategy between conflicting groups as strategic essentialism theory. The *brigadas* demonstrated temporary solidarity in order to achieve a common goal. Both the Mexican and Chilean muralist movements took advantage of this method to promote their ideologies and, in Chile, elect Salvador Allende. Upon Allende entering office, the groups slowly turned away from political themes in favor of aesthetics. One of the main changes occurring during Allende’s presidency was the increase in using words and letters to convey a deeper message. Perception is changed when words are integrated into figural works; as Robert Matta describes, “To see should not be only that which the photographic camera or microscope does. To see as though reading a word is to see something grow, to see how it goes on changing, to see it in the space in which it exists.”

This idea is not new to aesthetic understanding; however, Chileans progressively developed the use and viewing of words. Both the BRP and BEC used capitals exclusively to emphasize and simplify their messages. They purposely used different typefaces to distinguish their works. The BRP used even width, brush sized lettering (Figure 9) while BEC tapered their lettering into wedges, stretching their bases out (Figure 10). Both groups displayed the words horizontally, especially along major roads to be legible to cars and buses.

Allende, the socialist president, came to power as the lower classes became politically active due to massive economic and social inequality. These disparities were only exaggerated under Allende’s presidency as outside interests, such as the Committee for State Security (KGB)
and Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), forced polarization of the political parties. This instability eventually led to Allende’s removal from government and suicide.

**Under and Post-Military Dictatorship**

Pinochet established a military junta after the September 11, 1973 coup of Allende. Pinochet’s regime is known for its human rights violation in the process of reforming the market economy. Pinochet suppressed the muralism present under Allende, quickly halting mural production until the 1980s. Although Pinochet was eventually ousted by a plebiscite in 1988, he continues to be a controversial figure in Chilean history and polarizes the population. As the Pinochet junta persecuted intellectuals, many artists fled the country in self-exile. Murals that were made by the Popular Front group that supported Allende were erased. A new brigada formed, the Brigada Chacón (BC), named after the communist militant Juan Chacón Corona. This group was known for painting its murals in private on paper and then gluing the large paper to Santiago’s walls, a medium called *papelógrafos* (Figure 11).

Prior to the 1989 elections, the Partido por la Democracia (PPD) told the younger populations of their party to mural the walls, use posters and “win the battle of the streets.” “Que opina la calle [what the street says]” was an important concept during this time. The overwhelming street art and its influence forced Pinochet to order the cleansing of opposition street art. The 1988 referendum banning street art left the walls blank, but the PPD wanted to break this silence. Many anti-Pinochet groups joined by papering the walls as the BC had done before. This reviving of the democratic process created a new ambiance in the streets. The psychopolitical implications of the art continued to affect public sentiment and the elections.
After the downfall of Pinochet in the early 1990s, most *brigadas* continued working to create social change. Significantly, after Pinochet’s regime lost control, many exiled artists returned with new influences from their time abroad. One significant development that occurred during this time period was the revival of the Museo a Cielo Abierto (Open Sky Museum) in Valparaiso. Motivated by Francisco Mendez Labbe and Nemesio Antunez, along with the Pontificia Católica Universidad de Valparaiso, the Museo a Cielo Abierto was renovated. The organizers chose Cerro Bellavista for the museum due to its winding pathways and stairways, allowing for a pedestrian only museum. It was recreated over a three-year period between 1991 and 1994. The majority of artists who participated in the project were returned exiles.

Mario Toral painted the *Valle del Paraiso* (Valley of Paradise, Figure 12), which is the literal meaning of Valparaiso. You can see in the mural the influences of the Mexican artists. The use of the woman to represent liberation is characteristic of the Mexicans muralists and it calls to mind Pablo Neruda, the beloved Chilean poet who a close friend of the Mexican artists. His works were applauded throughout Chile as influential writer of love and scenic poems. Neruda was intimately involved in artistic circles and politics. He died a few days before the September 11, 1973 coup to public morning. The inscription that accompanies the woman, “Para los habitantes de las aguas y de los cerros de este valle” [For the habitants of the waters and the hills of this valley], also alludes to the poet. Neruda lived above Cerro Bellavista in Cerro Florida and commonly wrote of the regional landscape. His poem, “Oda a Valparaiso” [Ode to Valparaiso] speaks directly to the city personified as a woman, similar to the one depicted by Toral:

- desgreñada, touseled hair,
- no acabas de peinarte… always combing…
- desnudo naked
con un nombre

with a name

tatuado en la barriga

tattooed on your belly

The poem continues describing an earthquake that catches the personification off guard. The dynamic lines of Toral’s mural create an image of turbulence under serene mountains:

corriste

you ran in all directions

enloquecido,
crazed

te quebraste las uñas,
you tore your fingernails

se movieron

water and rock

las aguas y las piedras,
shook,
las veredas,
sidewalks,
el mar,
the sea, and

la noche,
the night

tú dormías,
you slept

en tierra,
on the ground,
cansado

exhausted

de tus navegaciones

from your wild gyrations,
y la tierra

and earth

furiosa…

infuriated…”

I read the mural as a visual translation of this poem with Valparaiso sleeping, exhausted from the havoc she has created. The earth is broken with colors and a dark crevice opens above the reclining nude female. The mural is not about destruction as the poem continues to describe the recreate peace after the tremor. Valparaiso stands strong tattooed with “la lucha / la esperanza / la solidaridad / y la alegría” [struggle, hope, solidarity and joy]. Neruda thus creates a positive
image of Valparaiso and through the mural becomes part of Chilean identity himself. Toral’s work recreates the poem in a way Chileans can identify with their surroundings and cultural past.

The Museo a Cielo Abierto reveals Chilean preference for viewing their art outside and within its own context. The dislike for museums was demonstrated even more strongly in 2007 when Alejandro Delgado painted a stencil across from Santiago's Museo de Bellas Artes (Museum of Fine Arts). The stencil read "MUSEO MAUSOLEO" [MUSEUM MAUSOLEUM]. Both projects reject the European museum ideal. Delgado questions the value of museums as cultural creators by comparing the institution to death. The Museo a Cielo Abierto has not become venerated within the city, perhaps due to its choice of name. However, it has created a forum in which artists can create their own works. Many artists have taken advantage of the space, adding unofficial additions or recreating past works.

Toral became a significant muralist during this period and painted the monumental Memoria Visual de una Nación (Visual Memory of a Nation, Figure 13) in Santiago's Universidad de Chile metro station. He once again gave words a prominent role in the composition. Mapuche and Diaguita epigrams represent Chile's past, while contemporary poetry depicts the present. Toral's Memoria is a literary painting of Chilean history addressing the issues of Chilean identity. The iconography of the work draws from many indigenous groups as well as European influences, which have both shaped Chilean society significantly. The mural is located in a metro station and completely envelops the viewer. It is almost impossible to see the whole piece when waiting for the subway; however, it shapes the metro user’s experience. Toral’s historical allegories, geography and historical figures represent the Chilean trajectory. The mural covers the pre-Hispanic past, the violence of the conquest, the establishment of the Republic and the modern urbanity that now pervades most of Chilean society. The end result of modernity is
appropriate for the location and addresses the site specificity of the metro station. The mural is monumental, appropriate for the subject matter. Aesthetically, the piece is similar to the nationalist realism of Mexico. Yet the mural places the Mexican style in a different context, and thus differs from Rivera's representation of Mexican history in the Palacio Nacional de México. Rivera’s work is placed in the Palacio Nacional de México, and points to the new socialist ideals of the Mexican government. However, Toral’s work is more egalitarian in its placement in a metro station as it is more accessible than the Palacio Nacional.

During this time period, commissioned art was mainly abandoned due to the restraints placed on artists by commissioners. With the end of the dictatorship, more non-political crus began to form such as NCS (Ninos con Spray [Children with Spray]). They began to draw on hip-hop influences and focused on more limited audiences than the political muralists. Hip-hop graffiti began mainly in Viña del Mar, Valparaiso’s neighboring city, and quickly spread elsewhere. Collective works have become rare, although a few artists continue to work together. Individuals began to sign their works, which was unheard of among the brigadistas. In the later 1990s santiaguino crus became more self-aware with their names to promote their beliefs. Some collectives do remain such as the Duck-Hen Art collective, although they are not politically affiliated. The habit of using text seems to be ingrained in Chilean art after the political propaganda period. Didactic works are still popular among artists and emotional force plays a significant role in aesthetic choices. The shift away from the communal can be seen as an influence of modern society and capitalism described by Mignolo and Quijano as Westernization of Latin America.
CHAPTER 4
CONTEMPORARY CHILEAN MURALISM

Santiago and Valparaiso Street Art Communities

Chilean street artists stress the importance of architecture and site-specific works. Architecture, city plans and city atmospheres affect their works significantly. The two main metropolis areas where I researched were Santiago and Valparaiso/Viña del Mar. The strong sense of community between cities is formed due to their codependence. While Santiago is the capital, for a very long time Valparaiso was the main access into the country. As the main port city, Valparaiso was significantly important to Chile's economic growth, politics and relation to the outside world. When the Panama Canal was built, Valparaiso began to dwindle in significance as ships no longer had to go all the way around South America. Nonetheless, Valparaiso continues to be important within Chilean society due to its cultural significance and housing the Congress.

The art communities of Santiago and Valparaiso are highly intertwined as artists move from one city to the other with ease. The artist groups are interconnected through their art, and it has become easy for graffiteros to recognize tags and murals. Each artist tends to choose one area of the city, although collaborations lead to expansions into new locations. Most artists view santiaguino and porteño art to be part of the same movement and community. The interplay between them allows for diversity among the movement and fosters artistic growth. The relationship is symbiotic, both sides benefitting. Artists are proud to belong to both communities.
While many artists prefer one city or location to another, they still tend to work in at least both cities, if not throughout the country.\textsuperscript{LXXV}

The main art locus of the country surrounds the capital, Santiago. With a population of 5.8 million\textsuperscript{LXXVI}, Santiago is economically and politically bustling allowing for free artistic expression. Santiago has many areas in which art is more accepted than others. Bellavista, an aesthetic barrio [neighborhood or district] north of center and Villa Victoria, a traditionally political barrio, have the largest mural production. Bellavista is located north of the Mapocho River, which divides the city. Bellavista is split between two districts, Recoleta and Providencia. Graffiti is split along this line. It is heavily promoted in Bellavista-Recoleta but less so in Bellavista-Providencia. The bohemian barrio is known as a “forgotten” neighborhood, home to artists and poets.\textsuperscript{LXXVII} The western part of the barrio is a favorite area of local artists due to the “friendly streets.”\textsuperscript{LXXVIII} The streets, similar to Valparaiso’s, are narrow with large walls allowing artists extensive space to create their murals. It has long been a haven for artists, writers and partygoers. The majority of the murals reflect this atmosphere. They tend to have a “drug-fuelled” or fantastic quality.\textsuperscript{LXXIX} In the area of bars, the murals become more commercialized and directly correlate to the type of business they are painted on. Artists often repaint their own walls or the works of other artists, creating a constantly changing aesthetic geography. Two styles fight for supremacy in the area. Nueva figuración and hip-hop flops often overlap and integrate with each other.\textsuperscript{LXXX}

La Florida is a residential area in southeastern Santiago. Compared to Bellavista, La Florida draws more hip-hop artists and flops. Although it is more focused aesthetically on hip-hop, la Florida exhibits a lot of politicized works. Graffiti is seen as a form of resistance and one inscription reads, " Hip hop no es solo una cosa. Latas arriba, voces fuertes, brazos firmes...
organize!! [Hip hop is not just a thing: cans up, strong voices, fire arms... organize!!]. Also visible are stenciled alterations to the street names of the area.

The infrastructure of Santiago, surrounding the Mapocho River, has influenced graffiti significantly. The river is a dividing line between the city’s north and south. As it is dug down into the city like a tunnel, the river has large wall space perfect for murals. Artists have long utilized it as a highly visible and large-scale canvas. For example, the BRP often painted political murals along the river. The creation of these murals along the river serves as a connection between the north and south sectors of the city. The river often provokes site-specific works (Figure 14). In the mural, the artist painted a boat interacting with the river. He creates new architecture around his boat, such as a staircase down to the river and a ledge on which a man sits.

The port city of Valparaiso lies on the coast 120 km outside the Chilean capital Santiago. It is known for its bohemian, artist-attracting atmosphere and has been described as the most unique city in South America. Valparaiso is the cultural center of the country due to its large amount of art and music production. Once an important port city that harbored all the ships headed to the west coast, Valparaiso fell into disrepair as the Panama Canal diverted commerce. As the birthplace of both Allende and Pinochet, the city has an ingrained political heritage. The city currently houses Congress, which moved outside of Santiago during the 1960s because of political terrorism. The city is known for its accepting culture and has a large number of refugees, creating a diverse atmosphere. The first refugees arrived in September 1939, from Franco's Spain. Porteños are generally accepting of both local and visitor muralism. PeKa has described Valparaiso as having “mad infrastructure” due to its geographical limitations of hills. Vazko described the city as “the most beautiful and piss-smelling city in Chile, cheap, pretty, fun
and easy to paint." The walls are in a state of constant flux as space becomes more limited in the tourist areas. Many artists have begun painting on the tin roofs, leaving their works only visible from the higher hills.

Valparaiso attracts many people due to the romantic atmosphere of the cerros and sea. The streets are “friendly;” small and twisting. Some artists likened the city to São Paulo, a dubious comparison. In addition, they explained Valparaiso values street art in the same way as São Paulo, and the city’s architecture promotes it. The houses are painted in bright colors; the architecture is shaped by the hills with alleyways and pasajes, shortcut staircases. The city forms a labyrinth that artists find comforting and familiar.

Located in El Plan, the lower part of the city along the bay is the Barón Metro Station. During the 1960s, this area was valued by the brigadistas due to the high visibility of the walls. After the political propaganda faded away, the walls were left bare until the 2000s. The graffiteros of the region began to illegally paint the walls. When the metro was privatized in 2007, the new management invited multiple artists to paint murals. Charquipunk satirized the metro with an allegory of increasing costs since privatization, leaving the poor no method of transportation. In his mural (Figure 15) a politician plays with two metro trains as if they were toys, crashing them together. Other artists such as Inti and Alme took advantage of the space to promote an indigenous identity. Their two paintings look towards each other on the same wall (Figure 16). They are both dressed in Andean textiles. Inti’s albino figure is distorted as usual, while Alme is more traditional in his man’s body. However, Alme’s covers the figure’s mouth with the indigenous textile silencing him. This reflects the imperial subjugation of the indigenous populations.
The Parque Cultural at La Ex-Carcel (Cultural Park at Ex-Prison Hill) is another area in Valparaiso well known for constantly having art. The colonial prison building, located above the main tourist area, has a long tradition of protest painting. The 1973 BRP mural of anxious faces still exists in the prison exercise yard. In 1999, Valparaiso's prison was moved to a new site outside of the city. The space remained unused for two years until it was "reclaimed" by porteños to create a park. The prison holds a long history within the oppression of Chilean subaltern populations. By recreating the area as a public service, the community is resisting colonial authority. Since the reclamation many brigadas and equipos have held interventions in the space. Most of the murals and graffiti depict Chile's revolutionary history and the human rights violations under Pinochet, which addresses the social violence of the location. The prison's terraces (Figure 17) are known locally as Las Ruinas (The Ruins) partially due to their similarity to Andean terraces and Incan ruins. Nancy Gewolb and her University of Playa Ancha students claimed the space for public use in the early 2000s. A local folklore surrounding the terraces adds to the mystic of the area. A sailor is said to have returned home, only to find his wife with another man. The sailor in despair burnt down the home to never be rebuilt. Las Ruinas act as a mediator between the political muralism in La Ex-Carcel and the aesthetics of the city housing both styles.

Pasaje Fischer (Fischer Passage, Figure 18) is steep short cut between the port and Cerro Concepcion. The stairway has become the main focus for street art due to its history as a space for anti-dictatorship graffiti. The majority of artists who paint in the passage, focus on images of political rebellion and socialist change. Recently the experimental art space "Espacio G" moved into the passage, which has attracted a diverse group of artists. The gallery is known for collaborative works such as the Envíos Project, which renames streets in order to promote a
sense of community. The project is the ongoing renaming of streets as “nosotros” [us], a word was chosen to represent the power of communal artistic action. To explain the process Espacio G published a contemporary manifesto.

**We/us and them**

**The street as support.**

Our construction of nosotr@s (us) is a story of bodies-in-action, activated and coordinated in the midst of another bigger story, the city.

And in this coordination of bodies we opened ourselves up to that ‘other’ which provokes new flows of thought and new ways of seeing. The Nosotr@s exercise arose as part of the Envíos (Sendings) Project’s Instructions Workshop (1), chosen by Espacio G (2), as part of its 2007 programme. In this context, for a matter of days, a flux of people circulated and activated through collaborative proposals that would become the Instructions Workshop put forward by Envíos.

One of these instructions proposed an exercise in street intervention, which consisted of subverting five points in the city of Valparaiso, through erasure of the official urban signposting.

The intervention once proposed, tensions began between different ways of seeing and doing, each person coming from different contexts, be they geographic, aesthetic and/or methodological-in response to the problematic of what indices to return to in order to open up the street. **Nosotros** (we) was the common word, simple and anonymous.

Erasure as the first act (painting) and the renaming of the street with the text Nosotros through the stencil (engraving) can be understood as two acts that distance themselves from the visibility and form the logic of representation that dominate the art world, to recognize new practices and displacements in contemporary art.

The power of us embodies the creative strength of the slightest actions of a group of individuals who for an instant are at the helm.

Within the manifestos, we can see the influence and development from the Mexican and earlier Chilean muralist movements. The Envíos project continued the collective muralist objective developed by the earlier brigadas. The title of the Envíos project manifesto recalls the importance of the street in Latin American culture. The street “supports” the work and voice of these artists while they are part of “another bigger story, the city.” The project attempted to find a word that would relate them all together in spite of their personal contexts. The process is similar to Mariategui’s attempt to link all of Latin American through their shared heritage. The
The word “nosotros” creates an inclusive art piece that allows all Chileans, and even foreigners, to experience the work.

The neighboring city of Valparaiso is Viña del Mar. Both cities have grown to the point they form one metropolitan area, yet they are at odds with each other culturally. Viña is an extreme contrast to Valparaiso, being a favorite beach vacation city of the Chilean upper classes. Compared to Valparaiso, Viña is sterile and extremely Europeanized, yet it continues to attract many graffiteros because of its standing as the most glamorous city in Chile. The city’s development reflects Western evolutionary philosophy more than any other Chilean location. Viña’s art tends to be more heavily influenced by hip-hop. Flops are common especially on the beaches (Figure 19). These flops are often aesthetically focused and do not confront social challenges commented upon by other graffiteros. The city could be interpreted as a continued European presence in the Chile, distinct in its motives behind the creation of art from Valparaiso. The nation’s internal perception of Viña as extremely attractive reveals ingrained colonial social values. Viña, as well as the rest of the country, exhibits alternative mediums in street art to muralism.

**Alternative Mediums**

Stencils have come to play an important role for beginning graffiteros and students. Stencils rose in popularity in order to protest Pinochet and grew even more with the increasing influence of punk styles during the 1980s. The stencil movement is more inherently political than the muralist movement. This is mainly due to the efficiency of the medium. As brigadas were forced to paint extremely quickly and efficiently, they chose to adopt stencils. A simple stencil can easily send a message to the viewer without using complicated iconography found in muralism. Stencils also focus on issues of globalization and commercialization. Product
placement with stencils draws attention to the pervasiveness of certain products such as Coca-Cola. Stencils additionally created to reflect the distinct image of Che Guevara and many important figures have been drawn in similar styles. This commentary on capitalist culture and political hierarchies draws attention the labor structures developed during the colonial period still affecting Chile today.

The leading stencilist in Santiago is Veggie, who uses stencils to draw attention to issues such as ageism and poverty. El Peñi [Mapuche for the Friend] uses stencils to represent underprivileged subjects such as the Mapuche. He creates violet and grey portraits that reach out to their audience in search for compassion. Valparaiso has been part of the stenciling movement for a long time; however, Argentine artists recently began interventions rapidly increasing the medium’s popularity. Concepción also has many stenciled works due to the medium’s appeal to students. It is not only university students who choose to use this medium; school age children have created stencils to represent themselves. In Valdivia, the students at the Escuela Superior created stencils that subvert the image on the Chilean schoolchildren's bus ticket of a boy and girl reading together. The students blindfolded the figures as a form of protest in solidarity with the current student protest movement (Figure 20). Heroestencil is a stenciling cru highly influenced by Banksy. Led by Kapitan Koshayuy, Heroestencil tends to mock stenciling itself in relation to other street media. In this way, they address the postcolonial issue of Western artistic values still practiced in South America. One of their best-known pieces is a little girl stenciled on to a wall. She is tagging the name Heroestencil on the wall in spray paint (Figure 21). The group is known for traveling to rural Chile to teach other artists stenciling techniques, similar to the pedagogical goals of the Mexican muralists.
Stickers are another street art medium that is widely ignored. Similar to stenciling, stickers became popular due to their efficiency and easy distribution. Concepción is the leading city of sticker production. However, stickers are also popular in the far southern towns such as Puerto Montt. In some areas, the government has approved stickers for municipal projects. For example in Puerto Montt the government has used *graffitero-designed* stickers to promote their anti-littering campaign. All the trash cans in the city have stickered eyes, playing on the word *ojo* (eye), which commands people to be aware of their actions.\(^{\text{hxxviii}}\)

In Santiago, stickers tend to address issues of counter-culture, music and drugs, although a few examples of political stickers exist as well. Chile's leading sticker artist is Sergio Valenzuela. Similar to many other artists, he addresses issues of indigenous syncretism. One of his most prolific stickers (Figure 22) is a mix between traditional political symbols and a traditional Aymara symbol. The Aymara face is Ekeko, the god of prosperity. Valenzuela paints the face in the traditional rainbow, an emblem of the "No to Pinochet" campaign which occurred during the 1988 plebiscite that ousted him. The face thus becomes a representation of not only an upbeat Andean symbol but also of Chile's troubled history. The sticker shows the tension between Aymara tradition and modern Chilean history. It draws a parallel between the suffering of Aymara people within Chilean society and the violence of the Pinochet era.

**Significant Graffiteros**

Three muralists based out of Valparaiso are rising in the local community as well as internationally. Going by the names Inti, La Robot de Madera (LRM) and Charquipunk, these artists have created both individual and a collective identity. The artist, Inti Castro took his name from the Incan sun god. Inti’s works draw heavily on Andean cultural traditions, most notably in
his use of textiles. He commonly draws on traditional Andean iconography, which contrasts, with his albino figures. Inti is obviously highly influenced by Francis Bacon.\textsuperscript{lxiii} Bacon's study of the human form is similar to the amorphous white blobs Inti originally favored. Although Inti's works have developed to use a less abstract version of the human body, he still tends to favor albino skin color and simple facial features. Bacon's \textit{Three Studies for Figures at the Base of a Crucifixion} (Figure 23) contorts the bodies to the point of revulsion. The triptych sets the anthropomorphic forms against a stark red background. In both Bacon and Inti, you can furthermore see the influence of Picasso, especially his blue period. Bacon’s \textit{Three Studies} is generally considered his full development. However, the painterly distortion found in Bacon was Inti's starting point (Figure 24). When collaborating with other artists, Inti's figures are flexible and adapt to the other artist's aesthetics. These collaborations thus add to his albino bodies and act as a form of syncretism itself.

Sebastian Navarro is an artist from Concón, a city along the coast north of Valparaiso. His tag, Charquipunk is a combination of two words. The Quechua word “charqui” translates in English as jerky, which is derived from the Quechua word. Charquipunk then combined the Quechua word with the English work “punk” to address his dissent from popular culture. His style can be categorized as naturalistic with a touch of fantasy.\textsuperscript{xc} As he doesn’t use letters in his own artwork ever, his \textit{flop} signature has become the smiling cat (Figure 25 & 26). He chose the signature, as it was quick and easy to paint.

Simon Paulo Arancibia Gutierrez has chosen the street name La Robot de Madera (LRM), taken from a character in a book he read as a teenager. The name represents the creation of the impossible.\textsuperscript{xci} His works deal less directly with postcolonial themes than Inti and Charquipunk. He tends to focus on representing the human form through different painting techniques as seen...
on the Casa Barbara (Figure 1.4). LRM studied at the Escuela de Bellas Arts in Valparaiso, focusing on figure drawing. He became involved in street art in 2005, a few years after Charquipunk, using stencils and stickers. Since 2007, he has been an active member of the street art community, working in collaboration with other artists heavily. LRM’s collaboration style continues the communal traits of earlier *graffitero* groups.

The cooperative designing and painting of the murals by these three artists reflects the Mexican tradition. Inti, Charquipunk and LRM create the murals in conjunction. Although they all have spoken of the challenges involved in painting with other artists, each has expressed they prefer the results of their collective works. As each artist has a very distinct style, it is easy to parse their collaborations. When looking at the works, even though Inti, Charquipunk and LRM are disjointed aesthetically, compositionally they flow smoothly and work well together. They have differentiated themselves from previous collaborative *equipos* by rendering their contributions in contrasting styles. This practice avoids the characterization of a population as homogenous, an issue grappled with by both Bhabha and Spivak. The three artists individualize their sections while working with similar themes and iconography.

One of the best-known murals in Valparaiso painted by the trio is located on a steep street leading to Cerro Alegre. The mural (Figure 27), approximately eight feet by twenty feet, occupies the wall of a residence. The three artists, painting in significantly different styles, each contributed a large figure on a bright orange background. Large words are printed in yellow upon the orange background. The words, “fuego [fire],” “memoria [memory],” etc. allow the viewer great insight into the artists’ intentions. The words are meant to invoke the Chilean identity in relation to the Pinochet dictatorship.
For knowledgeable viewers, it is easy to identify each figure’s artist. Each of the paintings is a different representation of Latin America and Chilean identity. On the far right, Inti painted one of his characteristic quilted bodies, representing a Chilean variation of a kusillo. The middle female, to the right of the mural’s center, is LRM’s creation. The hooded woman looks out of the corner of her eye back down the street. Her blue hood, pattern with tan, contrasts sharply with the orange background. The woman’s features are ethnically ambiguous. The color of the woman’s skin is darker, yet she has a narrow, straight noise and sharp angled chin. Her hair, mainly hidden under the cloak, is a light brown. Charquipunk’s bird takes up the rest of the composition. The bird, a mythical creature imagined by the artist, is brightly colored and finely feathered. Being an avid amateur ornithologist, Charquipunk tends to paint birds indigenous to South America and Chile to represent their identity. Charquipunk painted three other Juan Fernandez hummingbirds, indigenous to South America, in the mural. When Charquipunk paints the bird outside of South America, he intends to transplant part of South American identity in a new location.\textsuperscript{xciii}

Inti’s most recent work (Figure 28) in Valparaiso is located on the back walls of a residential building. It is only viewable from Cerro Concepción, far above. It is almost impossible to view the mural from up close and thus Inti painted it to be seen from a distance. His albino figure lies horizontally, bringing back to mind the mineral women of González Camarena’s mural (Figure 29). This positioning allows Inti to depict the man in its entirety although he cuts the body into pieces according to the architecture. To the far left are the Inti places the lower legs and feet. Set back a bit farther on another building is half of the shoes. At this point, a courtyard interrupts the wall, creating a gap in the mural. The remaining part of the figure, its head and upper body occupy the rest of the wall.
The albino’s face is generic with small eyes, a protruding nose and round mouth. The o-shaped mouth speaks to the viewer as the figure raising its right hand in a rhetorical gesture. In its left hand, the figure holds an orange book. The figure is wrapped in intricately patterned cloth, much of which is written on in Inti’s characteristic block lettering. The figure wears a traditional Andean hat, which is ribboned with a line of small albino indigenous dolls. A necklace of peppers, bells and coca leaves wraps around the figure’s neck, along with other ribbons of indigenously dressed dolls. The hat is horned reflecting a *kusillo* mask. The hat is a reference to Bolivian culture and positively represents *indigenismo* within South America.

The cross-feet of the figure enhances the horizontality of the image as we imagine the figure at rest. The positioning of the figure is also an allusion to death and the decaying of indigenous culture. As the shoes are removed from the figure’s feet and place to their right, seemingly “below” the feet, this feeling of rest is even more accentuated. The feet are lined horizontally and wrapped in similar strings of peppers, coca leaves and bells as around the figure’s neck. The interrupting courtyard cuts the shoes in half. They have a similar patchwork design as the figure’s coat and are laced with belled strings.

As with many of Inti’s works, the detailed patterning on the figure’s textiles also includes blocked words. Inti uses a similar blocked, capitalized font to the BRP’s typeface invoking the past political propaganda. Throughout the fabric of the figure, the viewer can read cut off words such as “Valparaiso,” “Unidos Para [united for],” “Arriba [upwards],” “Todos Los Destinos [all destinations],” “Todos Los Caminos [all paths],” “América Latina,” and “Nunca Acaba [Never stop/give up].” All of these words send a message of unity and hope for Latin America. The message is a reflection of postcolonial and anti-imperialist rhetoric addressed in Chapter 1.
Contemporary Muralism and Graffiti

After the fall of Pinochet and two decades of democracy, one might ask what remains of the muralist movement? It is difficult to claim a cohesive group remains active, yet some brigadas continue to paint. Individualism has taken a priority within the art world. However, many societal factors continue to instigate the production of murals. Many artists chose to view themselves as part of a communal art movement based in Santiago and Valparaiso. This art movement was more flexible than what academics usually define as movements.

Graffiteros have not only been influenced by their own country’s past but also current developments in other countries. Street art in other Latin American countries, especially Brazil, has had significant influence on Chile. Latin American artists are generally seeking out new ways to develop their work; one method is looking at pre-Columbian and regional aesthetics. Chilean artists are particularly inspired by Os Gemeos (Brazil), Speto (Brazil), Jaz (Argentina), and Saner (Mexico).xci

Brazil is especially influential as well due to its recent economic and artistic uprising. Os Gemeos (The Twins) are two Brazilian identical twins who started painting graffiti during the late 1980s. They are mainly known for their depictions of São Paulo’s social and political systems. Similar to many Chilean artists, they include local folklore into their works. The pichação movement, a graffiti form from São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro, has influenced Chileans as well. Artists will tag high and inaccessible walls competitively. Most of the tags are in cryptic writing and aren’t as appealing to the public community as other forms of street art.xcv

Other South American countries have also contributed to Chilean street art. Argentina’s large use of stencils has spread widely throughout the country as Argentine artists intervene in Valparaiso. Bolivian indigenous aesthetics can be found extensively through artists creating
South American identities such as Inti, Alme and Yisa. Peruvian photorealistic graffiti can be seen in contemporary Chilean street art, especially in the northern regions. Most artists draw from many different influences to create their aesthetics and messages.

Chilean artists look further to contemporary artistic developments for influence, as they eschew past traditions. Britain is influential with its rise in popular and street artists such as Banksy and YBA’s. Banksy style stencils are becoming increasingly popular within Santiago. His style has been characterized as fresco—both fresh and cheeky, a popular combination among audiences. British influence is both due to the popularity of the artist as well as British Chilean historical relations. Since Sir Francis Drake stole Incan and Chilean treasure from a Spanish galleon in 1578, Chilean populations have tended to view the United Kingdom favorably. The pirate symbol is still used extensively among graffiti artists to commemorate the moment.

American art has likewise affected Chilean street art, although many artists vehemently avoid American artistic developments due to sour international relations. Hip-hop and pop art has grown in popularity due to the New York style street art. Some Chilean artists also look to the popular art of Andy Warhol. The use of commercialized images and mass media has gained traction as a way to counter and satirize globalization. This use of commercialization is mainly used in stencils.

The use of materials has a significant influence on street art. Latin American art differentiates itself from European firstly in the painting techniques. This mainly is due to the cost of materials. In the Americas, it is cheaper to buy spray can paint than acrylic, while the opposite is true in Europe. This had led to new artistic techniques to create volume, outlines and texture. These new developments have mainly been pioneered by younger generations.
Street art has become more open to youth and popular culture. This opportunity has created new areas of interest in muralism. While barrios such as Villa Francia and La Victoria remain centers of politicized muralism, other areas such as Bellavista have become more aesthetically focused. Hip-hop, punk and other pop subcultures are the basis for most Chilean street artists. As in world graffiti development, hip-hop graffiti originally began with tags or *flops* written for closed audiences of those in the know.\textsuperscript{ciii}

Most contemporary *graffiteros* have a similar origin story, becoming involved in street art by tagging or painting *flops*. Although the idea of spreading muralism to youth disappeared after the 1950s, it regained interest during the 2000s. The creation of courses in primary and secondary schools helped give later artists a technical foundation for their street art.\textsuperscript{civ} Many students turned to tagging as a way to empower themselves. Writing their names in highly visible and obscure locations creates an omnipresent personality. Leaving a mark on your physical surrounding is nothing new. In prehistoric times, people would paint their hands onto the walls. Both those prehistoric people and the contemporary artists try to imprint their presence on not only the location but also the moment in time.\textsuperscript{cv} The artist attempts to make him/herself known in a commercialized state.\textsuperscript{cvi}

Muralism is a form of communication in many parts of the world. Graffiti is often ignored and seldom studied as a valid form of art or communication. Despite this, street art plays an important role in Chilean popular culture and addresses significant socioeconomic concerns of the masses. Muralism functions to give voice to disenfranchised populations, creating a public record.\textsuperscript{cvii} Modern Chile is fairly socially and economically conservative. Since the fall of Pinochet’s government, the leftist coalition party, la Concertación, consisting of 17 political distinct parties, has dominated politics. While la Concertación has attempted to shift politics
liberally, deeply ingrained social hierarchies have not changed. Chile has become a significant economic power within the region. The economic success of the Pinochet’s reforms has come at a cost. The upper and lower classes are extremely economically distanced. As the majority of mass communication sources tend towards the right, the left is underrepresented. Considering the history and power of the Chilean mural under both Allende and Pinochet, it is not surprising that the current *graffiteros* are attempting to use the same medium.

While discussing contemporary issues with artists, it was revealing many of them do not view themselves as inherently political. All Chilean artists are aware and educated about the past political muralism, yet some chose to eschew politics in their works. These *graffiteros* do consider themselves socially engaged but politically neutral and call themselves “post-political.” A portion aim their work mainly towards child audiences. In this sense, it is similar to the Mexican pedagogical strategy to promote art among younger generations. Other artists chose to focus on hip-hop culture in order to connect with a wider audience. Artists use hip hop art to change societal prejudices such as Yisa to dispel nationalistic prejudice against Bolivia.

Although there has been a rejection of political propaganda in most contemporary art, aesthetics are not everything. Not everyone can understand the academic aesthetics promoted by European influences. *Graffiteros* do not want to place their ideas into the public mind but rather wish to create works that promotes public discourse. A work of art can inspire multiple different interpretations amongst viewers. Even as muralism shifts towards pure aesthetics, many artists still choose to address social and political issues.

Money is an important concept everyone can understand due to society’s monetary reliance. Universal themes such as love and justice tend to be focused on by the artists, once again due to the general understanding of such themes by viewers. For these artists, graffiti is
more than spray cans on the wall. It is a contemporary manifestation of politics, culture and performance. Graffiti cannot be defined simply as a medium. It has specific characteristics that make it more of a movement than art form alone. The graffiti concept is the soul of art. This anti-institutional form of communal art is contrary to “todo (everything)”. The nature of graffiti is more vandalism than art.\textsuperscript{cix}

These post-political works still hold extreme significance within Chilean culture and identity. Spanish and Latin American culture promote being in the street. Populist politics has created a culture of interaction between politicians and the street. As Latin Americans still attempt to create an identity from Spanish and indigenous backgrounds, muralism acts as a place where artists can explore these issues. Muralism creates meaningful identities with its representation of syncretism and Chilean culture.\textsuperscript{cx}

\textit{Graffiteros}, such as Inti and Charquipunk, specifically choose to represent cultural \textit{mestizaje}. This allows for a discourse on indigenous influence in a highly Europeanized society. Not only does Chile have a history of Spanish colonialism, it received a large migrant population from Basque and Germany. This has created the idea Chile is more European than other South American countries, other than Argentina, which was the choice country for many Italian immigrants. Indigenous populations are thus ignored within their own society, as they do not fit into the European standard.

The indigenous festival and \textit{carnaval} are two predominate motifs of contemporary \textit{graffiteros}. These artists are interested in the Catholic indigenous festivals as an example of extreme syncretism. Charquipunk elaborated on this stating pointedly, “Veo el graffiti vinculado al carnaval latinoamericano y la fiesta indígena” [I see the graffiti as linked to the Latin American carnival and indigenous festival]. This is evident in his use of bright color and
indigenous birds, which bring to mind contemporary *carnaval* costumes. Charquipunk, Inti and LRM tend to celebrate life and see *carnaval* as a way of doing so. *Carnaval* for them is less focused on religion than it is on bringing together a community. The religious aspect is still significant since Catholicism is ingrained in Chilean culture, but the artists are more interested in the syncretism represented by the holiday. The acceptance of this holiday into the art world demonstrates the return to traditional culture addressed by Said. The hybridity of the holiday is demonstrates Bhabha’s theory of hybridity as Catholic and indigenous traditions combine to form a new cultural manifestation.

Inti takes this to a higher level by developing a new form of *kusillos*. The Bolivian *kusillo* is a festival personification (Figure 30). They are usually dressed in clothing made from leftover textiles. Inti represents this by dressing his figures in patchwork clothing. The hats in Inti’s works are highly indigenous and reflect the pointed hats of the *kusillos*. Inti characterized his original albino forms with twisted facial features and grotesque bodily contortions. Over time they have become more mask-like than ill defined. Some of his most recent works for a Paris exhibition (Figure 31) explicitly reinterpret *kusillos*. *Kusillos* tend to wear masks with generic features. The textiles and costumes they wear represent their identity and communal affiliations. Although *kusillos* are more related to Bolivian indigenous traditions, it is not surprising Inti would use them in his imagery. Chile could very well be considered an Andean country, but due to the genocide of indigenous populations and a large immigrant population, it does not have a large Andean population. Inti seeks to look back to the pre-Hispanic Andean past. The Incan empire stretch as far south as Santiago and many Aymara communities still thrive in the North, not to mention the central and south Mapuche population. Inti’s works also attempt to bring pride to South America and create solidarity with the whole continent.
Where is Street Art Going Now?

As Chile develops rapidly into an economic and socially important country in South America, one has to wonder how Chilean street art will change. Street art is deeply ingrained within Chilean society, and most likely will continue to flourish under the current economics of the country. However, this additionally leads many artists to despair. Although many parallels exist between the current Chilean muralist movement and the traditional Mexican movement, the movements differ in their motivations. Artists walk a thin line between their social goals and financial needs.

Slowly the art world has come to recognize Inti, leading to his financial success. As the art circuit continues to promote his art financially, how will his message change? One can look at Banksy as an example of this commercialization. Banksy is known for his anti-institutional street art. His works tend to be political in nature or at least address social concerns of economic disparity or popular culture. Recent publicity has transformed Banksy into an art sensation. His works sell for millions of dollars. Publicity is a complex issue and Banksy is walking a thin line by commercializing his works. Street art is neither easy work nor inexpensive. The way in which an artist earns his/her money can cause a moral dilemma."source:122"

Chilean graffiti artists and muralists have encountered the same stereotypes that many other artists face. The starving artist archetype prevails in the public imagination about many of the artists currently working in Santiago and Valparaiso. Nonetheless, artists are intensely dedicated and will spend exorbitant amounts of time committed to their works. The process of painting large murals can take days or even weeks, involves dragging paint from all around the city, and quite a lot goes into either finding commissions or available walls on which to paint."source:133"
Police and politicians have been recently cracking down on the artistic movement. The government is erasing many works and famous pieces have been vandalized or have disappeared. The city became an UNESCO world heritage site in 2003. Since then artists and the government have conflicted over the city’s preservation. Buildings are now protected as patrimonial legacy, and graffiti is not just vandalism of private property but historical. Additionally though the artistic atmosphere of Valparaiso and Bellavista promotes tourism. Tourists are attracted to these areas of high art production. Muralists are “walking the edge of a blade” between creating new works and participating in illegal activities. Downtown centers have become more difficult to paint in and artists now tend to choose peripheral areas to create their murals. This is especially prominent in Valparaiso where the more popular, touristy cerros recently have become more difficult to paint in. The cerros further from the beach tend to be poorer and are more accessible to artists.

Cerro El Litre has become a haven for many artists. Charquipunk and LRM paint these less touristy areas to make them more enjoyable for the common people. They discuss how people from the poorer, “more authentic” neighborhoods are eager for artists to create their work in their cerros. These populations offer their houses to paint and are generous, sharing food and appreciating the works created differently than in the lower cerros. People will ask artists to paint their house in the higher hills, which have a very different political atmosphere than the lower, touristy cerros.

We now have to ask: how will influence of the art circle and the globalizing market influence the current movement? As our world becomes more integrated, one has to question the postcolonialist theory and perspective. Globalization promotes cultural blending and in some ways the homogenization of cultures. Yet the homogenization of cultures is from a Western
perspective, as Western societies tend to dominate commercialization and cultural transplantation. Graffiteros have already reacted to these issues, as evidenced in Figures 32 & 33, which address the omnipresence of American products and culture. Graffiti has taken on American products to comment on this continuation of Western domination labeled as globalization. Veggie’s stencil (Figure 32) is titled Consumption Consumes You. The work shows Ronald McDonald running after children with a knife. The text, “Mañana tus hijos solo comerán basura” [Tomorrow your children will only eat trash] degrades the quality of Western food influences. El Peñí’s stencil (Figure 33), titled Arterisco of Conciencia [Drink Consciousness], is a militarized commentary on Coca Cola by. The word “Con-Ciencia” [Conscience], flanked by audophones, is written in the trademark font. Four soldiers march towards the viewer as below a tank guns down a man. The work condemns capitalism and westernization as a product of military violence in South America.

One unexpected result of current globalizing trends on the graffiti movement is its application to a video game. Charquipunk, Inti and LRM have been featured recently in the video game Papo y Yo, developed in Canada by Chilean game developer Vander Caballero. Caballero grew up with an alcoholic and drug addicted father. His game is untraditional as it focuses on the emotions of growing up with an abusive influence. The avatar of the game is named Quico who lives in a South American slum. His best friend Monster, a large dinosaur like rhino, is addicted to frogs. When he eats frogs, he becomes extremely violent to the point of even killing the hero of the story.\textsuperscript{cxvii}

The plot does not necessarily relate to street art, but the setting is significant. The documentarian and graffiti expert, Pablo Aravena, acted as a consultant on the urban environment of the game. Papo y Yo’s city mirrors Valparaiso with its multicultural atmosphere.
The creators wanted their players to "get lost" in the immersive experience, a thing that Valparaiso lends itself to greatly. The graffiti used on the game’s urban walls are real works licensed to the developers. The images are taken mainly from São Paulo, Valparaiso and Santiago. With the stacked building blocks along hills and the use of graffiti, the game developers have created an alternative reality to Valparaiso (Figure 34). This intermedia connection between the street and video games is a novel development. The audience of Charquipunk, LRM and Inti has increased significantly with this new use of street art. It opens up multiple opportunities to how street art can be used in the future. How technology will affect the viewing of these images and exhibition of murals has yet to be seen.

In the globalizing world, the formation of identities is changing. People are becoming more multicultural and seek understanding between cultural groups. How this will affect the development of artists who rely heavily on indigenous iconography, such as Inti and Yisa, is not yet known. The commercial art market is evidently changing and becoming more accepting of Latin American works, yet will these artists then change because of this acceptance?
CONCLUSION

Placing my thesis into a postcolonial framework raises some consequences. My research with artists in Chile raised my awareness of the privilege I hold within globalized society as a white American. This issue is addressed in “White Privilege and Male Privilege” by Peggy McIntosh. She argues that our education does not train us to recognize the unfair advantage that white privilege gives us. When contacting artists, I noticed curiosity in their responses as to why I would be interested in completing a thesis based on their lives and mediums. Some graffiteros’ sentiment verged on suspicion, as previous researchers, including one in my sources, have taken advantage of the artists’ works for financial gain. At this point a sense of discomfort, in relation to different power structures, limited my interaction with artists. I needed to address my privilege in a culturally appropriate way and thus explaining my motivation to complete this work to artists. I did this by referencing the postcolonial literature, such as Spivak and McIntosh’s, to make clear that I was not planning to speak on behalf of these artists nor exploit them.

Other problems arose in my methodological approach to my research. Snowball sampling is inherently biased due to the interrelations between participants. As my initial contacts were also personal friends, they were not unbiased first contacts. However, to gain trust among graffiteros, it was the sensible sampling method. There was some randomness to the contacts I connected with through blog signatures on their murals. The contacts that spread from both of these connections were connected intimately. Another issue with the demographics of my research pool is the lack of female voices. All of the formal interviews I performed were with male artists. As I was unable to formally speak with a graffitera (a female street artist), I cannot
speak to how this male dominated viewpoint skewed my research. The identity formation of subalterns, such as women and minorities, within a larger subaltern context could be expanded upon in further research. This also reveals the false claim of a postcolonial identity that pervades Chilean society. A nationalist ubiquitous identity is actually counter to postcolonial studies. I do not argue the identity formed by Chilean *graffiteros* represents the entirety of Chilean society. The diversity found within the country could not be enveloped into one image and neither could the art of these *graffiteros*. However, their work as a whole allows insight into the workings of Chilean society, as *graffiteros* critique societal structures and identities.

*Graffiteros* have attempted to create new ways to express their works and adapt to globalizing society without losing their identities. Although the inherent politics of the movement have waned in the current environment, the socially concerned muralists continue to address political issues. The continuation of imperial thought processes and social structures reflect themselves in the street art of Chile. Through the influence of the Mexican muralist movement, Chilean artists have created their own identity within the postcolonial world. Chilean muralism is very much Latin American, having eschewed much of the European and American influence. Chilean muralism, due to its politicized history, speaks of social issues directly and somewhat ironically. The didactic focus of their murals, whether political or social, enhances the impact of their works.

Chilean society, similar to Brazilian, incubates street art, allowing it to develop and grow in ways that it cannot in a hostile European or North American setting. Street art in Chile has already broken the boundaries of what is considered “high art.” The murals of Inti, Charquipunk and LRM are highly anticipated by a public that actively promotes their works. A large population in Valparaiso rejects the UNESCO heritage protection believing it hurts their art
movement. “From Arica to Puntas Arenas,” graffiti has been accepted with open arms and perceived as a beneficial cultural manifestation. Unlike in the United States, Chileans have integrated muralism and graffiti into their everyday lives. Chilean muralism is truly a public art and lives up to the multiple manifests that demand a development of art for all of Latin America.

This thesis serves as an introductory exploration into the current issues that drive the street art movement. Continued research is needed, especially considering the recent increase in political graffiti in relation to the student movement, which is not addressed in the presented work. Due to increased dissatisfaction with the government, students have protested for a year-and-a-half, addressing issues of high tuition and low quality education, both at the secondary and university level. As these protests continue, future research will need to look at whether the current muralist movement returns to its political roots and begins to address these issues blatantly.

When looking at these works of art within a postcolonial context, we are able to decipher their importance within the Chilean and South American subaltern. The resulting formation of an identity distinct, yet hybridized, with European culture seems at odds not only with itself, but with both Bhabha’s and Said’s theories of culture. However, this recognizes the diversity within Chilean identity and the graffitero community. I conclude that postcolonial development will continue to influence street art and its makers as Latin America copes with the increasing globalization and homogenization of culture.
ENDNOTES

i I studied abroad in Lima, Peru for the academic year 2010-2011. I was directly enrolled in a local university, la Pontificia Universidad Catolica del Peru. I am often told that I speak with a Peruvian accent. There is a long-standing rivalry between Chile and Peru, so the artists I worked with commonly mocked my “Peruvian” accent.


ix Spivak, “French Feminism,” 92.


xi Homi Bhabha, “The Other Question…” *Screen* 24, no. 6 (November-December 1983), 23.

xii Huddart, *Homi K. Bhabha*, 46.


xiv Homi Bhabha, “‘Black Male’: The Whitney Museum of American Art,” *Artforum* 33 no. 6 (February 1995), 110.


xvii Ibid., 336.


xx Ibid., XXIII, 222.


Greet, Beyond National Identity, 16.


Aníbal Quijano, “El marxismo de Mariátegui,” 44.

Greet, Beyond National Identity, 16.

Ibid., 21.


Salvatore, “The Postcolonial in Latin America,” 399.


Ibid., 182.

Ibid., 183.


Ibid., 17.

Ebe Bellange, El Mural como reflejo de la realidad social en Chile. (Santiago: Chile America CESOC, 1995), 15.


Ibid., 24-25.

Bellange, El Mural como reflejo de la realidad social en Chile, 23.


Bellange, El Mural como reflejo de la realidad social en Chile, 22.

Siqueiros, Siqueiros por Siqueiros, 113.


Eduardo Castillo Espinoza, Puno y letra: movimento social y comunicacion grafica en Chile (Santiago, Chile: Ocho Libros Editores, 2010), 52.

Castillo Espinoza, Puno y letra, 52.


de Micheli, Siqueiros, 15.
lii Ibid., 184.
liii Ibid., 185.
liv Castillo Espinoza, Puno y letra, 54.
lv Ibid.
lvi Ibid., 57.
lviii Interview with artist, July 17, 2012.
lx Ibid.

Rod Palmer, Street Art Chile (Corte Madera, California: Gingko Press, Inc. 2008), 46.

lxii Bellange, El Mural como reflejo de la realidad social en Chile, 34.

Palmer, Street Art Chile, 9.
lxiii Ibid.

lxiv Castillo Espinoza, Eduardo, Puno y letra: movimiento social y comunicacion grafica en Chile (Santiago, Chile: Ocho Libros Editores, 2010), 78.

lxv Palmer, Street Art Chile, 10.
lxvi Ibid., 11.
lxvii Interview with artist, July 1, 2012.
lxix Palmer, Street Art Chile, 11.
lxxiii Ibid., 156-157.
lxxiv Interview with artist, June 28, 2012.

lxvii Interview with artist, July 31, 2012.
lxxix Palmer, Street Art Chile, 22.
lxxx Ibid.

xxx Castillo Espinoza, Puno y letra, 118.

xxxii Palmer, Street Art Chile, 29.

xxxiii Interview with artist, July 15, 2012.

xxxiv Palmer, Street Art Chile, 139.

xxxv Ibid.

xxxvi Interview with artist, July 15, 2012.

xxxvii Palmer, Street Art Chile, 42.

xxxviii Interview with artist, July 4, 2012.

xxxix Interview with artist, June 28, 2012.

Ibid.
Ibid.
Ibid.
Interview with artist, June 25, 2012.
Ibid., July 20, 2012.
Palmer, *Street Art Chile*, 16.
Ibid.
Interview with artist, June 28, 2012.
Ibid., July 20, 2012.
Palmer, *Street Art Chile*, 17.
Ibid., 8.
Ibid., July 6, 2012.
Ibid., 11.
Interview with artist, June 27, 2012.
Ibid., June 27, 2012.
Ibid.
Ibid., July 20, 2012.
“Interview with Charquipunk and La Robot de Madera.”
Interview with artist, July 3, 2012.
Palmer, *Street Art Chile*, 17.
A Chilean colloquialism used to describe the entire country. Arica is the largest northern city and Puntas Arenas is the farthest south.
APPENDIX A: GLOSSARY

América: Latin America differentiated from America due to the exclusion of non-Latin heritage countries.

Bombardeo: A campaign to spray an urban area, usually with the intention to obliterate other artists’ works, relating to the idea of territoriality and "bossing" an area.

Bombardero: A graffitero who participates in bombardeos.

Brigadas: Street art brigadas formed during the 1960s. Brigadas have multiples roles and due to the political nature of their art have to be extremely organized:

Fileatador (outliner): Responsible for outlining the drawing.

Fondeador (backgrounder): Responsible for painting the background color.

Guardia: The lookout for the brigada or cru.

Rellenador (filler): Paints in the figures after being outlined.

Trazador (planner): Responsible for designing the initial mural plan.

Cap: Term for nozzle borrowed from English.

Crew/cru: Group of graffiti-artists aesthetically focused.

Equipo: Team of propaganda- or street-artists.

Fapcap: Slang word taken from English "fat cap" that is a wide nozzle attached to a lata to create broad, highly visible lines.

Flop: A work of hip-hop graffiti. In Chilean slang, the term means "throw up" i.e. quickly done and usually is just a tag without much figural work.
**Flop analítico**: An analytical throw up. The term was coined by Mauricio Roman to describe flops that have a figurative dimension.

**Freestyle**: Abstracted wildstyle graffiti.

**Graffitero**: An artist who participates in the graffiti or muralist movement.

**Gringismo**: The use of phrase in intentionally bad English. Artists who wish to draw attention to the US influence on Chilean culture or politics use it.

**Incoerencia**: Illogical and intentionally meaningless text.

**Indigenismo**: Term referring to the pursuit of greater social and political inclusion for indigenous people of the Americas; coined by José Carlos Mariátegui, a Peruvian postcolonialist.

**Intervention**: The act by *graffiteros* of taking over a space in order to promote a political or social ideal.

**Lata**: Can of spray paint. In Chile, they are sold without a nozzle to discourage shoplifting.

**Latex**: General term to describe water or casein-based paints. They were widely used during the 1960s and 1970s and regained popularity during the 1990s.

**Mascara**: Stencil screen. X-ray photographs are commonly used to create them as they last long and leave crisp lines.

**Muelde**: A mold, which is painted over to create a negative image. They usually are used to create childish shapes.

**NeoPop**: Latin American term for fresh-looking and funny art.

**NoPop**: Riposte of NeoPop developed by Sergio Valenzuela of Ekeko. He chose "no" due to its reminiscence to the anti-Pinochet "No" campaign and affirmation of freedom.
Nueva figuracion: Figurative street art that typically is aesthetically cartoonish and associated with the nueva generacion born in the 1980s. Nueva generacion is viewed as a new open-minded generation. Nueva figuracion has increasingly turned to stencils.

Papelografos: Long paper posters, usually with didactic or ironic text, that are pasted to walls. They are popular with political groups since they can be painted in private then quickly pasted on the streets.

Porteño: Demonym of Valparaiso.

Pueblo: Direct translation is village. However, the word has many different societal meanings. It can be translated as a regional or ethnic grouping, i.e. the South American or Chilean people. In this context, it also means the common or working-class.

Santiaguino: Demonym of Santiago.

Tag: Used in the same way that it is used in American English, graffiti- or street artists signature. They do not have to be lettering or words. Some artists use specific symbols or images as their signatures.

Toy: Unoriginal or defective work of arts. It can also be used for a work that breaks unwritten rules of conduct, such as defacing another artist's works. Note that it is not inherently wrong or unexpected that artists add to other's works; however, defacing them is considered inappropriate conduct.

Wildstyle or estilo selvaje: An expressive North American graffiti style characterized by angular interlocking letters. It can be used to describe a tag or flop.

Zapatera: Shoe paint that is favored by some street artists, as it is cheap and long lasting.
APPENDIX B: MANIFIESTO DE INTEGRACION PLASTICA

Fernando Marcos and Osvaldo Reyes

Chile, hasta ahora ha estado nutriéndose permanentemente en lo europeo, en el campo de las artes plásticas.

Algunos artistas, especialmente los acomodados, se enorgullecen de la influencia “civilizante”.

La verdad es que también en Chile, existen otros artistas que sin desconocer lo que se cultiva en otras latitudes (más allá del continente Americano), de ningún modo pueden aceptar, al menos en nuestra época, la dependencia en que se encuentra nuestra cultura y el arte, especialmente en la plástica nacional, en relación a lo europeo.

Estos artistas, a su vez consideran en primer término que nuestro país como las demás naciones del continente Latinoamericano desde hace mucho tiempo se encuentran preparados para producir un arte y una cultura propia, que verdaderamente nos represente.

Muestra de esta potencia creadora existe en el pasado, y también en el presente, a pesar es claro, de las corrientes artísticas más cosmopolitas que universales, que por desgracia han dominado hasta ahora en las funciones orientadores del arte nacional.

Los artistas que reconocen esta fuerza creadora de nuestro pueblo no esperan, por cierto, el último grito europeo, parisiense, para poder crear. Sin embargo, ello no significa el no reconocimiento del verdadero aporte en la cultura y el arte que Europa o París pueden haber entregado.

Por otra parte, los fenómenos económico-sociales que se producen en nuestra América, están impulsando a todos los países del continente hacia una ruta objetiva en defensa de sus intereses, inmediatos y mediatos. Los pueblos todos están cada vez más interesados en la Unión Latinoamericana, no solo para la satisfacción de necesidades primarias, sino en una unidad más profunda, como es la unidad creadora, en el arte y la cultura, como resultado de una mutua comprensión; como producto de una lucha sostenida, en contra de las fuerzas negativas y retardatorias que niegan o desconocen, lo que realmente significa una América Unida, en todas sus proyecciones de vida.

Esta unidad, en la creación artística y la cultura, nacida desde el fondo mismo del pueblo Latinoamericano, con toda su rica experiencia y potencialidad, no solo ha de servir para expresar sus respectivos aportes, en lo universal, sino que ha de satisfacer las necesidades de este mismo pueblo de América.

Así, todos los artistas plásticos: pintores, escultores, arquitectos, ceramistas, grabadores, dibujantes, etc., deben unirse en nuestro país para desarrollar una labor conjunta y coordinada que tienda a reflejar en el arte plástico nacional, este impulso que el pueblo está aportando a la creación artística nacional y continental.

De este modo, en su propósito de integración plástica y artística en general, podrán aportar obras coherentes y verdaderas que sobrepasen los límites estrechos en que actualmente se desarrollan
algunos sectores plásticos antisociales, ausentes de nuestra realidad y fieles intérpretes de lo reaccionario y caduco.

También esta misma unidad de acción ha de servir para luchar por una verdadera justicia económica y social que beneficie a este postergado sector social creador de cultura y de arte.

Llamamos entonces a todos los artistas chilenos, especialmente jóvenes, a estrechar filas en el Movimiento de Integración Plástica, con el objeto fundamental de luchar por las siguientes bases programáticas:

1. El impulso hacia la conformación de un Arte Plástico Nacional, tanto en su proceso creador mismo, como en los aspectos de investigación, formación, y divulgación artística.
2. Que la creación artística nazca desde el fondo mismo del pueblo, para lo cual el artista debe estar en permanente contacto con los elementos del pueblo trabajador; de igual modo, en permanente contacto con los pueblos de América Latina.
3. Estimular la formación de nuevos valores artísticos que interpretan esta realidad nueva.
4. El estímulo al arte popular, pues este constituye la fuerza primaria creadora de los pueblos.
5. Por una expresión plástica Latinoamericana, en lo universal, que nos interprete y nos represente con las fuerzas vitales de nuestros pueblos.
6. Por el intercambio constante de artistas latinoamericanos, con el propósito de estrechar vínculos, y de crear las condiciones necesarias para un conocimiento y valoración justa de la creación artística continental.
7. Luchar en contra de los sectores artísticos retrógrados y cosmopolitas, que hasta ahora han mantenido el arte y al artista plástico nacional, al margen de nuestro pueblo.
8. Este Movimiento de Integración Plástica luchará por los intereses y reivindicaciones inmediatas de los artistas plásticos de Chile.

Firman este documento: Fernando Marcos, pintor muralista; María Fuentealba, escultora; Osvaldo Reyes, pintor muralista; Rosa Abarca, pintora; Hardy Wistuba, pintor; Ximena Cristi, pintora; Enrique Rufatt, arquitecto; Fernando Bustos, arquitecto; Luis Oviedo, dibujante-grabador; Luis Guzmán, escultor-ceramista; Flor Orrego, pintora; Daco Maturana, dibujante-grabador; Heriberto Alfaro, escultor…
APPENDIX C: IMAGES

Figure 1  Charquipunk & LRM. *Casa Barbara*. Near Ascensor Reina Victoria, Cerro Alegre, Valparaiso, Chile. January 2011. Images from http://www.fotolog.com/charquipunk/. 
Figures 1.1, 1.2 & 1.3  Charquipunk & LRM. Casa Barbara (detail). January 2011.
Figure 2  Zapotec tomb fresco at Atzompa, a satellite city of Monte Albán. 650-900 CE. Image from http://www.thehistoryblog.com/archives/date/2012/07/page/2.

Figure 3  Fresco in the Church of San Francisco de Santiago. ND. Image from http://www.allsantiago.com/areas-and-barrios/around-iglesia-de-san-francisco/.
Figure 6.1 & 6.2  Gónzales Camarena, José. *La Presencia de América Latina*.
Figure 7 & 7.1  Donoso, Johnson, Millar and Meschi. Mapocho Mural. Vega Central, Santiago. 1964. Images from Castillo Espinoza, Puño y Letra, 71-73.
Figure 8 & 8.1  Brigada Ramona Parra Murals. Santiago. Images from Palmer, *Street Art Chile*, 60 & 10.

Figure 9  Brigada Ramona Parra Mural. Santiago. Image from Palmer, *Street Art Chile*, 60.
Figure 11  Brigada Chacón Papelógrafo. Calle Bellavista, Providencia, Santiago. 2001. Images from Castillo Espinoza, Puño y Letra, 159.

Figure 13 & 13.1  Toral, Mario. *Memoria Visual de una Nación*. Universidad de Chile Metro Station, Santiago. 1996. Image from http://www.flickr.com/photos/31119151@N05/favorites/?view=md.
Figure 14  DUE CREW. *Mapocho Butress Boat*. East of Purísima bridge, Santiago. ND. Image from Palmer, *Street Art Chile*, 20.

Figure 15  Charquipunk. Barón Metro Station, Valaparaiso. 2007. Image from Palmer, *Street Art Chile*, 32-33.
Figure 16  Inti and Alme, *Indigenous Figures*. Barón Metro Station, Valaparaiso. 2007. Image from Palmer, *Street Art Chile*, 31.

Figure 17  Charquipunk. *Gato*. Las Ruinas, Ex-Prisión, Valparaiso. ND. Image from www.dipity.com/tickr/Flickr-valpo-charquipunk/.
Figure 18  Pasaje Fischer.

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![Image of students blindfolded](image)

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