

Civil Reawakening in the Post-disaster:
The Re-emergence of Housing Struggles after the 2010 Earthquake in Concepción, Chile

Omar Adrian Nuño Iñiguez

A Thesis
in
the Department
of
Geography, Planning and Environment

Presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree
of Master of Science (Geography, Planning and Environment) at
Concordia University
Montréal, Québec, Canada

May 2023

© Omar Adrian Nuño Iñiguez, 2023

CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY

School of Graduate Studies

This is to certify that the thesis prepared

By: Omar Adrian Nuño Iñiguez

Entitled: Civil Reawakening in the Post-disaster: The Re-emergence of Housing
Struggles after 2010 Earthquake in Concepción, Chile

and submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Science (Geography, Planning & Environment)

complies with the regulations of the University and meets the accepted standards with respect to originality and quality.

Signed by the final examining committee:

_____ Chair
Alexandra Lesnikowski

_____ Examiner
Gonzalo Lizarralde

_____ Examiner
Jacob A. C. Remes

_____ Supervisor
Kevin A. Gould

Approved by

Craig Townsend
Chair of Department

Pascale Sicotte
Dean of Faculty

Date: May 8th 2023

Abstract

Civil Reawakening in the Post-disaster: The Re-emergence of Housing Struggles after 2010 Earthquake in Concepción, Chile

Omar Adrian Nuño Iñiguez

On February 27th, 2010, one of the strongest earthquakes ever recorded, struck Southern Chile. This earthquake, known as 27F by the locals, disrupted not only the physical structures of Chile, but also its social structures. The failure of the government to adequately respond the immediate aftermath and later the reconstruction, highlighted key structural failures in Chile's socioeconomic fabric. Specifically, 27F exposed public disappointment with Chile's post-dictatorship government and rekindled neglected and nearly forgotten social struggles. I analyze the post-disaster as a moment of resilience through a historical lens. My research explores how 27F brought back actors and struggles of past social movements giving continuity to their memory and practices, eventually linking the weaknesses of the post-disaster response with foundational structural failures in Chilean policymaking.

Specifically, this thesis explores the historical conditions of post-disaster gentrification and housing activism in neighborhoods of Ribera Norte, in Greater Concepción. Drawing on grey literature, archival documents and semi-structured interviews with activists and members of civil society who were affected by 27F, I show how the shortcomings of the reconstruction and the post-disaster housing mobilizations were in some respects a continuation of Chile's contested 20th century housing policies. Furthermore, my research shows that the legacies of past social movements brought critical experience and leadership to the movement for reconstruction that followed 27F.

Keywords: Post-disaster reconstruction, housing struggles, grassroots movements, Chile, gentrification, resilience, neoliberalism.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank my wife, Sandy, for accompanying me during this process, leaving behind the heat of the Caribbean for Montréal's snowy winters and the peaks of the Andes. I am grateful to my siblings, as their support was instrumental during the difficult times of the early 2020's. This thesis would not have been possible without my supervisor Dr. Kevin Gould, who introduced me to many key concepts of critical geography and guided me through the process of shaping and writing this research. I really appreciate the opportunity of working with you, exchanging enticing concepts and ideas over a coffee, especially those ideas that did not make into the final version – such as Borges.

I would like to show appreciation to Mauricio Sáez, who introduced me to the people of Concepción, as well as to the other participants of this research: Alfonso, Anita, Bárbara, Carolina, Eduardo, Ernestina, Marcela, María, Mirtha, Victor, and Voltaire. Besides making this thesis possible, you taught me a lot about solidarity and organizing during our conversations. I can only hope to convey your knowledge and experiences through this work.

I was able to conduct this research because of the many agencies that supported this project: Concordia's Faculty of Arts and Science, the Power Corporation of Canada, Mitacs, and *Œvre Durable* (at UdeM). I must also acknowledge the diligent work of many: from the administrative staff at Concordia, the archivists at Concepción's Historical Archive and at the Ministry of Housing, who provided me excellent sources and advice to better navigate Chile's historical repositories.

Last but not least, I thank my dear friends Madia, Omar, and Stefan, all those drinks, tacos, and conversations we shared went a long way, especially during the lockdown. Gina, your proofreading brought much needed order to the entropic mess of my syntax. And to my colleagues at *Œvre Durable* and the Informal Cities Working Group, thank you. Your advice, ideas, and critical takes, have informed my research.

Dedication

To Lulú, my mother.

Table of Contents

LIST OF FIGURES.....	VII
GLOSSARY	IX
ACRONYMS.....	XV
1. INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1. HISTORICAL AND GEOGRAPHICAL CONTEXT OF CONCEPCIÓN.....	6
1.2. THE ARGUMENT	14
1.3. THESIS STRUCTURE	17
2. DISASTER RECONSTRUCTION STUDIES	20
2.1. THREE MAIN ASPECTS OF POST-DISASTER STUDIES	20
2.2. POLITICS OF DISASTER IN CHILE: THE 27 TH FEBRUARY 2010 (27F)	23
2.3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND METHODS.....	26
2.4. THE INTERVIEWEES	33
2.5. POSITIONALITY	39
3. EARLY HOUSING STRUGGLES: THE MAKING OF THE POBLADORES.....	43
3.1. <i>LA POBLACIÓN</i>	44
3.2. REFORMA AGRARIA	53
3.3. HOUSING POLICY	56
3.4. SUMMARY.....	63
4. RESISTING REPRESSIVE POLICIES DURING THE PINOCHET REGIME.....	65
4.1. POLICIES OF VULNERABILITY.....	67
4.2. CIVIL REAWAKENING IN THE <i>POBLACIÓN</i>	74
4.3. SUMMARY.....	88
5. SOCIAL REAWAKENING FROM THE <i>CONCERTACIÓN</i> TO 2010	90
5.1. THE SUBSIDY MODEL	92
5.2. THE <i>RIBERA NORTE</i> PROJECT	99
5.3. SOCIAL ORGANIZATION DURING THE TRANSITION	104
5.4. SUMMARY.....	112
6. SELF-ORGANIZATION IN THE AFTERMATH OF 27F.....	116
6.1. STATE OF EXCEPTION: A PARALYZED GOVERNMENT PRIORITIZES PRIVATE PROPERTY	117
6.2. CITIZENS FULFILL THE ROLE OF THE STATE.....	123
6.3. SUMMARY.....	134
7. THE STRUGGLE FOR A JUST RECONSTRUCTION.....	136
7.1. SHORTCOMINGS OF THE EARLY RECONSTRUCTION.....	138
7.2. THE TOIL OF CONVERGENCE	152
7.3. DISASTER CITIZENSHIP IN <i>PRAXIS</i>	164
7.4. SUMMARY.....	180
8. CONCLUSIONS: RECONSTRUCTING CIVIL SOCIETY	184
REFERENCES.....	201

List of Figures

- Figure 1. Map of Central Chile highlighting important cities and South America's Plate Tectonics. Most of the population lives in the area between Santiago, the Capital, and Concepción. The area between Concepción and Valdivia is the most seismically active. Generated from QGIS with data from Chile's National Library.....5
- Figure 2. Map of Seismic Activity in the Biobío Region and its vicinity. This map contrast two sources for seismic activity: a heatmap of earthquakes equal or greater than 5 Mw from 2011 to 2021, and a scatter plot of last century significant earthquakes, highlighting the most devastating ones. Generated in QGIS with data from Chile's National Library, the European-Mediterranean Seismological Centre, and USA's National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.....8
- Figure 3. Map of the Municipality of Concepción. Generated in QGIS with data from Chile's National Library, Patrimonio Industrial Biobío, and Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA).....46
- Figure 4. Map of the Municipalities of the Biobío Region, highlighting the important industrial sites and enterprises. Most of the Region key industrial sites and factories remain active, with the exception of the Schwager Mine in Coronel, and the Chivilingo Hydroelectric Plant in Lota. Generated in QGIS with data from Chile's National Library and the NGO Patrimonio Industrial Biobío.....49
- Figure 5. Diorama of Concepción after the 1939 Chillán earthquake, locally known as the Ruin. Credit: Rodolfo Gutiérrez Schwerter "Zerreitug" (2021) at Concepción Gallery of History.58
- Figure 6. Map of Ribera Norte's reclaimed land from the Biobío River. The river was slowly reclaimed by Pobladores since the early 20th century, debris from 1939 and 1960 earthquakes was used as a foundation to this reclamation effort. Generated in QGIS with data from Chile's National Library, Patrimonio Industrial Biobío, JAXA, and Mihovilovich Gratz & Fuentealba Domínguez (2020).....60
- Figure 7. Pobladoras organizing a soup kitchen in the Cardinal Juan Francisco Fresno Camp, Santiago. Credit: Kena Lorenzini (1984) at the Gabriela Mistral Cultural Center, Santiago.....84
- Figure 8. Comparison of Ribera Norte before the Ribera Norte Project started (1995) and the contemporary state of the area (2022) Left: A bird's-eye view of Pedro del Río and Aurora de Chile in Ribera Norte (1995). Right: Satellite Imagery of Ribera Norte (2022). Generated in QGIS with data from MINVU (2001).....101

- Figure 9. The first democratic leadership of the Junta N. 5 holding a meeting during 1989. From left to right: Juan Soto Fernández, Mario Gaete, Ernestina Gatica, Camilo Fernández, Ana María Peñaloza, and Marcelo Gaete. Credit: Ana María Peñaloza Puelles.108
- Figure 10. Two poblaciones in Concepción. Top: A camp of mediaguas Ribera Norte during the late 1990's. Credit: MINVU (2001). Bottom: Población Agüita de la Perdiz, next to the UdeC and Cerro Caracol in Concepción a settlement that still has mediaguas as the majority its permanent housing units. Taken by author in 2021.142
- Figure 11. Map of the Ribera Norte Project and the Municipality of Chiguayante, indicating its land designations in 1970. Most of Chiguayante was designated agricultural land 50 years ago, the población Villa Futuro established in agricultural land in the 1990s. Generated in QGIS with data from Chile's National Library, Patrimonio Industrial Biobío, JAXA, and Chile's National Planning Office (1970).145
- Figure 12. View of the Biobío River and the Nahuelbuta Range from Villa Futuro. Photo by author (2022).147
- Figure 13. A timeline of relevant events for the 27F reconstruction. Completed using data from Ampuero (2016) and archival materials from the Historical Archive of Concepción.168
- Figure 14. A third-party trial pit requested by Pobladores from the Renacer Santa Clara Camp in Talcahuano in 2011. Credit: Eduardo Ampuero (2016).173
- Figure 15. Top: The empty lot where the Santa Rosa Mill used to be. Taken by author in 2022. Bottom: The Alto Río Building days after the earthquake. Credit: Alejandra Jara (2020) for La Tercera.188
- Figure 16. Celebration of Gabriel Boric's victory in Concepción's Main Square. Credit: Sandy A. Sosa Rivero (December 19, 2021).190
- Figure 17. Pandemia en Comunidad. A depiction of community support and the organization of a soup kitchen during the pandemic. Embroidered on canvas by Sylvia Yáñez Vázquez (2022), exposed on Casa Prochelle I, Valdivia.194

Glossary

CONCEPT	DEFINITION
AGRARIAN REFORM	The Chilean agrarian reform was a process of land redistribution that elapsed during the years 1960-1974, spanning four administrations. It ended the <i>latifundista</i> system and introduced a market-based landowning system.
ALDEA	Spanish for ‘village’ or ‘hamlet.’ However in the context of post-27F Chile, it was a euphemism to designate emergency camps and informal settlements that arose after the earthquake. It is used interchangeably with ‘camp’.
ANNALES SCHOOL	A set of historiographic perspectives emerging from the journal <i>Annales d’histoire économique et sociale</i> , in mid-20 th century France.
ASOCIACIONES GREMIALES	Translated as “guild associations,” associations of businessowners and sometimes employees.
AURORINO	Demonym for an inhabitant of the <i>población</i> Aurora de Chile.
CABRO	Literally a male goat, in Chile it is slang for a young boy.
CAMP	The least developed type of informal settlement. They consist of tents, shacks and <i>mediaguas</i> , with no services. In Chile. Sometimes it can be synonymous with <i>aldea</i> and <i>población</i> , however, those terms can also define more established settlements and even formal neighborhoods.
CARABINEROS	Chile’s national military police.
CERRO	Spanish word to define a hill or a small mountain. In Concepción the

	two most defining ones are Cerro Caracol, and Cerro Chepe, along the northern banks of the Biobio River.
CLIENTELISM	The exchange of favors or resources for political gains or votes.
CONSTITUYENTE	Independent elected citizens tasked with the redaction of Chile's new constitution.
CONTRALORÍA	'Comptroller office.' Autonomous office in charge of independently auditing and scrutinizing the use of public funds.
COSTANERA	Coastal Road.
COUP (D'ÉTAT)	Seizure of a government by force.
DICHATINO	Inhabitant of Dichato.
DISASTER CAPITALISM / SHOCK DOCTRINE	Term coined by author Naomi Klein to designate the use of a disaster to exceptionally apply a radical set of otherwise unpopular neoliberal politics.
DISASTER CITIZENSHIP	Strengths-based approach to analyze post-disaster dynamics. Alternative to the shock doctrine in which the disaster ignites mutual aid and the organization of civil society.
EL NIÑO	Meteorological phenomenon that causes increased temperatures and rainfall along Chile's Pacific coast.
ERRADICACIÓN	'Uproot.' The dissipation of an <i>aldea</i> or <i>población</i> , usually by displacement and/or dispossession. However, it can also mean successful transition to ownership or regularization of a settlement.
ESTALLIDO SOCIAL	Series of protests at the national level that occurred during 2019-2020. One of the defining events that led to the plebiscite for a new constitution.

FUNA	A protest aiming to reject and shame a particular individual or group.
GREMIALISMO	An economic right-wing ideology that aims to depoliticize social organizations.
INTENDENTE	Elected official in charge of administering a Chilean Region, equivalent to a premier in Canada.
JUNTA DE VECINOS	Or just ' <i>junta</i> '. A neighborhood council.
LAFQUENCHES	Group of the Mapuche people native to the area along the Biobío River.
LATIFUNDIO	An immense and privately owned tract of land.
LONGUE DURÉE	'Long duration.' Proposed by Fernand Braudel, member of the <i>Annales</i> School, <i>longue durée</i> refers to long-term historical phenomena. This term opposes the analysis of history as a series of events and instead understands history as the result of social structure.
MAPUCHES	Largest indigenous group of Chile. They speak Mapundungún, and they inhabit the region of Araucanía, as well of parts of Argentina.
MEDIAGUA	A small wooden structure used as emergency housing in Chile, usually a 3x6m room with no bathroom or utilities.
CHILEAN MEMORY	In the Chilean context, 'memory' is a concept of resistance to the attempts of Pinochet's dictatorship to rewrite history to gain the hearts and minds of Chileans. It is also a concept of resilience due to the country's proclivity to natural hazards.

MENTALITÉS	Historiographical methodology, part of the <i>Annales</i> School, that aims to capture the collective ‘thought’ of a determined historical group or an era, closely related to collective memory.
MILICO	Derogatory term for soldier.
MIRISTA	From the MIR, or member of MIR (see abbreviations).
MUTUALISTA	An organization dedicated to the mutual aid of citizens.
OLLA COMÚN / OLLA DE POBRE PAJARERA	A soup kitchen or communal canteen. ‘Birdhouse.’ Familiar term that refers to urban social housing units built by the Concertación administrations.
PARO	Strike or walkout.
PENQUISTA	Inhabitant of Greater Concepción.
PLAZA	Public square.
PLAZOLETA	A small public square.
PLEBISCITE	An exceptional public vote to determine a major national event. In this thesis it refers to the 1988 vote to end Pinochet’s government and transition to democracy.
POBLACIÓN CALLAMPA	<i>Población Callampa</i> is a derogatory term for shantytown, the literal translation is ‘mushroom community.’ However, as many <i>poblaciones</i> have been improved and turned into formal neighborhoods. <i>Población</i> by itself does not have the same connotation. It describes a working-class or industrial neighborhood.
POBLADOR	A <i>Poblador</i> or <i>Pobladora</i> , is an inhabitant of a <i>población</i> . The term is used to describe all inhabitants of camps, <i>aldeas</i> , and any kind of informal settlement. They are usually migrants

	from rural areas that settled on available urban land.
RADICACIÓN	‘To take root.’ Is the act of establishing permanency somewhere. For <i>Pobladores</i> , this meant not only to settle in vacant land but to improve and build the <i>población</i> .
REGION	Region, with upper case, is the largest administrative territorial designation in Chile after the republic itself. There are 16 Chilean Regions which are often referenced by their roman numerals.
RIBERA NORTE	The urban northern shore of the Biobío River, located in Greater Concepción.
RIBERA NORTE PROJECT	An urban redevelopment project carried out in Ribera Norte from the river mouth to the town of Hualqui (1990’s to the present day).
PENGUIN REVOLUTION	A 2006 social movement led by high school students.
SUBSIDY MODEL / SYSTEM	Chile’s framework for the construction of new housing, especially social housing. It was developed during the dictatorship and refined during the Concertación government. Its role is to approve, fund, and audit new housing developments. In this model, the construction and design of housing is left to the private sector.
TEOLOGÍA DE LA LIBERACIÓN	‘Liberation theology.’ A catholic doctrine which seeks to improve the material needs of the poor. In Latin America it often overlapped with left wing politics, which made their proponent political targets of autocratic regimes.

TOMA (DE TERRENO)

An occupation of a site, building, piece of infrastructure, as a means of protest. It can also describe squatting, or the retaking of a property/estate to reclaim ownership during the agrarian reform.

VECINO

“Neighbor.” It usually implies membership in a neighborhood council.

Acronyms

ABBREVIATION	DEFINITION
27F	27 February. Reference to 2010 earthquake and tsunami.
AFP	<i>Administradoras de Fondos de Pensiones</i> . Private entities that administer pension funds.
ANDHA / ANDHA CHILE	<i>Asociación Nacional de Deudores Habitacionales</i> (National Association of Mortgage Debtors). Social movement and political party.
AP	Alliance for Progress.
CCHC	Chilean Chamber of Construction
CEMA CHILE	<i>Centro de Madres Chile</i> (Center for Mothers Chile). A women's charity sponsored by the state.
CEVAS	<i>Centros de Vacaciones Solidarios</i> (Solidary Vacation Centers). Religiously affiliated youth centers.
CORFO	<i>Corporación de Fomento de la Producción</i> (Production Development Corporation). Chilean governmental bureau.
CORRA	<i>Corporación de Reconstrucción y Auxilio</i> (Reconstruction and Aid Corporation)
CORVI	<i>Corporación de la Vivienda</i> (Housing Corporation).
DC	<i>Partido Demócrata Cristiano</i> (Christian Democratic Party)
EGIS	<i>Entidad de Gestión Inmobiliaria</i> (Housing Management Entity). An entity that manages the development of housing projects.
EVÓPOLI	<i>Partido Evolución Política</i> (Political Evolution Party).
FRAP	<i>Frente Acción Popular</i> (Popular Action Front). Political coalition.

FENAPO	<i>Federación Nacional de Pobladores (Pobladores' National Federation).</i>
FEUC	<i>Federación de Estudiantes Universidad de Concepción (University of Concepción Federation of Students).</i>
INDAP	<i>Instituto de Desarrollo Agropecuario (Institute of Agricultural Development).</i>
JAXA	Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency
LA RED	<i>Red de Estudios Sociales en Prevención de Desastres en América Latina (Network for the Social Study of Disaster Prevention in Latin America).</i> Research network.
MAPU/OC	<i>Movimiento de Acción Popular Unitario / Obrero Campesino (Popular Action Unitary Movement / Laborer Peasant).</i> Social movement and political party.
MBS	<i>Ministerio de Bienestar Social (Ministry of Welfare).</i> Now Mintrab.
MDSF	<i>Ministerio de Desarrollo Social y Familia de Chile (Ministry of Social Development).</i>
MINVU	<i>Ministerio de Vivienda y Urbanismo (The Ministry of Housing and Urbanism of Chile).</i>
MNRJ	<i>Movimiento Nacional por la Reconstrucción Justa (National Movement for a Just Reconstruction).</i>
MINTRAB	<i>Ministerio del Trabajo y Previsión Social (Ministry of Labor and Social Security).</i>
MIR	<i>Movimiento de Izquierdas Revolucionarias (Revolutionary Left Movement).</i>
MP	<i>Movimiento de Pobladores (Pobladores Movement).</i>

MUI	<i>Movimiento Universitario de Izquierda</i> (Leftist University Movement).
MUR	<i>Movimiento Universitario Revolucionario</i> (Revolutionary University Movement).
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization.
ODEPLAN	<i>Oficina de Planificación Nacional</i> (National Planning Office). Now MDSF.
ONEMI	<i>Oficina Nacional de Emergencia del Ministerio del Interior</i> (National Office of Emergency of the Interior Ministry).
OAP	<i>Organizaciones Autónomas Populares</i> (Autonomous Popular Organizations).
PRZ	Pedro del Río Zañartu (Neighborhood)
PS	<i>Partido Socialista</i> (Socialist Party).
PUC	<i>Pontífica Universidad Católica de Chile</i> (Pontifical Catholic University of Chile).
RBB	Radio Bío-Bío.
RN	<i>Partido Renovación Nacional</i> (National Renovation Party).
SEREMI	<i>Secretaría Regional Ministerial</i> (Regional Ministry Office). Regional Office of any ministry e.g. MINVU's SEREMI.
SERVIU	<i>Servicios de Vivienda y Urbanización</i> (The Housing and Urban Planning Service). Branch of the MINVU.
SHOA	<i>Servicio Hidrográfico y Oceanográfico de la Armada de Chile</i> (Hydrographic Institute of the Chilean Navy).
TECHO	<i>Fundación TECHO</i> ("ROOF" Foundation). Religious charity. Formerly know as <i>Fundación un Techo para Chile</i> .
UDEC	<i>Universidad de Concepción</i> (University of Concepción).
UDI	<i>Partido Unión Democrática Independiente</i> (Party of the Independent Democratic Coalition).

UP	<i>Unidad Popular</i> (Popular Unity). Political Coalition.
USA	United States of America.
USD	United States Dollar.
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

1. Introduction

I arrived in Chile in November 2021. It was late spring, a time of changes. Chile, as the rest of the world, was struggling at the time with the COVID-19 pandemic. It also was undergoing an intergenerational change, represented by the presidential elections between Gabriel Boric, one of the social leaders of 2011 student movement, and José Antonio Kast, a life-long far-right politician. However, this intergenerational process was far bigger than the elections. At the same time, Chileans passed a referendum to write a new Constitution, as the previous one was imposed during a period of dictatorship. This new Constitution would be a first, written by designated official elected by citizens, called *constituyentes*. The systematic change that the new Constitution represents was made possible by a variety of interconnected struggles. These struggles share a legacy of resisting repression and social organizing. This process also represents the will of Chileans to step away from a legacy of concentrated power and impunity, while bringing back the legacy of the social progresses achieved before 1973's *coup d'état*, a legacy that was violently interrupted and replaced by decades of neoliberal policymaking.

The ongoing change in Chile is the continuation of various efforts to elaborate alternatives to political economic systems put in place during the dictatorship of General Augusto Pinochet Ugarte (1973-1990). Although Pinochet's autocratic rule ended in 1990 by the government that followed known as the Concertación (Coalition of Parties for Democracy), was still influenced by Pinochet's policies, including the constitution of 1980. The lukewarm approach of the Concertación's administrations to enact meaningful change after taking power, slowly and steadily built discontent and disappointment for Chileans who yearned a transition away from Pinochet's policies. The precariousness and atomization of society that took root during the Pinochet years and continued during the Concertación made Chilean society deeply vulnerable.

The weakened state of Chilean civil society and institutions amplified the damage caused by the 2010 earthquake that shook Southern Chile (27F). The earthquake put on display many of the structural issues on Chile's socioeconomic ordering. The strain of the earthquake on the housing stock, and the inadequate reconstruction process brought Chile's housing policies to a point of rupture, which prompted Chileans to organize a nation-wide movement. This thesis is an exploration of the legacy of past housing struggles and the movement for reconstruction that followed the 2010 earthquake. Specifically, I examine how citizens recovered practices and experiences of past housing-related social movements to navigate the difficult period after the earthquake including exclusionary government reconstruction policies and grassroots alternatives.

During this process of reconstruction, citizens found themselves not only in the midst of wider-ranging phenomena, but also of diverging and mutually exclusive interests, logics of the market, financialization, and political clientelism.¹ Consequently, citizens had to organize, learn from each other and reconnect among themselves. The victory of the Concertación in 1990 led to a period of complacency for civil society, as they expected the center-left administrations to phase away the dictatorship's neoliberal policies. Instead, the Concertación consolidated those policies, attempting to introduce welfare provisions within them. The disillusionment caused by the Concertación, prompted old actors of civil society and struggles to re-emerge, as their concerns were not addressed. The 2010 earthquake put in evidence fundamental flaws in Chile's socioeconomic structures. Out of need, citizens acted in solidarity, and stepped up when the government could not fulfill their needs. Chileans reconnected in the aftermath of a great disaster, not only to rebuild again but to navigate a period of struggle and significant social change.

¹ The exchange of favors or resources for political gains or votes.

This thesis draws on a collection of experiences and clues, which come in the form of interviews, articles, policies, and maps among others. My intent to demonstrate the links between the actors and phenomena that shaped the reconstruction as well as the underlying processes that left many Chileans vulnerable to a powerful natural hazard in the form of 27F. With these research materials linked in place and explained, it is possible to have a clearer perspective on how Chileans – despite being in the cradle of neoliberalism following a political repression under Pinochet, complacency during the Concertación, and a ongoing exposure to natural hazards – have not only reorganized and struggled, but have negotiated with their governments to advance common interests. In the case of the reconstruction, this meant forming the first national-scale movement to resist post-disaster gentrification and obtain better housing solutions to those affected by the earthquake.

The Earthquake: 27F

Chileans bid farewell to the summer each year in late February with the Viña del Mar Festival, the paramount music festival in Latin America. In 2010, festivities halted abruptly, and the summer closed leaving a bitter taste in people's mouths. On the night of February 27th, one of the strongest earthquakes ever recorded shook the Maule Region in Southern Chile (8.8° Richter). This abruptly changed the atmosphere from one of celebration to one of despair and uncertainty. The first account of the earthquake I heard from a *penquista*,² Mauricio Sáez, an acquaintance and fellow geographer whom I met at a *café* during my university years in Guadalajara, México. He recalled the night of the earthquake vividly:

I was with two friends in my hometown, Santa Juana. We were talking, partying, after watching the *Festival de Viña del Mar* with some other friends who left earlier. Then it happened – in that moment I felt a vibration and a sound. I stood and went towards the door. Then the movement started, very, very strongly. It was difficult to stand. My friends were shocked and didn't know what to do. I called them, we were hugging each other and walked towards the *patio*. We

² Demyonym from an inhabitant of the Greater Concepción.

stayed there hugging while it happened as the aftershock returned, all really intense. It was tremendous, tremendous. [. . .] Since my friends were from out of town, I thought ‘I have to take them to Concepción.’ I immediately took my sleeping bag and set up a tent [outside in an open area], and told them: ‘If you don’t want to sleep because you’re afraid [that’s ok, but] I’ll sleep at least three or four hours because tomorrow we’ll have to walk to Concepción, and walk for 10 or 12 hours.’ [I was] thinking that due to the degree of the earthquake, bridges and roads would be cut.

(Mauricio Sáez, personal communication, 6 July 2021)

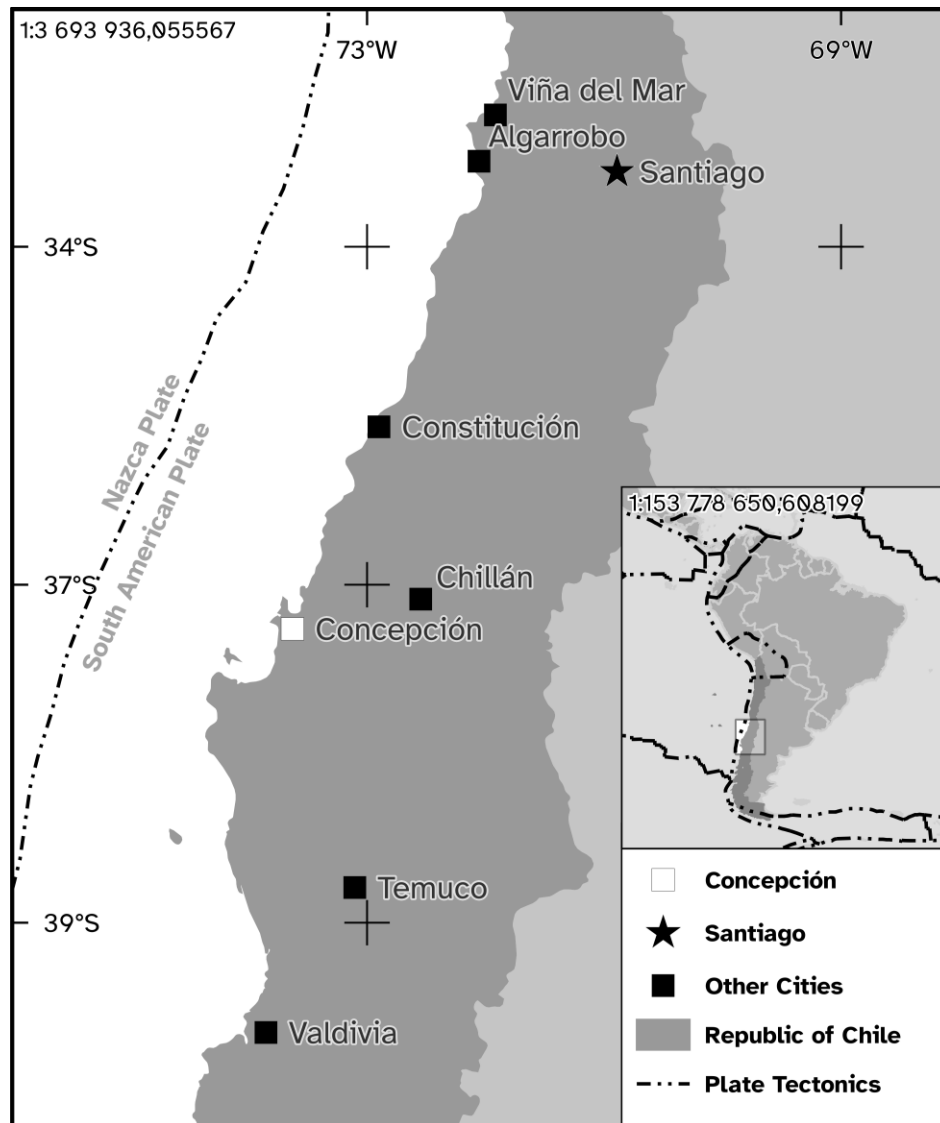


Figure 1. Map of Central Chile highlighting important cities and South America's Plate Tectonics. Most of the population lives in the area between Santiago, the Capital, and Concepción. The area between Concepción and Valdivia is the most seismically active. Generated from QGIS with data from Chile's National Library.

In the coastal area near Concepción, the tremor was followed by a deadly tsunami that caused most of the deaths and material damages. At least 500 persons died and 800,000 were affected. At least 190,000 housing units were destroyed or damaged, resulting in a total of 30 billion USD on material damages (Muñoz & Llacolén, 2010; Sub. Economía y EMT, 2016). In the aftermath, citizens filled the gaps left by a failed government prevention and response. The mobilization that arose to fulfill basic needs in the post-disaster later transformed into mobilization to demand fair reconstruction from the government.

1.1. Historical and Geographical Context of Concepción

The City of Concepción

Despite having started my research in early 2020, I began my fieldwork in Chile almost two years later due to the impossibility of travel during the COVID-19 pandemic. I flew to Santiago with my wife in late October 2021. We quarantined for five days in one of the many high-rises of the city, and then, travelled from Santiago's southern bus terminal to Concepción on November 15th, 2021. Traveling south from a double decker bus, we could admire the Chilean landscape, including the dramatic view of the Andes a testament of the geologic violence and youth of the Southern Cone. The forest grew denser and greener as we travelled south, leaving behind the semi-arid environment of Santiago. The German influence also became evident in the architecture. After a long stretch of highway that took us over the Chilean Coastal Mountain Range, I could see the Bay of Concepción and a picturesque town. We had finally arrived. After settling-in, I texted greetings to an artist and social leader from the area, whom I had interviewed remotely months before, Eduardo Ampuero, that we had arrived at Concepción. "Welcome to the Mapuche frontier," he replied.

Coming down from the north, the first glimpse of Greater Concepción is that of the Bay of Concepción and the town of Penco. That view, along with Ampuero's greeting, were an adequate introduction for a newcomer to Southern Chile. Penco was the founding site of Concepción. However the city was relocated to *La Mocha* Valley after it was razed by the devastating earthquake of 1751 (Oliver Schneider & Zapatta Silva, 1950). It is from the city's original location in Penco that inhabitants of the city are known as 'Penquistas.' Located within the traditional land of the Mapuches and Lafquenchés, Concepción is the *de facto* capital of Southern Chile. Mapuches are the largest Indigenous group in Chile, their territory covers much of Southern Chile and Argentina. Lafquenchés are a group of the Mapuche who live in the area surrounding the Biobío River. During colonial times, the Biobío was the frontier

of Spaniard expansion. It served as a major port and strategic point of access to inland and southern Chile, or as historians (Bengoa, 2016) call it, *Chile Profundo* – the Chilean interior. The importance of this location was evident since Pedro de Valdivia founded the city in the 16th century. It quickly became a key point of replenishment for the Spaniards and European expeditions to the Pacific Ocean. Victor Vivallo, a history enthusiast and inhabitant of Pedro del Río Zañartu³, one of Concepcion's historic working-class neighborhoods, remarked on the importance of Concepcion's location for the development industry:

[The neighborhood] Pedro del Río [Zañartu] has a very especial particularity, in that it was the first and greatest industrial corridor of Concepción. Going further back than the neighborhood, in the middle of the 18th century there was an earthquake and tsunami that destroyed Concepción, [which back then was located where Penco is today. That is when they came out to search for the best sector of the region, one can say, to establish the new Concepción. Then, they found this sector [Valle de la Mocha] which is protected by hills: the Cerro⁴ Chepe in one side, Cerro Caracol for the other. It also had an important quantity of fresh water, which was the Biobío – that was also the frontier. That gave them safety.

(Victor Vivallo, personal communication, 20 January 2022)

This strategic importance of the region led Spaniards to displace the native inhabitants from La Mocha Valley and to create a strong naval and military presence in the region. After its independence during the 19th century, the Chilean government intensified the colonization efforts south of Concepción which reignited conflict between settlers and natives. Later the government encouraged a second wave of European colonization led by German and Italian immigrants, which only grew with an influx of refugees and veterans from those countries after the World Wars.

³ *Vecino* is the literal translation of neighbor, I use both terms interchangeably. In the context of social organizations, it is implied that they are active members of a *junta de vecinos*.

⁴ A *cerro* is literally a hill, or a small mountain.

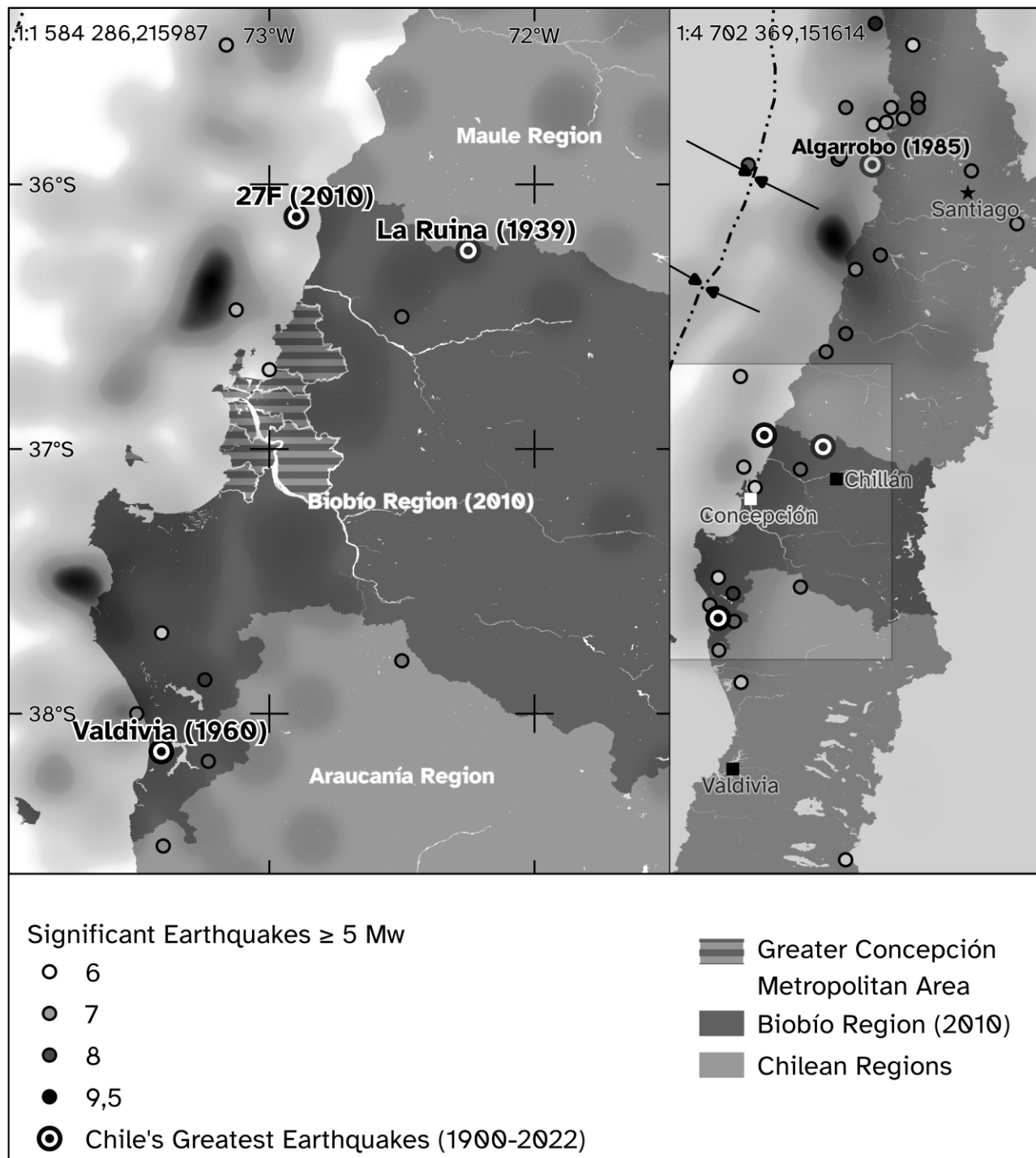


Figure 2. Map of Seismic Activity in the Biobío Region and its vicinity. This map contrast two sources for seismic activity: a heatmap of earthquakes equal or greater than 5 Mw from 2011 to 2021, and a scatter plot of last century significant earthquakes, highlighting the most devastating ones. Generated in QGIS with data from Chile's National Library, the European-Mediterranean Seismological Centre, and USA's National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

Chilean Disasters: Natural and Otherwise

Chileans are familiar with natural hazards to say the least. A country located over the intersection of the Nazca and South American Plates; the Concepción region has always been prone to earthquakes (See Figure 1 p. 5). Since colonial records began, this has been evident. As early as 1570 the city had been razed by seismic events several times. As mentioned above, it was relocated to the current site of Concepción in 1751 (Palacios Roa, 2012). Even Charles Darwin referred to the city as inhospitable due to the frequency and intensity of such telluric movements. Nevertheless, *Penquistas* are there to stay and have learned to live with the constant threat of earthquakes and other hazards such as floods and wildfires.

During the 20th century, Chile experienced two especially destructive earthquakes: the first in Chillán, in 1939, known as ‘The Ruin’; the second, further south in Valdivia and Concepción, in 1960. Thus, earthquakes are deeply rooted in Concepción’s history (See Figure 2 p. 8). They are embedded into the collective memory of Chileans. Mauricio Sáez (personal communication, 6 July 2021) remarked: “Each generation [of Chileans] expects to live at least one of two great earthquakes in our lifetimes, and we’re taught how to deal with the experience by our parents.” The Valdivia earthquake was the most powerful ever recorded. With 30 000 deaths, however, The Ruin remains the deadliest in Chilean history (Concha Ramírez & Henríquez Aste, 2011).

While the earthquakes of 1939 and 1960 persist in the memory of Chileans as a reminder of natural hazards, man-made disaster was embodied by the US-backed dictatorship of Augusto Pinochet (1973-1990), which replaced the democratically elected administration of Salvador Allende (1970-1973). Pinochet’s administration not only sought to maintain power after the *coup*, but it attempted to make Chile into a laboratory for neoliberalism. Although the military junta justified itself claiming that Allende’s presidency had been a Marxist disaster, most academics argue that the actual disaster was the military coup and

its aftermath (Dinges, 2004; Frank, 1976; Klein, 2008; Letelier, 1976; J. G. Valdés, 1995). The violent *coup* provided a blank slate to rebuild a free-market society and suppress the triumphs of past social struggles. Many of those who opposed the dictatorship were disappeared or tortured by the army and the Chilean military police, the *carabineros*. This led social movements to disappear or to go underground. The Revolutionary Left Movement (*Movimiento de Izquierdas Revolucionarias*; MIR) was one of the few that took up arms and began revolutionary struggle in 1973. This state sponsored suppression of social movements led to a generalized repression of leftist thought and aimed to erase the memory of the old Chile: a country with a strong democratic tradition, a long history of grassroots organization and social victories, and the first country with a democratically elected socialist administration (Stern, 2006).

The dictatorship was not only a disaster due to its sheer brutality and attempts to reshape the collective memory and inclinations of Chileans with its application of the shock doctrine (Klein, 2008). It also fomented a series of policies that increased situations of precarity and vulnerability for many Chileans.. As I explain in Chapter 2, I agree with disaster studies scholars that disasters are not caused by natural hazards, but by the pre-existing vulnerabilities of individuals and collective institutions (Lizarralde et al., 2021; Woods, 1998). Hence, the role of the government is key as a provider of systems to ensure the well-being of citizens after a disaster has occurred. With this in mind, the shrinking of responsibilities and capabilities that most governmental agencies showed during Pinochet's administration, aggregated with the insertion of corporate actors that used the government only to further the development of capital, dramatically reduced the government's capacity to fulfill its obligations to the citizenry, not even living up to the standards of the institutions created after The Ruin, the devastating earthquake of the 1960s (Blaikie et al., 1996; Wisner, 2004).

Grassroots Resistance

Since its foundation, Concepción has become a key location for the Spanish and Chilean settler-colonial project. As a result, Greater Concepción has had a strong military presence since Chile became independent. Yet, Concepción became a central point of left-wing politics and grassroots organization during the 20th century. Two aspects allowed this to happen. First, as the city industrialized working-class residents organized neighborhood councils – *juntas de vecinos* – which collaborated with unions, *mutualistas*,⁵ and guilds. This created a wide network of working-class community organizations. The second aspect was the creation of the University of Concepción (UdeC). The university was founded in 1919, incorporating pre-existing schools from different disciplines, principally dentistry, pharmacy, and pedagogy. The establishment of the university was made possible by a committee of professionals, and soon the university became a fertile ground for a progressive intelligentsia.

Organization amongst students and professionals has been a constant since the university was founded and students have increasingly been expected to carry out voluntary service for the community. From the left, popular organization communed with students' movements. The most notable are the University Left Movement (*Movimiento Universitario de Izquierda*; MUI) and the insurgent Revolutionary Left Movement (MIR), both emerging mainly from the UdeC. The process of community organizing during the 20th century peaked when a coalition of movements – Popular Unity (Unidad Popular; UP)– nominated socialist physician Salvador Allende for the presidency. Allende led Chile's first democratically elected socialist government between 1970 and 1973 (Goicovic Donoso, 2016).

By 1982, almost 10 years after the *coup*, the neoliberal vision of the Pinochet government and its University of Chicago advisors (the Chicago Boys) had failed miserably and

⁵ A different kind of mutual aid organization focused on material improvements and acts of solidarity without a clear geographical or political delimitation.

Chile was in financial crisis. Despite the Pinochet regime's brutal oppression, the precarity and economic collapse caused by the 1982 crisis reignited social mobilization, eventually leading to political action and the creation of the *Concertación* in 1988, the political coalition that spearheaded 1990's referendum (Goicovic Donoso, 2016; Oxfhorn, 1995; Weinstein, 1989).

During the period of industrialization (late 1800's – 1940s), the inability of cities to keep up with the housing demand for immigrants led to the emergence of the *Poblador*, a social actor which expanded the range of action for citizens in the peripheries through the practice of land occupation or squatting, called *tomas de terreno*⁶ by the locals (Goicovic Donoso, 2016). *Pobladores* were landless peasants and led two social movements to access land ownership: the ones that migrated to the city to work in industries led the movement for housing in the cities, and the ones who stayed in rural areas supported the movement for agrarian reform.⁷ From the early 1900's onwards, social organization expanded through the clerical and industrial sectors. A turning point, in this regard, was the founding of the Worker's Only Center (*Central Única de Trabajadores*; CUT) in 1953. The growing organization and practices of *Pobladores*, as well as the consolidation of student's movements for the educational reform (1967-1968), paved the way for student movements like the student's University Left Movement. *Pobladores* and students are two of the main pillars upon which social organization in Chile is based.

⁶ From now on referred simply as *tomas*. While these were started by squatting *Pobladores*, the practice later expanded in ends and meaning. Hence, *toma* also refers to the occupation of a building, government office, infrastructure, etc., as a means of protests. However, during the Agrarian Reform it was briefly used to repossess *latifundios*, as such the practice has been used as an informal means to claim ownership of land.

⁷ For the purpose of this thesis, whenever I refer to *Pobladores* I refer to urban *Pobladores* unless stated otherwise.

While the MIR formed militias to fight the military government during 1973-1978, it shifted its focus towards popular resistance as social movements started to resurrect themselves. This was especially evident after the strike of 1980, the first since the *coup*. Social movements resumed mainly on two fronts. First, independent organizations of *Pobladoras*, women running soup kitchens for the poor, grew in importance as the crisis of 1982 deepened. These independent movements came hand-in-hand with the resurgence of the *Pobladores* who were resisting the displacement caused by Pinochet's new urban policy (Schneider, 1991; T. Valdés & Weinstein, 1993). The second front was a progressive branch of the Catholic church which "started to encourage increasing autonomy of popular organizations and undertook a variety of efforts to augment the capacity of popular sector to organize themselves" (Oxhorn, 1995, p. 82).

The plethora of organizations that emerged after 1982 led to the formation of *Concertación*. Under different organizations, the *Pobladores* were still part of the struggle for housing and reconstruction by the 2010's, represented by both the National Association of Housing Debtors (*Asociación Nacional de Deudores Habitacionales*; ANDHA Chile) and the National Federation of Pobladores (*Federación Nacional de Pobladores*; FENAPO). Autonomous organizations (*Organizaciones Autónomas Populares*; OAPs) resembling the soup-kitchens of the 80's arose to fill the gaps left from the state's response to 27F (Simon & Valenzuela-Fuentes, 2017). From the other front, construction of housing for population in extreme poverty arose from several charities from the Catholic Church, the most relevant of which was the 'Roof for Chile' Foundation (*Fundación Techo para Chile*; *TECHO*) created in 1997. TECHO was initially led by Jesuit priest Felipe Berríos and a group of voluntary students from the Pontific Catholic University of Chile (PUC) in Curanilahue, a population located south of Concepción. At a more localized level, *juntas de vecinos* worked closely with

all parties to ensure the wellbeing of citizens, collaborating with autonomous organizations and trade unions.

The context I describe in this section is a testament of Chilean's historical experience with reconstruction and community organizing. Chileans have had to constantly organize to resist an adverse environment including earthquakes and other natural hazards, as well as the hostile political environment during the dictatorship. These experience of disaster, of struggle, and of reconstruction, are linked together in the present by memory. Memory is one of the main concepts in Chilean historiography, as such, its study is a subfield of history itself. However, for the purpose of this thesis, it is important to keep in mind that the connections memory preserve are both tools for learning, as well as a moral responsibility (Mellafe, 1981; Winn, 1979). As some authors claim (Lara Meza, 2010; Lazzara, 2006; Mellafe & Loyola Goich, 1994), memory is not definite, it changes and gets amended constantly, subject to both the context of the time it was produces and that of the present. Hence, the process of historizing memory is a complex one, and a political one, as it is central to the "making and unmaking of political and cultural legitimacy" (Stern, 2006, p. xx). It was through memory that past social processes and Chilean's democratic achievements were preserved, and it is from memory that practices of resistance are recovered, that actors such as *Pobladores* get re-integrated into wider social struggles.

1.2. The Argument

Through a historical lens, this thesis analyzes the social mobilization that arose after the earthquake on February 27th, 2010. At its core, the struggle for reconstruction was a struggle for housing. *Pobladores* have been at the forefront of the housing struggle since they arrived in Chile in the late 19th century. As industrial workers, the fight for housing in Chile has deep ties with union organizing, and in Concepción, it was led by women's unions as well as by neighborhood councils. Through these unions and council, workers living in precarious

conditions managed to obtain land to build their shantytowns on, sometimes the unions themselves built homes for the workers, or leveraged the employer to do it.

It was through the constant housing crises caused by earthquakes and other natural hazards that the Chilean government started to get involved in solving this crises. In consequence, as the 20th century progressed the government started got more involved in all aspects of housing. It was after the great earthquakes of 1939 and 1960 that the Ministry of Housing (MINVU) and the National Office of Emergency (ONEMI) were founded.⁸ Today, despite having gone through half a century of neoliberalism, the Chilean government is more involved in housing than most nations in the Americas, dictating policy and shaping the market with a subsidy-based housing model, that today remains Chile's framework for housing development, funding, and acquisition.

It is important to understand that in Chile, the struggle for housing has many aspects. This thesis focuses on reconstruction, but not merely as the struggle for four walls and a roof. For Chileans, dignified housing includes permanency in the urban core and historic districts of cities, urban integration, well-built units, and an end to overreliance on debt. While *Pobladores* are central actors in some of these aspects, there are many other groups who have contributed to the struggle including, students, middle-class citizens, volunteers, NGOs, and community leaders. However, after 27F the struggle for reconstruction was mostly represented by the dynamics of two coalescent movements: The National Movement for a Just Reconstruction (*Movimiento Nacional por una Reconstrucción Justa*; MNRJ) and *RED Construyamos*. These movements were mainly focused on negotiating a better

⁸ These were founded under different names; however they do share a common precedent agency, the Corporation of Reconstruction (CORRA) founded in 1939.

reconstruction of the most affected areas and for the most affected populations of the Greater Concepción Metropolitan area. Thus, the focus of the thesis on Concepción.

The legacy built by the *Pobladores* and other movements of resistance was recovered by the MNRJ and *RED Construyamos*. The struggle for reconstruction not only brought back practices of solidarity and resistance to displacement, but it connected contemporary struggle with those of the past, such as the struggle of *Pobladores*. In doing so, the struggle for the reconstruction confronted structural issues on Chile's socioeconomic ordering, and while these did not go through significant change, the critique of these issues raised an unprecedented awareness in Chileans, planting the seed for further social organizing. Likewise, the preconditions that rendered many Chileans vulnerable and the government's insufficient response, were planted decades before by Pinochet's policymakers.

The struggle for the reconstruction is a continuation of the struggles for housing of the *Pobladores*, as it confronts the same structural issues on Chile's socioeconomic ordering. The social organization that occurred in the aftermath of 27F demonstrates that the legacy of past struggles is not simply erased or forgotten, as both the MNRJ and *RED Construyamos* recovered practices and actors from previous housing movements. Their previous collective experience helped citizens of the Greater Concepción to not remain as helpless, passive actors. Out of need, they made the post-disaster a fertile ground for solidarity, change, and negotiation with authorities. The aim of this thesis is to examine the housing rights mobilizations that emerged after 2010's earthquake in a wider historical scope and as part of a long-term phenomenon.

With this research, I aim to answer the question: How were the social movements that organized against neoliberal state responses to 27F informed by past social struggles? After 2010's earthquake, despite being in a state with a mostly inactive civil society, the

reconstruction grew a nation-wide movement that managed to re-shape the post-disaster dynamics between the Chilean government and its citizens. This was possible even after decades of social atomization and neoliberal policymaking, in an environment previously shattered by a similar post-disaster neoliberal imposition. To explore how this developed I followed Chile's historical struggles for housing, as the legacy of these movements informs the practices of resistance used by citizens and allow them to continue the unresolved struggles of past grassroots movements. To understand what these movements struggled against, however, it is necessary to engage with Chile's neoliberal housing policies that have been constantly implemented since 1974. Both the struggle of the *Pobladores*' and the many movements and struggles for reconstruction after 2010 are struggles against displacement and property. In short, this thesis will review the historic process of citizens' self-organization within the housing struggle and how this organization has been revitalized and influenced by the struggle for reconstruction since 2010.

1.3. Thesis Structure

This thesis consists of seven main chapters after this introduction:

2. Disaster Reconstruction Studies: this chapter consists of a literature review that focuses on the writings of critical social scientists concerned with disaster reconstruction. This chapter also elaborates the theoretical framework for the thesis as well as the methodology and methods.

3. Early Housing Struggles: The Making of the *Pobladores*: the aim of this chapter is to explain the origins of the *Pobladores*, a working-class sector of the Chilean society. They inhabit informal urban settlements known in Chile as *poblaciones*. The *Pobladores* are key actors as they have been at the core of the housing struggle since its start. This chapter explores how *Pobladores* came to the cities in the late 19th century and how their

organizations created social change. Their movement reached their peak in 1970 when President Salvador Allende started to implement an agrarian reform and an ambitious housing program inspired by their demands.

4. Resisting Repressive Policies During the Pinochet Regime: in this chapter some of the major related policies passed during the dictatorship are presented. These policies fostered an environment of social atomization and vulnerability. Moreover, they set the basis for Chile's subsidy-based housing policy. Despite this, civil society prevailed and social organizations made a comeback a decade after the military coup that brought Pinochet and his government to power. This contrast between government policy and resistance is explored through the lived experiences of *Pobladores* in the neighborhood of Pedro del Río Zañartu.

5. Social Reawakening from the Concertación to 2010: this chapter explores three post-dictatorship political moments which would influence the societal responses to 27F in 2010. First, from the policy side, the chapter focuses on the continued evolution of the subsidy-based housing model. Second, at the national level, the chapter examines the continuation of the neoliberal project in housing policy by the Concertación, represented by the Ribera Norte Project, which generated a kind of social malaise. Finally, in Concepcion local communities mobilized to vote the dictatorship out, which aided the resistance effort against the processes of displacement in Concepción.

6. Self-Organization in the Aftermath of 27F: this is the first chapter of the thesis which engages directly with the case study of 27F. This chapter focuses on the immediate response to the earthquake. I highlight the failures of the state to handle the crises that arose and the spontaneous organization of citizens to provide themselves with basic necessities, recreating practices rooted in Chilean's past social movements.

7. The Struggle for a Just Reconstruction: this chapter focuses on the testimonies of Eduardo Ampuero and Bárbara Orrego to explore the struggle for the reconstruction itself. Eduardo Ampuero founded and was part of the leadership of *RED Construyamos*, while Bárbara Orrego is part of the leadership of one of the *poblaciones* (Villa Futuro) that resisted post-disaster gentrification. The first section of the chapter explores the failures of the early reconstruction, which prompted the need for a more organized resistance by affected citizens. The second section is focused on the transition from independent organizations and localized struggles to the nation-wide movement that was the National Movement for a Just Reconstruction (MNRJ). Finally, a discussion of the actions taken by *Pobladores* and civil society to resist post-disaster gentrification and to negotiate a better reconstruction for the involved communities.

8. Conclusions: Reconstructing Civil Society: the final section concludes the thesis, pointing out that although the reconstruction movement did not lead to significant social change nationwide, it had very meaningful effects on those communities which were directly affected by 27F. Moreover, it helped these communities to re-organize and acquire know-how, and it demonstrated to much of the Chilean population the limits of Chile's current socio-economic model.

2. Disaster Reconstruction Studies

In this section, I briefly review scholarly literature regarding the social aspects of so-called natural disasters. Specifically, I highlight scholarly contributions which address vulnerability studies, disaster capitalism, and disaster citizenship. Then, I discuss the work of scholars who apply these concepts to the Chilean context. The section concludes with my explanation of the theory and methods that informed this thesis.

2.1. Three Main Aspects of Post-disaster Studies

Socio-Political Disaster Studies

Historically, disaster-studies literature has been mostly concerned with the physical aspects of natural hazards and the managerial aspects of post-disaster aftermath (Bryant, 1991; Eade & Williams, 1995; Emel & Peet, 1989). Since the 1980s, some academics broke away from this perspective and have started to focus on the socio-political aspects of disaster. This new perspective claims that the human experience of disaster is due to the failure of social structures to mitigate the effects of natural hazards (Wisner, 2004). This kind of analysis focuses on two main aspects: 1) Risk, which examines how social structures and institutions push society towards situations of risk such as the ongoing environmental degradation associated with climate change (Beck, 1992; Goldblatt, 1999); and 2) Vulnerability, which, in counterpoint to societal risk, claims that those who suffer most of the consequences of natural hazards are those in disadvantaged positions, those who lack the means to resist or prepare for hazards or calamities (Blaikie et al., 1996).

In the Latin American context, the Network of Social Studies in the Prevention of Disasters in Latin America (LA RED), has greatly enriched the disaster studies literature. LA RED is a network of academics and professionals created in Costa Rica in 1992. It is concerned mostly with social analysis of disaster risk in Latin America and the Caribbean (International Social Science Council & United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural

Organization, 2013). The work of LA RED includes histories of disasters in the region (García Acosta, 1996, 1997, 2008), reports on risk and vulnerability (Blaikie et al., 1996; Lavell & Metzger, 1996) and in-depth case studies (Lungo & Baires, 1996).

Earlier key works questioned the definitions of calamity and disaster while drawing connections between the environment and human activity (Hewitt, 1983, 1997). Other works introduced qualitative methodologies and critical theories (Beck, 1992, 1995; Dynes, 1987; Oliver-Smith, 1986, 1996), which extended to critical studies of reconstruction and the resistance of disaster affected communities populace (D. Alexander, 2000; Erikson, 1994; Haas et al., 1977; Lindell, 2013; Lindell & Perry, 1992). Theories that have influenced this literature include a Marxist analysis of capitalism, geographies of uneven development (Corbridge, 1989; Peet & Thrift, 1989), and the study of governability and power relations between governments and citizens (Barrios, 2017; Beck, 1995; Durning, 1989; Foucault et al., 1991; Franklin & Institute for Public Policy Research (London, England), 1998; Harrell-Bond & Bond, 1986; Platt, 1999). This overlap of disaster studies with political economy has led scholars to increasingly examine the relation of neoliberal structures within the context of disaster, exploring mismanagement and opportunism in the context of post-disaster reconstruction (disaster capitalism), as well as how citizens organize with acts of mutual aid to resist hostile reconstruction policies (disaster citizenship).

Disaster Capitalism

Disaster capitalism refers to the furthering of neoliberal policies and corporate profiteering in the aftermath of a disaster (caused by a natural hazard or human caused disasters). Naomi Klein referred to this way of imposing policies as '*shock therapy*' (2008). In her book, *The Shock Doctrine*, Klein highlights the importance of Chile as a key site for this model of policymaking and for the implementation of United States supported counterinsurgency policy

known as Operation Condor.⁹ While Klein's book offers a geopolitical perspective on interventionist policies of the west, other authors expand the study of disaster capitalism to the role of development aid (Donini, 2008; Harrell-Bond & Bond, 1986), colonialisms, and aggressive processes of indebtedness and financialization (Bonilla & LeBrón, 2019; García López, 2020; Lloyd & Wolfe, 2016; Look et al., 2019).

Relevant for this thesis is the part of the literature which examines housing vulnerability and urban displacement in a post-disaster period. These works emphasize how neoliberal approaches to disaster seek to consolidate real-estate into corporate ownership, eroding pre-existing housing structures during a reconstruction process (Adams et al., 2009; S. E. Alexander, 2008; Cárdenas & Fuster Farfán, 2018; Peck, 2006). Clyde Woods's work (1998, 2017) studies this phenomenon in the context of the USA's southern states, building a historical-genealogical approach to present a detailed picture of the process of state-sponsored dismantling of welfare networks. Other works have analyzed how neoliberal reconstruction efforts have eroded social institutions like the public education system, labor markets, and longstanding land-tenure systems through asset-stripping and landgrabs (Button & Oliver-Smith, 2008; Gustavussen, 2018; Klein, 2008; C. Woods, 2009).

Disaster Citizenship

Disaster citizenship, in contrast, focuses on how disasters can open avenues for the population's struggle for rights, representation, resources, and collective goals. To examine the way in which 'individuals, families, neighbors, and formal organizations' form a solidary response, I draw on Jacob Remes' concept of *disaster citizenship* (2016). Remes proposes two alternative concepts to those used in mainstream disaster studies: 1) instead of 'social

⁹ An inter-governmental secret operation created in Santiago, Chile, in 1975. The operation was an anti-communist counterinsurgency coalition between the governments of the Southern Cone and the USA. This covert operation has been implicated in crimes against humanity (Costa, 2019; McSherry, 2009).

capital’, he uses the term ‘solidarity’ to describe the process by which ordinary peoples’ liberatory post-disaster responses are enacted; 2) instead of ‘disaster capitalism’, he proposes the term ‘disaster citizenship’ to describe how disaster provides the working class a chance to organize, dialog with the government, and form a new era of governance through mutual aid (Remes, 2016, p. 20). These two last concepts complement each other as they portray different, though at times overlapping, experiences of the population and institutions overcoming situations of catastrophe.

Disaster studies research which engages the role of grassroots organizations, along with a re-conceptualization of citizenship and social contracts, has been present in earlier work, to some degree (Button & Oliver-Smith, 2008; Lindell & Perry, 1992; Loewenstein, 2017; Platt, 1999; C. A. Woods, 1998). Related work expands upon similar phenomena through the concepts of social capital and resilience (Bornstein et al., 2013; Jia et al., 2020; Kage, 2013). There is also a growing literature on how colonial structures can shape vulnerability and how “vernacular” mechanisms of response diverge from colonial ones (Dauer, 2020; Fernández et al., 2019; Moulton & Machado, 2019).

2.2. Politics of Disaster in Chile: the 27th February 2010 (27F)

The management of the aftermath of 27F has been heavily scrutinized. Researchers have examined the lack of detection of the early telluric movements (Soulé, 2014), the effects of earthquake and tsunami on infrastructure and housing (Araneda C. et al., 2015; Crispiani & Errázuriz, 2013; Muñoz & Llacolén, 2010) as well as the poorly planned response and reconstruction (Observatorio de la Reconstrucción, 2013; Oficina Internacional del Trabajo, 2010; Romero Aravena, 2015). Such research also elucidated the damage to infrastructure, the built environment, to the labor workforce and even the lack of organizational resilience of government institutions. In sum, these studies provide quantitative insight into the managerial aspects of post-disaster response from this context. Meanwhile, other authors break

down the many layers in which the state failed to commit to an appropriate response to the disaster as they choose instead to manage the social unrest just as they managed social protests (Ampuero Cárdenas, 2016; Gould et al., 2016).

Klein (2008) frames the 1973 coup and the military government as a social disaster, as a landmark case study of disaster capitalism. This has brought about an ever-growing literature base on neoliberal politics in Chile, including post-disaster-related works. Many of these studies focus on the political aspects of the post-disaster period (González-Muzzio & Sandoval, 2018), while others highlight the role of reconstruction on housing, exploring the dichotomy between benefits and widening social inequality (Fuster Farfán, 2019; Vergara Saavedra et al., 2016). Saavedra's (2021) interesting contribution even tracks the evolution of disaster response to natural disaster during the 20th century. Other studies go deeper into specific aspects, such as disaster-related corporate profiteering which is at odds with popular interests, the expansion of controversial reforms, and the consolidation and financialization of housing and land tenure (Contardo, 2014; W. Imilan & González, 2017; Navarrete-Hernandez & Toro, 2019; Saavedra & Marchezini, 2019; V. Sandoval et al., 2020).

Themes relevant to disaster citizenship have been studied mostly through the lens of grassroot organizations including popular autonomous organizations, communal kitchens mutual aid groups, (Drury et al., 2016; Simon & Valenzuela-Fuentes, 2017), as well as the role of the *plaza* – public square – as beacon of collective identity in the midst of disaster (Mitternig, 2014). While the concept of social capital has been used to measure the possibilities a specific group has had to overcome a crisis by any means (González-Muzzio, 2013), this approach tends not to consider the structures and power relations which create conditions for (the lack of) social capital. As a result, this approach risks blaming the affected population for their failure to develop social capital, instead of taking into account systems

of social reproduction which create landscapes of uneven vulnerability (Bourdieu, 2010; Dussaillant & Guzman, 2015; 2014).

Contribution

This research contributes to a critical body of social science work which understands disaster not as natural, but as the product of social structures and vulnerabilities that fail to mitigate (and sometimes amplify) damage caused by natural hazards. This thesis provides a strengths-based approach to the study of organized resistance to post-disaster neoliberal policies and programs. Drawing on six semi-structured interviews carried out between July 2021 and January 2022, this thesis examines the experiences and lessons of Chileans affected by 27F including the earthquake and reconstruction thereafter. My research also connects English language writing on 27F with debates and primary sources in the Spanish-language Chilean literature on the subject. Finally, this work pays particular attention to the ways that practices of disaster citizenship after 27F are shaped by the living legacies of historical grassroots movements.

I focus especially on the early 20th century emergence and subsequent organizing of the *Pobladores*, former peasants who migrated to cities where they worked in factories. *Pobladores* have been at the center of housing struggles since then the early 20th century, and they have supported a wide array of social struggles, including the agrarian reform during the 1970's, as well as the grassroots movement that arose to resist state repression and urban displacement during Pinochet's dictatorship (1973-1990). The legacy of resistance to displacement and community organizing helped *Pobladores* from Ribera Norte¹⁰ to resist displacement when a redevelopment project was proposed in 1993-1994 near downtown Concepción. Due to their experience resisting displacement and repression, neighbors of

¹⁰ 'Northern Shore.' Is the northern shore of the Biobío River, and it includes the neighborhoods of Pedro del Río Zañartu and Aurora de Chile in Concepción, as well as Villa Futuro in Chiguayante.

the *poblaciones* Pedro del Río and Aurora de Chile managed to stall the redevelopment project. However, policymakers and corporate actors used the aftermath of 2010 earthquake to restart the project, attempting to use the reconstruction as a means to displace neighbors from those *poblaciones*.

These communities managed to resist displacement in the 1990s, and then again after 2010. Although acts of solidarity and organizing were important to this resistance, the post-27F movements have been wider and stronger because they share the legacy of those *Pobladores* who have been fighting for a decent place to live, dignified housing, security and urban integration for decades. In sum, this thesis is an attempt to assess the role of civil society in the reconstruction after 27F, not in isolation, but as part of a deeply historical process. My work elaborates the extensive scholarship on disaster citizenship and disaster capitalism in Chile by drawing out the legacies of past-social organizing that manifested in post-disaster movements, a legacy that comes as a reaction to decades of policymaking that neglects the needs of citizens, especially to vulnerable sectors of the population.

2.3. Theoretical Framework and Methods

Neoliberalism

This thesis draws on a structuralist approach taking seriously the *longue durée*¹¹ of the entangled development of capitalism with settler colonialism. This approach is relevant to the Chilean context. As a settler-colonial state, Chile underwent several colonization efforts through the centuries and the colonization period is still a major point of contention in Chilean politics, especially in the south where Chileans experienced the most violent effects of 27F. In this regard, special consideration has to be given to the historical roots of

¹¹ 'Long duration.' A Concept proposed by Fernand Braudel, member of the Annales School, is a term to designate long-spanning historical phenomena. This opposes the notion of analyzing history just as a series of events but social structures (Harris, 2004).

neoliberalism as well as its actually existing manifestations during the dictatorship and subsequently. In fact, when referring to neoliberalism, I refer to the specific set of policies applied during the Pinochet dictatorship (1973-1990). Chile's neoliberal project has been heavily influenced by the work of the famed Chicago School economist, Milton Friedman, as well as that of the Chicago Boys in Chile. However, their ideas do not fit exactly with Chile's actual policies, in reality Chile's internal corporate and political interest have molded the system, as well as the shift in policymaking after the economic crisis of 1982 that steered Chilean neoliberalism towards a more moderate and pragmatic approach rather than a purely ideological one. Thus, there are two continuities here to keep in mind: first, that neoliberalism should be understood as shaped by settler-colonialism, as it continues and expands extractive policies while diminishing social rights and struggles –in this case, in the field of housing rights. Secondly, neoliberalism permits the continuity of Chile's corporate elite who have their roots in a land-owning class of so-called *hacendados*, who obtained their land-based wealth by dispossessing indigenous people, especially south of the Biobío in the Regions¹² of Araucanía and Los Lagos (Chonchol Chait, 2018; Peck, 2010; J. G. Valdés, 1995).

Disaster capitalism is the specific way in which these neoliberal policies have been implemented since 1973. Due to the radical political and structural shifts that neoliberal policies demanded, their advocates in the Chilean government sought to erase social movements and various forms of ongoing collective struggle. Such policies were nearly impossible to implement by regular channels, and as a result the dictatorship developed a system of coercion and violence to facilitate policy implementation. As previously explained, the notion of unnatural disasters implies that disaster is not caused just by physical conditions and natural hazard, but that the risk of disaster is socially constructed by human activity. In the

¹² Region, with upper case refers to the largest administrative division in Chile, equivalent to a Canadian province. These are divided in provinces, then the smallest division are communes, which work as municipalities.

Chilean case, there was a direct weakening of social structures during the dictatorship, which violently produced a more atomized society (Blaikie et al., 1996; Klein, 2008; V. Sandoval et al., 2020). Moreover government programs attempting to mitigate hardship of vulnerable sectors of the population were reduced or erased during the dictatorship, and the financialization of education and access to home ownership locked-in many families to life in informal settlements or at financial risk due to the increased need of debt as a tool for social mobility (French-Davis, 2010; Fuster Farfán, 2019; Hidalgo Dattwyler, Alvarado Peterson, et al., 2019).

At a deeper level, these dynamics can be understood through a Marxist analysis of the Chilean economic and property structures. There is a direct link between the adoption of capitalist policies and the formation of labor movements during the late 19th and early 20th centuries, mostly in Santiago, Concepción, and other industrial or extractive cities (Goi-covic Donoso, 2016, 2017). However, when going beyond the question of the means of production and the ownership of land, a different kind of analysis is needed. The land ownership struggle in Chile is represented by two movements, both mainly led by the aforementioned *Pobladores*. The first movement has sought to redistribute land, via land reform, which has been concentrated in the hands of elites since colonial times as a result of land-grabs and private land accumulation. The second movement was that of the urban *Pobladores*, those who gave up work in the fields to live in cities, where they have struggled for housing and permanency (Bengoa, 2016; McMichael, 2014; Torres Díaz, 2020). It is important to keep in mind, however, that both of these movements are connected by the land question. To understand the role of social organization in the urban environment, I borrow David Harvey's (2013, sec. 7.2) interpretation of Lefebvre's "right to the city." Harvey defines his theory of a revolution as "the spontaneous coming together in a moment of irruption when disparate heterotopic groups suddenly see, if for a fleeting moment, the possibilities of collective

action to create something radically different.” The post-disaster moment known as 27F represents one of such fleeting moment, ripe for the awakening of civil society to enact change (González-Muzzio & Sandoval, 2018).

The 27F movement also served as proof of the limited capabilities of the neoliberal state. Its failure to fulfill its obligations for those affected by the earthquake and tsunami demonstrated to Chilean citizens that civil society must be transformed. I use Remes’ (2016) concept of disaster citizenship as the main way to understand the act of solidarity and informal resources citizens mobilized to survive in the aftermath of the disaster. Disaster citizenship stands in contrast to the managerial and technocratic approach of the Chilean government. While the different actions and multiple government agencies had different levels of success, the government’s reconstruction efforts ranged from the barely adequate to predatory (Ampuero Cárdenas, 2016; Simon & Valenzuela-Fuentes, 2017). Disaster citizenship provides a framework to link the right to the city, or, as it is called in Chile, ‘housing with city’ – *Vivienda con ciudad*– with grassroot organization, as the struggle for reconstruction was not one for basic shelter, but one for dignified housing conditions and urban integration (Fuster Farfán, 2019; Hidalgo Dattwyler, Alvarado Peterson, et al., 2019). While this approach to disaster citizenship did briefly allow Chileans to find a way out of the zero-sum game dynamic provided by the vestiges of colonization and modern structures of uneven development, it never fully transcended the structural failures of the neoliberal system (Ayres & Clark, 1998; Gunder Frank, 1966).

Memory

Memory has become a paramount concept in Chilean historiography and discourse. A key moment of the adoption of this concept has been from the reflections of Chilean historian Rollando Mellafe (1981) regarding the collective memory of Chileans on ill-fated events – ‘*infausto*,’ he calls them. His work helps to connect Chilean collective memory – specifically

the way Chileans have dealt with catastrophic events— with the Chilean historiographical tradition. *Memoria Chilena* – Chilean Memory – is the name of one of the largest archival repositories of national events in Chile’s National Library and includes documents on key political, cultural, and economics aspects of Chilean society, including catastrophes. Created during the Concertación governments, this archive cemented the notion of Chilean memory in one of Chile’s most important institutions and repositories of knowledge. It became such a key concept, not because of Mellafe’s influence or some French school of historiography, but as a result of the extremely brutal context of the dictatorship and the persecution of many different forms of dissent and struggle. While state repression was insidiously effective, collective memory of the Chilean people preserved the capacity to struggle, to think freely, to mobilize for change, and indeed to carry on the struggle of those killed by state forced (Burke, 2001; Winn, 1979, 2018).

As a historical geographer, this notion of Chilean memory also assists me in connecting 27F with the Annales School¹³ which also gives great importance to collective memory through the study of *mentalités*.¹⁴ I use the notion of Chilean memory to refer to the collection of significant lived events shared by the Chilean population. In so doing, I seek to foreground a long-term analysis of social structures and institutions. I do not, however, engage with the notions of collective psychology or mentality, as many orthodox historians who subscribe to such a methodology have done (Burke, 2001, 2019). Instead, I situate my analysis to include both event-based and *longue durée* histories, as described by Ferdinand Braudel. I engage the study of disaster citizenship at both of these levels, understanding the Chilean notion of memory as an act of defiance during the dictatorship; one of commemoration

¹³ A set of historiographic perspectives emerging from the journal *Annales d’histoire économique et sociale*, in mid-20th century France.

¹⁴ Historiographical methodology, part of the Annales School, that aims to capture the collective “thought” of a determined historical group or an era, closely related to collective memory.

during the transition to democracy, and one of reconnection during the present period (Goi-covic Donoso, 2013; Harris, 2004; Parreñas, 2018).

During the dictatorship, the military government sought to erase all traces of past social progress: guaranteed rights, workers unions, left-leaning organizations, welfare programs, and democratic institutions. This ranged from prosecuting radical-left groups like the MIR, as well as private citizens and practitioners of Liberation Theology in the Catholic Church (Klein, 2008; McSherry, 2019; Stern, 2006). The effects and legacy of state repression during the dictatorship made it a difficult and dangerous task to capture certain lived experiences of citizens. This led to a democratization of sources that led the inclusion of lived experiences of common actors through oral history, interviews were not usually considered as legitimate sources in positivist methodologies. (Portelli, 1984; Ramos, 2011; Winn, 1979). By framing personal lived experiences within a structural approach, I seek to provide a wider perspective on my subjects and objects of study, while acknowledging the heterogeneous nature of the experiences of the people who figure in the stories that I am recounting here. I use this notion of memory as a resource to bridge specific experiences of those who participated in the reconstruction after 2010 with *longue durée* phenomena and historiographic perspectives. Finally, while for Chileans memory is an exercise and resource that has permitted these different moments and struggles, for this research memory is a concept that not only sets a longer frame but also links the underlying theoretical concepts on land and urban questions with the different social movements and moments studied in the thesis.

Methods

The struggle for reconstruction is a complex phenomenon. As such, I have decided to use a diverse set of methodologies. To situate the history I tell in the *long durée*, I rely on archival sources and institutional analysis. This approach gives insight into the policies that *Pobladores* have resisted and also of their victories, giving us a full picture of Chile's socio-

economic system set in place by 2010. The *long durée* framing also helps me to situate the testimony of my interviewees whose observations about 27F and their experiences living in a *población* are filled with thoughtful historical reflections and references extending back to the 1970's and before.

In contrast, the testimonies and newspaper articles help me to reconstruct the event-based history of the aftermath of 2010 and the process of grassroots organizing. Moreover, the interviews strengthen the *longue durée* approach as they situate overarching events and phenomena in the lives of common people, giving the reader an unfiltered glimpse of their experience and rationale. The archival and historical sources provide a clear picture of the context, while strengthening the oral testimonies, as interviewees can say a lot implicitly or can miss key events and considerations. Finally, oral history can help to fill gaps in official sources, as grassroots movements and social organization can be informal or governmental sources can be compromised as it happened during Pinochet's government (Lara Meza, 2010; Winn, 1979).

My fieldwork involved a trip to Southern Chile's largest city, Concepción, where I stayed near the historical downtown and gathered documents from government agencies such as The Ministry for Housing (*Ministerio de Vivienda y Urbanismo*; MINVU) and carried out archival research at the Historical Archive of Concepción, I carried out his work from November 2021 to February 2022. In June 2021, I started to interview citizens remotely due to the COVID-19 pandemic, I contacted Chileans who were involved in either the reconstruction effort or who were linked to organizations such as *juntas de vecinos* (Neighborhood Councils) or student's organizations, especially concerning three neighborhoods on the Biobío's northern shore (Ribera Norte) in the Greater Concepción Metropolitan Area: Pedro del Río Zañartu (Pedro del Río, or PRZ), Aurora de Chile (Aurora), and Villa Futuro. The case

study mostly develops around the struggle of these *vecinos* – Neighbors – to resist the re-development of Ribera Norte after 27F.

2.4. The Interviewees

I conducted six semi-structured interviews, four of them individual interviews and two group interviews. The group interviews were the idea of the *vecinos* of Pedro del Río. I met them at a reunion with a government functionary, where they were discussing the process to pass proposed policies for the new constitution. Initially I intended to interview just one of the *vecinos*, a local woman named Ernestina Gatica, who has been part of the leadership of Pedro del Río at least since the 1980's. However, as I conversated with her and the other *vecinos*, Ana Peñaloza, and Víctor Vivallo, amongst them, they decided that they wanted to include more than one experience in the interview. As such, we agreed to carry out two interviews so neighbors could leave a collective testimony of the neighborhood,

I used a thematic interview guide with precise questions for most of the interviewees, especially when interviewing scholars. All interviews were still somewhat conversational in nature, especially those with neighbors and social leaders. As such, I decided to leave some traces of this conversational nature of the interviews, as well as of orality, in the written thesis. As a result, the reader will encounter parts of the thesis where multiple interviewees are speaking, using informal register, and abruptly interjecting with new ideas. The selected fragments are presented as long quotes and accompanied with some long descriptions. The purpose of maintaining this traces of informality and using lengthy description is to situate the reader in the moment and space, both physical and cultural, in a manner more akin to discovery as I experienced myself when researching this project.

Each interview had a different purpose. While some were meant to better inform my research process, others were meant to act as primary sources to inform my narrative. I

recorded the interviews and transcribed most relevant exchanges. From these, I selected and translated the quotes used here in the thesis.

The interviews I conducted represent an important part of my work of knowledge production. The diversity of the recollected testimonies serves as an anchor for the theoretical and historical concepts presented in this thesis, connecting the *longue durée* processes with the events of 27F and the personal experiences of those who lived it. The interviews were extremely educational for me, and I hope, they will also be for the reader. Given the importance of the interviews, the following section is dedicated to describing the interviewees and how they collaborated with me during the research.

Individual Interviews

Bárbara Orrego Gallegos: Bárbara Orrego is a *Pobladora* from Villa Futuro, an emerging *población* in Chiguayante, a city further upstream in Ribera Norte but still a part of the larger metropolitan area. Villa Futuro is one of the youngest *poblaciones* on the northern shore but Bárbara has been there since its foundation, growing up there and seeing the *población* grow up with her. Before 27F, Bárbara Orrego was a union leader. When she saw her *población* experience the earthquake and fall for a profiteering scheme by a local politician, she stepped up as a new leader for the neighborhood council.

Orrego's interview was instrumental to understand that although most *poblaciones* were established decades ago, some are much younger, including Villa Futuro. Her *población* had to navigate the reconstruction and displacement attempts without the experience of older *poblaciones*. As a result, the experience of those from Villa Futuro was a difficult but also productive, as they acquired the know-how to resist and they forged new relations with other *poblaciones* and civil society as a whole.

Eduardo Ampuero Cárdenas: Former Spanish professor, Eduardo Ampuero is an artist and leftist activist, ex-militant for the communist party. Mauricio Sáez introduced us, and we carried out the interview remotely during the COVID-19 pandemic. Once in Chile, I met him and his partner Patricia Hanna Pazmiño in Concepción's *Plaza Peru*, a place of congregation for students right in front of the UdeC. They were part of the foundation and leadership of *RED Construyamos* and worked in the collective redaction of the book *8.8 Corrupción y Especulación Inmobiliaria: El 27F y la lucha de RedConstruyamos*, which gives their account of the struggle for reconstruction.

My interview with Ampuero was essential to understand the process as well as the challenges of community organizing, especially in a context as complex as the one Chile was undergoing in 2010. His experience exemplifies the importance the networking which occurred during the reconstruction process with *RED Construyamos*. My conversations with Ampuero helped me to understand how different sectors of the population came together, how diverse movements and organizations united, and how the process of the reconstruction was connected to many struggles that came before it, as well as those that came after.

Mauricio José Sáez Cuevas: I met Mauricio Sáez in Guadalajara, México. We studied in the same university campus and used to frequent the same café and befriended the baristas, most of them also students. He was excited to help and his support was instrumental for this research. His advice led me to contact many *vecinos* and, eventually, many of my interviewees. He is a fellow geographer and doctoral student at the Autonomous Metropolitan University (UAM) in Mexico City. During 27F he was a sociology student at University of Concepción (UdeC) and his lived experience of the earthquake reflects many of the themes studied here, such as the role of spontaneous organization, mutual aid, and the support of the student movement.

As Mauricio was part of the Penguin Revolution and 2011's student movement, his experience is a great example of how the student movement supported the reconstruction struggle. *Pobladores* and students have been at the forefront of social change in Chile since the early 20th century, and as Mauricio explained, their collaboration after 2010 was an indicator of a major societal shift. He explained to me intricacies of the political environment of 2010, both at the national level and regional one.

Voltaire Alvarado Peterson: During the second year of the pandemic, I came across a virtual discussion being held by the UdeC called *Vivienda y Hábitat Digno ¿Quiénes son los actores para los nuevos escenarios de la Vivienda y la ciudad?*. The participants discussed matters relevant to Concepción's contemporary housing struggles and it was moderated by Dr. Alvarado, professor at UdeC's Faculty of Architecture, Urbanism and Geography. Dr. Alvarado obtained his PhD from the Pontifical Catholic University of Chile (PUC) and is a leading academic on the historical development of housing and land use in Latin American cities.

My interview with Dr. Alvarado was key to my understanding of Chilean housing policy, its capacities and limitations. Most of our conversation was centered in the subsidy model for housing, a central mechanism that defined how most parties involved in the reconstruction operated. In short, this interview helped me to understand how Chile's housing policy was intrinsically linked to financialization and the risk of natural hazards.

Group Interviews

I conducted two group interviews of working-class activists from the Pedro del Río Zañartu's Neighborhood Council N.5 (*Junta de Vecinos no. 5 Pedro del Río Zañartu*, hereafter *Junta N. 5*). The *población* of Pedro del Río was founded *circa* 1908 and is one of Concepción's most important historic industrial neighborhoods. The neighborhood started to form alongside the *población* Aurora de Chile. My interviewees are also the leaders of the *Junta de Vecinos Santa Madre de Dios* – Neighborhood Council Holy Mother of God – and the *Junta*

de Vecinos Remodelación Zañartu – Neighborhood Council Zañartu Renewal. The first one is a council that focuses on supporting church activities in the neighborhood and looks after elderly and disabled citizens. The second one was formed to resist a displacement effort during the 1990's. All of the interviewees are members of the Committee for the Regeneration Project Ribera Norte.

The first group interview had six participants. This was the lengthiest interview, almost three hours long, and was where *vecinos* talked to me about life in their *población* before and during the dictatorship. The second interview had four participants, who delved into the industrial past of Pedro del Río and Aurora de Chile, as well as their resistance to displacement from 1973 to 2010. Ernestina Gatica helped me to organize the interviews and participated in both of them. These interviews helped me to understand how the history of the city and of the neighborhood was experienced by those who inhabit them, how the achievements of Concepción's working-class resulted from unity and hard work, and how past experiences of community organized helped them to overcome the aftermath of 27F.

Ana María and Marcela Peñaloza Puelles: These are two sisters who have lived most of their lives in Pedro del Río. They came from San Rosendo, a town near Cabrero in the inner Biobío Region. They moved to Concepción during the early days of the dictatorship as their father was posted there to work with the railway company. Anita, as she is known by the *vecinos*, was one of the leaders of the *Junta* N. 5 during the late 1980's. Along with Ernestina, they fought to maintain and democratize the *junta*. Marcela is a public servant and an involved citizen of the neighborhood. Both are well known and their family is a pillar of the community.

Carolina Silva R.: Carolina's family has lived in the neighborhood for more than 50 years. Her grandfather was employed by the steelworks at Huachipato, but the family was never actively involved in politics. Carolina had a sheltered childhood, mostly engaging with the *vecinos*

when they went to the football matches. It was not until she moved within the neighborhood that she started to explore it with her younger brother. She became involved after the earthquake by volunteering to register neighbors who were applying for housing subsidies and since then she continued to be involved in neighborhood organizing work.

Ernestina H. Gatica Fuentes: Ernestina's parents moved to Pedro del Río during the 60's from rural Biobío and the Mapuche heartland further south. Since her youth, Ernestina Gatica has fulfilled many roles in social organizations in Chile. She affirms that she inherited her political commitment from her father, a social leader and communist militant. After an extremely dire period during the dictatorship, Ernestina was part of the leadership of the *Junta N. 5* and led many struggles, including for permanence in the context of the Ribera Norte Project in the 1990's. While she retired from social leadership during 2010, she took part in the spontaneous reconstruction efforts after 27F, travelling within the region to provide aid rural sectors. She later returned to social leadership and is a key character in the struggle for a dignified neighborhood in Ribera Norte.

Luis Alfonso Oñate Puentes: Treasurer and member of *Junta N. 5*, Luis Alfonso Oñate, called Poncho by the *vecinos*, is also the president of Block 5 of the neighborhood. His father was a communist militant and close friend with Ernestina's father. Although Luis Alfonso did not continue with politics, he did maintain his friendship with Ernestina and is committed to the improvement of the life in the neighborhood.

María Valdés Baeza: *Vecina* of the neighborhood, María Valdés joined the *Junta de Vecinos Remodelación Zañartu* during the 1990s, a group formed to resist the displacement attempts in the context of the first Ribera Norte Project. She came into leadership after 2003.

Mirtha Fanny Muñoz Muñoz: Mirtha Muñoz moved from Santiago after marrying her husband, a *vecino* of Pedro del Río. She established herself in the neighborhood not long before 1973

and has lived there ever since. She argues that life in the neighborhood is much better than in Santiago, due to the sense of community in the former. She is the leader of Junta de Vecinos Santa Madre de Dios and the group *Descubriendo la Felicidad* – Discovering Happiness – which aids handicapped and elderly citizens.

Víctor Vivallo Pontoni: He is the director of *Espacios FM*, a local radio station linked to the Junta N. 5. He is also the husband of María Valdés. Together they are deeply involved in the life of the neighborhood. Victor Vivallo moved from Bulnes, now in the Ñuble Region, to Pedro del Río in part due to his knowledge of the history of the place as a center for leftist organization. He hid there in the earlier days of the dictatorship and later decided to settle there. He has a passion for the industrial heritage of the city and during the 90's he and a group created a radio show dedicated to providing alternative information during the push by regional officials to develop the Ribera Norte Project in 1996.

Undisclosed Participant: This person, who preferred not to be identified by name, is a resident of Pedro del Río. Having lived there most of their life, they have participated in the neighborhood life mainly through their involvement with the Catholic Church. They have volunteered and supported the Church's involvement in the neighborhood since the dictatorship into today. They remain involved, mainly to aid the elderly population of Pedro del Río with two neighborhood councils.

2.5. Positionality

The experience of carrying out my master's degree has been one of great change and contradiction, replete with lifechanging decisions and stark contrasts; in total, a *chiaroscuro*.¹⁵ As a member of a middle-class family in semi-rural Mexico, the news that I had been accepted with full scholarship to Concordia's Department of Geography has been life changing.

¹⁵ Italian painting technique popularized during the baroque period, used to represent volume and contrast.

To accept this offer, I took out a small loan from a dear friend and a couple of weeks later I was hugging my mom at the departures section of Guadalajara's airport. Both of us cried and hugged for a long time. I saw her for the last time as I passed through the gates. She had a difficult life, as women often do in Mexico, without many opportunities. Nevertheless, she did well with what she had, and amidst adversity, she supported me in every moment, even when she disagreed with me or could not understand my choices. Her sudden passing at the start of my studies brought a dark cloud into my life, one that may never clear. Completing this project has been one of the ways in which I have honored her life as she gave up so much to open doors for me and my siblings. During the first months of this research, I was mostly isolated, distracting myself from dark thoughts by focusing in on my research and associated coursework for the degree. During my grief, I read and re-read Renato Rosaldo's *The Day of Shelly's Death* (2014) to try and make sense of the tragedy of my mother's passings, and it has since then become a significant work for me.

Researching post-disaster reconstruction while going through a personal disaster, fleeing from the disaster Mexico has slowly become, and doing all of this during the ongoing catastrophe of COVID-19, an age-defining pandemic, has been humbling, illuminating, depressing, anxiety-inducing, hopeful, and thought-provoking. A true complex kaleidoscope of sentiments and of social phenomena have collided for me during this time and created, a defining moment in my life. Although this is a moment that could be considered hopeless, it has been also a moment of resilience and optimism for the many who want change and who wait for a change in the swing of history's pendulum. Personally, hope and resilience has come from the unity among my siblings, myself, and our extended family, as well as from my marriage with my wife Sandy and the warm welcome I received from her family—our family, now.

I identify with Chile's constant state of resilience and its current situation, as the country or the people transition away from the constitution written during the dictatorship to a new one written by elected members of the population (*Constituyentes*),¹⁶ and a decisive election. This process of change, this turning away from the neoliberal legacy of the dictatorship, has been brewing slowly since the Concertación's failure to distance itself from such policies became evident. In 2010, national level social organization was revitalized by a vigorous and young multiplicity of grassroots movements, which merged, retaking older ongoing struggles, as well as social processes. The fight for the reconstruction after 27F reunited volunteers, students, activists, *vecinos*, *Pobladores*, and even sectors of the usually passive middle class into a first-of-its-kind organization. While the reconstruction process and its results were varied and complex, it was an important part of the larger process of transitioning away from the dictatorship's legacy and towards a more just and democratic Chile.

For this research, my own identity as a Latin American has been key in shaping my perspective and my opinions on Chile as a whole. I studied for my bachelor's degree at the University of Guadalajara, Mexico, near my hometown. Guadalajara received many Chilean refugees after 1973, including two who worked in my department, and whom I had a chance I had a chance to meet. The departments of social sciences in this university have a strong influence from all the student organizations that streamed down from the malaise of 1968. The university, as an autonomous, public, and free entity, has been a key structure for grassroots movements and politics in my home state of Jalisco. In this context, I met with former volunteers of the Sandinista insurgency and MIR veterans, people who I have admired and who taught me about importance of popular grassroots mobilization and the struggle for Latin American self-determination. My political thoughts have been deeply influenced by my

¹⁶ As of today, the first proposition for the new constitution was rejected by the population in September 2022. The second proposal and electoral process for it will begin in May 2023.

readings of Rubén Jaramillo, Ricardo Flores Magón, André Gunder Frank, Rosa Luxemburg, and Frantz Fanon.

Finally, while I am a foreigner to Chile, I do not necessarily perceive myself as a complete outsider of the Chilean struggle. As Latin Americans, most working-class Mexicans and Chileans share many common concerns for the underlying phenomena fueling vulnerabilities and struggle in our countries. At the end of the day, as a citizen of a Latin American country, my life has also been greatly determined by forces outside of my control, by decisions outside my scope of influence, and by persons out of my reach. As those documented in my research, I am also vulnerable.

3. Early Housing Struggles: The Making of the *Pobladores*

*Between the smell of burning wood, kneaded bread, and the fresh breeze that comes down from the foothills of The Nahuelbuta Range, we are received in Mundo Nuevo, a recovered territory of Chilean peasants appropriated from Forestal Arauco.*¹⁷

Aucán Salas (2018)

Pobladores have been central actors to housing and other social struggles. This chapter will explain how this sector of the population formed and their characteristics. Since they are the group most involved in the struggle for housing and land, their history is directly linked to the development of Chile's urban and landownership policies. Therefore, this is also an exploration of the historical preconditions of Concepción's urban structure.

Salas' opening quote situates us within *Chile Profundo* – the rural interior of Chile –, a region that stretches from the southern shore of the Biobío River and continues inland into the Araucanía Region. I begin by situating the reader in this region as it is the heart of the land struggle in Chile. As such, it is paramount to understand that the struggle for reconstruction after 27F is an iteration of the same struggle. This is true in two aspects. First, as the reconstruction process lengthened, it became evident that its shortcomings were a result of systematic deficiencies from within the Chilean socioeconomic structure, many of which streamed directly from its housing policies. Second, *Pobladores* have toiled for housing, permanency, and urban inclusion since their arrival to cities during last century, and they have done so from a position of precarity and vulnerability to natural hazards. Hence, their history is one of resilience from a constant state of reconstruction.

This chapter draws on archival materials from the Historical Archive of Concepción, supplemented by secondary sources and two semi-structured interviews with neighbors of

¹⁷ Also known as *Celulosa Arauco y Constitución* – Arauco and Constitución Wood Pulp – is an enterprise that produces wood-derived products, created by the privatization of merger of two major state-owned enterprises during Pinochet's administration.

Pedro del Río. As inhabitants of one of the oldest *poblaciones* in Concepción, the interviewees are the most relevant primary source to understand the struggle of the *Pobladores* in the area. The last section of this chapter is supported by an interview with Dr. Voltaire Alvarado, expert on Chilean housing policy. I must also highlight the contributions of Ernestina Gatica, a social leader of the *población* since the days of the dictatorship, and of Victor Vivallo who provided a wealth of knowledge on the industrial past of Ribera Norte. The testimony of the interviewees relates specifically to the *población* Pedro del Río Zañartu.

This chapter is divided into three main sections. The first section traces the urban development of Ribera Norte during the industrialization period (late-1800's to mid-1900), a development that brought the *Pobladores*, industrial workers, to Concepción's urban core. The following section is a brief but important overview of Chile's Agrarian Reform. Lastly, the chapter provides a review of Chilean housing policy and its implementation. The chapter ends with a brief closing summary.

3.1. La Población

Who are *Pobladores* exactly? For the most part, they are industrial workers, peasants, rural dwellers, displaced Indigenous people, and the landless. They flocked to the cities to fill industry's demand for labor. As such, they are also the builders of Chile's industries. They lived in *poblaciones callampas* – shantytowns – that were built on vacant land due to the lack of accommodation in the urban centers. These settlements were often near job sites, whether industries or the urban core. However, things have changed. Currently, *poblaciones* – without the *callampas*, have turned into neighborhoods and most informal settlements are found around the urban periphery. *Pobladores* now can refer to inhabitants of informal settlements, inhabitants of an established *población*, or descendants of earlier *Pobladores*. I must note an important point, that *Pobladores* are not squatters. Although *tomas* often involve squatting, *Pobladores* are perceived more as pioneers, especially in Ribera Norte.

There were also rural *Pobladores*. Their movement sought agrarian reform and land redistribution. They were mostly represented by the Revolutionary Left Movement (*Movimiento de Izquierdas Revolucionarias*; MIR), a social movement, and the Popular Action Unitary Movement (*Movimiento de Acción Popular Unitario / Obrero Campesino*; MAPU/OC), a leftist political party. These organizations were key in pushing for the Agrarian Reform (Angelcos & Pérez, 2017; Goicovic Donoso, 2016). Hence, there were two important social movements involving *Pobladores*, both grounded in access to property and resistance to precarity but that developed differently in urban and rural context.

During my sojourn in Concepción, I stayed in an apartment at the intersection of the streets Juan Martínez de Rozas¹⁸ and Rengo.¹⁹ The building was in front of Cerro Amarillo, a historic hill that had once served as a battleground, a bandits refuge, and an execution site. Today it holds a park, a school, and a cultural center. From my balcony, I could see the Biobío River, the railway bridge to the Pedro del Río neighborhood, the iconic Cerro del Chepe, and the Laguna Las Tres Pascualas. Farther away, in the distance, the massive iron towers of an oil refinery could be seen as well.²⁰ All of this diversity of the Valle de la Mocha's landscape embodies and contains all the key aspects of Southern Chile; it is a landscape of struggle and dispossession and a landscape of extractivism and industry. In many ways, the landscape is a testament of the city's history, including its key role in the expansion of the

¹⁸ Juan Martines de Rozas was one of the leaders of the Chilean indepenence from the Spaniards (1810-1823).

¹⁹ Both Rengo and Chepe were prominent indigenous leaders, while Rengo fought against the Spanish occupation during The Arauco War Chepe attained prominence in the regional society and owned the hill that holds his name. This conflict is one of the most important periods of Chilean colonial history, and one which defined many aspects and structures that came after it. It consisted of the struggle for the region of the Mapuche heartland and took place between the XVI and XVIII centuries. Concepción was a major site for this conflict and by the mid-1700's the Mapuche lost most their lands north of the Biobío. After Chilean independence the national government furthered the dispossession of the Mapuche with the occupation of the Araucanía.

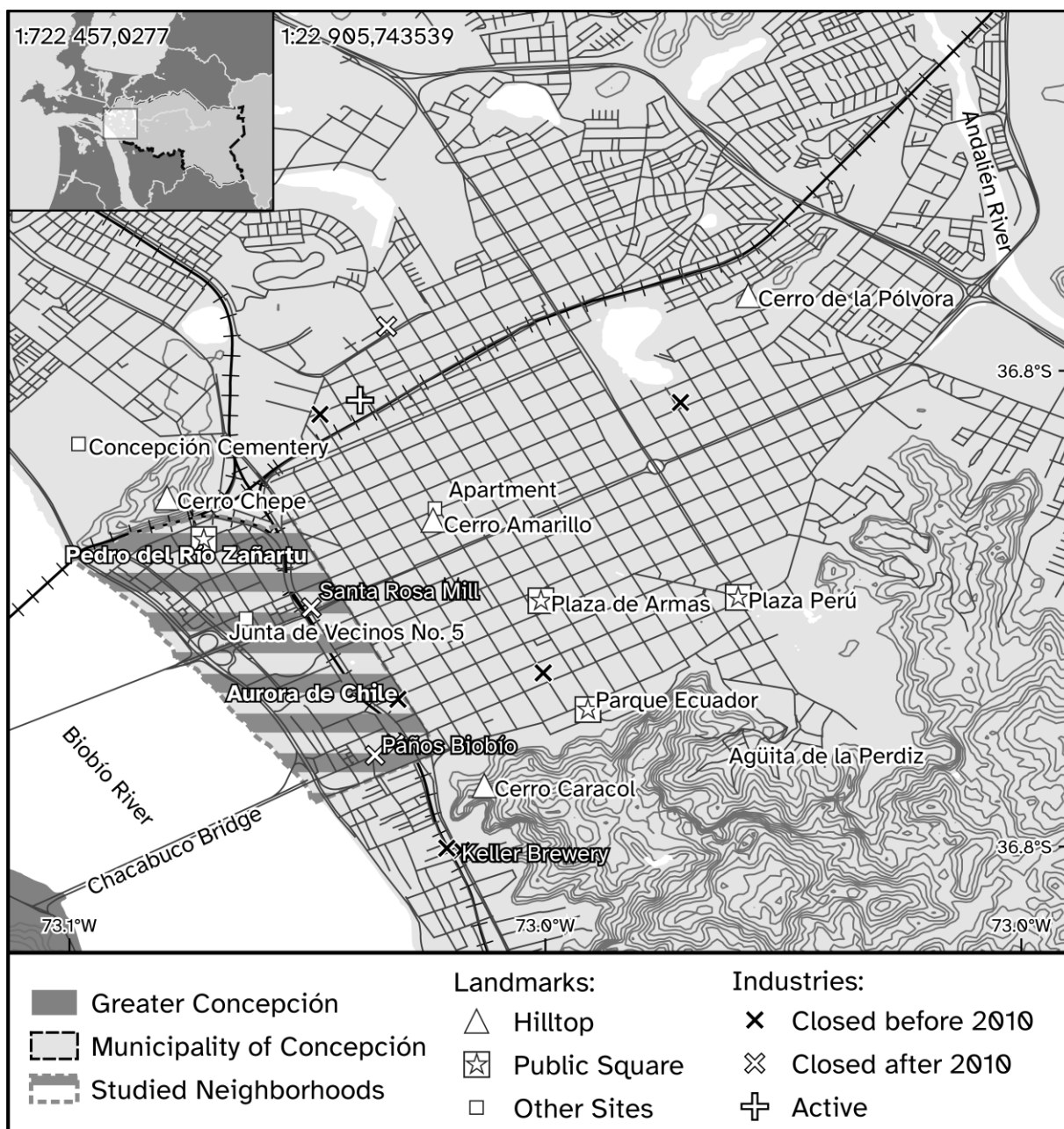


Figure 3. Map of the Municipality of Concepción. Generated in QGIS with data from Chile's National Library, Patrimonio Industrial Biobío, and Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA).

frontier and its relevance as a site for the independence and the struggle of regional control between Santiago and Chile's Regions (Mihovilovich Gratz & Fuentealba Domínguez, 2020).

Before the construction of the Panama Canal, naval traffic from the Atlantic Ocean to the Pacific Ocean went through the Southern Cone, passing through the Strait of Magellan. Thus, cities like Valdivia and Concepción became replenishment centers for transiting vessels before 1914. In inland Araucanía, indigenous communities such as the Mapuche were being displaced and forcibly resettled. The beneficiaries of this process were the European immigrants who received land-grants and loans to exploit the land. Perhaps the most glaring example of this is the case of the infamous José Duhalde, as his *latifundio* was at the center of the conflict for land redistribution and the Agrarian Reform. Some dispossessed indigenous people got involved in the struggle for the reform while others joined the numerous peasants who left rural areas for the cities (Mallon, 2005). Taken together, the proximity to Araucanian extractive activities and its key role as a port made Greater Concepción one of the earliest industrial areas in Chile. Even though a lot of naval transit was lost when the Panama Canal was finished in 1914, the city has remained a main link between Southern Chile and the rest of the country. Also, with its early industrialization, Greater Concepción became the center of all economic activity in the country's southern region.

As Concepción grew in size and started to industrialize, factories were established in the floodplain between the river and the city core. The area between the downtown and the northern bank of the river is now called *Ribera Norte*. The industrialization of Ribera Norte accelerated as mining activities started in Lota-Coronel and Curanilahue – the only mining sector still operative – a railway was built to connect the emerging industries with the coal sector, and later to the ports along the Bay of Concepción – Talcahuano and Lirquén. After the railway from Lota-Coronel extended to the outskirts of Concepción (See Figure 4 p.49), the process of immigration towards the city accelerated. The city became a key point of

exchange between the coastal industrial sector in Tomé-Penco-Talcahuano and the extractive activities in Southern Chile (Benedetti Reiman, 2019; Pacheco, 1997).

Most of the industries that emerged did so along the river front of Concepción. Among those were: The Concepcion Gas Company (1887), The *Santa Rosa* Mill (1890), the *Keller* Brewery (1874), and the *Schaub* Factory (1897) farther south in Chiguayante. Later on, other iconic companies opened next to the rail line, including the Thermoelectric Power Plant (1926), the *Paños Biobío* paper mill (1919), and *Schiavi* Crystal Factory (1922). From 1885 onwards, the city had an accelerated economic and urban development fueled by the rail and carbon from Lota-Coronel. The process of rural immigration towards the city also accelerated with the population increasing from 40,304 inhabitants in 1885 to 190,169 inhabitants in 1970 (Mazzei de Grazia, 2015; Tacla Chamy, 1970). Within Ribera Norte, Pedro del Río was the first and most industrialized neighborhood. Víctor Vivallo (personal communication, 20 January 2022), a member of one of Pedro del Río's oldest neighborhood councils, emphasized the importance of the neighborhood in the region's industrial development:

Pedro del Río has a very especial particularity in that it was the first and greatest industrial corridor of Concepción. ... Until recently, there was a brick building nearby, which was the first thermoelectric power plant of the region. It was herein the población, not near or at the outskirts, [where] the first thermoelectric plant was established here and it fed the railway line. Another of the great enterprises was the one that assembled buses – *locomoción colectiva*. [This] was because the buses that arrived [here were incomplete, they] only had the steering wheel, the driver's seat, chassis, right? Then, all of that was mounted here. [We also had] the cement factory [and] the mill which was demolished a few months ago, a historic mill. So, a big portion of the *Pobladores* here have a relation with these, for example, Marcela with the *Maestranza* Railway [Company]. That was the industrial pole, the pole par excellence of Concepción, and that is why the neighbors, which were all families of workers, had that relation too. They identified with it.

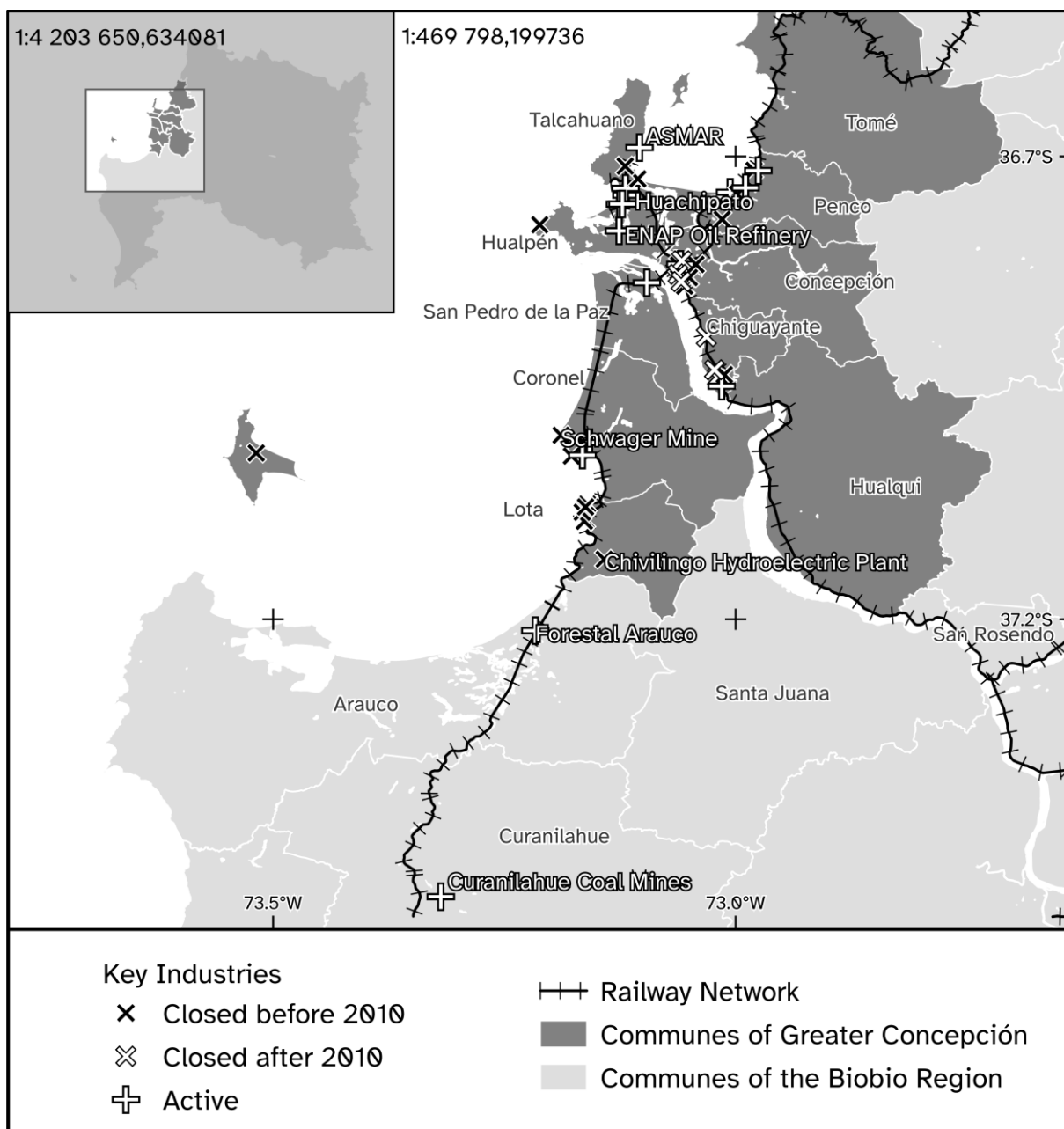


Figure 4. Map of the Municipalities of the Biobío Region, highlighting the important industrial sites and enterprises. Most of the Region key industrial sites and factories remain active, with the exception of the Schwager Mine in Coronel, and the Chivilingo Hydroelectric Plant in Lota. Generated in QGIS with data from Chile's National Library and the NGO *Patrimonio Industrial Biobío*.

With industrialization came the rise of industrial workers – the *Pobladores*. In the case of Concepción, they settled in the outskirts, most notably in *Ribera Norte*, slowly filling the shore with debris and reclaiming it from the Biobío River. These informal settlements were referred as camps, or *poblaciones callampas*. Two of these emerging *poblaciones* are of special

relevance here; Pedro del Río Zañartu, the oldest one, and Aurora de Chile (See Figure 3 p. 49). Both *poblaciones* formed between the railway and the river, a neglected wetland which was slowly reclaimed by the *Pobladores*.

Life in the settlements was difficult. *Pobladores* were continuously working against compounding struggles. There was, however, always a way. For precarity, they organized soup kitchens; for lack of space, they filled the river; for floods, they built houses on stilts. Their reclamation of the river is, in a way, a tale of constant reconstruction. As the materials for the filling process came from the ruins caused by the previous century's great earthquakes, the floods kept the *población* in a permanent state of reconstruction for decades.

Near the end of my short sojourn in Concepción, some of the residents of Pedro del Río told me about the arrival of their families to the neighborhood. Doña Ana Peñaloza and her sister Marcela came from San Rosendo and the surrounding areas. Doña Ernestina's father came from a Mapuche community in the vicinity of Purén and her mother from Hualqui. Victor came from the town of Bulnes (in the Ñuble Region). According to the *vecinos*, most of the *Pobladores* before the 1970's were peasants. A few of them, like Ana and Marcela's father, worked at the railroad. Many others worked at local industries or found their way somehow informally or as petty criminals. Victor Jara's (1972) album titled *La Población* serves as a testament to these new urban dwellers, their experiences and hardships helping to constitute the folk figure that the *Poblador* represents. The song 'All I Have' – *Lo único que tengo* –, which was written in collaboration with folk singer Isabel Parra, is a clear example of this representation. In the song, the protagonist describes the precarity of her position as a *Pobladora*. Later on the album, the lyrics connect the many experiences of

exclusion to revolutionary impulses and ideas, including those of retaking the land – through *tomas* – from *latifundistas*.²¹

Victor Jara & Isabel Parra – Lo único que tengo

¿Quién me iba a decir a mí?
¿Cómo me iba a imaginar?
Si yo no tengo un lugar
en la tierra.

*Who would have told me?
How could I imagine?
if I don't have a place
on earth.*

Y mis manos son lo único que tengo,
y mis manos son mi amor y mi sustento.

*And my hands are all I have,
and my hands are my love and my liveli-
hood.*

No hay casa donde llegar,
mi padre y mi madre están
más lejos de este barrio
que una estrella.

*There is no home to go to,
my father and my mother are
farther from this slum
than a star.*

¿Quién me iba a decir a mí
que yo me iba a enamorar?
Cuando no tengo un lugar
en la tierra.

*Who would have told me
that I would fall in love?
When I have no place
on earth.*

Just as in the case of Santiago by the start of the 1900s, Concepción had a severe housing shortage with no viable solutions. The crisis was rooted in three interconnected developments: industrialization, rural-urban immigration, and the early moments of the labor movement. Luis Alfonso and Ernestina Gatica, long time neighbors of Pedro del Río and members of its oldest neighborhood council (the *Junta de Vecinos N.5 Pedro del Río Zañartu*, hereafter *Junta N. 5*) recalled how their childhood years were shaped by the involvement of their

²¹ Latifundistas were landowners with great power. They owned *latifundios* which were enormous estates. This concentration of land and power is referred as the *latifundista* model.

parents in labor union organizing. Luis Alfonso reflected on the complications of this involvement for his family when his father was forced into exile after Pinochet took power:

Luis Alfonso Oñate: I was born in 1968, and I have memories of my father being a communist. He participated in all of that, and as a result the rest of us lived a very complicated period, especially in 1973. ... He was granted asylum in Argentina. For us, it was complicated because we had to flee and hide suddenly. My father was a very good friend of Ernestina's, they worked together many years, I have many good memories of when he used to tell us [about those years].

Ernestina recalled her participation in the struggle for social justice, partially inspired by her father's example:

Ernestina Gatica: I have lived all my life in Costanera Street [See Figure 6 p. 61]. My father was an activist, a union organizer, and militant of the communist party since his youth. From there I have [inherited] that essence of a combatant and a fighter. [I have been] a social leader of little thing since I was thirteen. ... The neighborhood has a history which is not romantic, but real and objective, of resistance. It always has had excellent leaders until 1973 – always men – at the head of the many *juntas de vecinos* and the different organizations of those times. After that came the dictatorship, and well... but always resistance, with the clear objective to improve, of changing the conditions of life, but also with a socio-political vision, always.

(L. A. Oñate, E. Gatica, personal communication, 20 January 2022)

Chronists claim that Concepción had the most organized working class of anyplace in Chile by 1950 (Oliver Schneider & Zapatta Silva, 1950, p. 364). The Worker's Confederation – *Confederación Obrera* – was formed in 1910 out of a plethora of already active unions. Although, according to Oliver Schnider, the first recorded *junta de vecinos* was constituted in 1927, neighbors were already organized through unions or other organizations – such as *mutualistas*²² – in Pedro del Río since the neighborhood's foundation in 1908. When labor unions

²² A different kind of mutual aid organization focused on material improvements and acts of solidarity without a clear geographical or political delimitation.

were outlawed in 1973, in order to maintain activities, many organizations morphed into neighborhood councils or charities linked to the Catholic Church (Benedetti Reiman, 2019; Oxhorn, 1995).

The branching paths of the rural to urban migration of the *Pobladores* had major ramifications for the future of southern Chile and for Greater Concepción. *Pobladores* changed the physical and social landscapes of cities as industrial change was possible by the improvement in transportation infrastructure and the influx of capital. Some *Pobladores* staged *tomas* and protests to make themselves heard, demanding housing solutions from the government. Other *Pobladores* remained in the countryside where they pushed for land reform. Whether they moved to the city or remained in the rural areas, *Pobladores* pursued the transition to land ownership in one way or another. The changes that resulted from their struggles would form the conditions for the work of social movements after 27F.

3.2. Reforma Agraria

During the late 1800's and early 1900's many Latin American countries undertook processes of landowning restructuring, phasing away from Spanish *latifundios*. In Chile, this process had its first unsuccessful attempt in 1932. The expanding process of colonization and dispossession in Southern Chile provided some changes to the land ownership structure of indigenous properties to accommodate the sponsored European settlers, mainly Germans and Italians. Although the colonization of Chile's hinterlands reduced the pressure to carry out an agrarian reform, over time a full reform was inevitable as Latin American countries pushed for redistribution pressure increased until by the 1950's. By then, the left in general, but particularly the rural left, was quite organized and acquiring support (Bengoa, 2016, p. 57; Grove, 1939; Mallon, 2005).

When an agrarian reform law was finally passed during Jorge Alessandri's administration (1958-1964), it was the result of a multi-sectoral national mobilization and done from the context of Cold War geopolitics. Alessandri came to the presidency as an independent, supported mostly by the Christian right and other conservative factions which were increasingly unpopular. Despite that, his government had a successful start. His presidency's success, however, did not last long as the 1960 earthquake of Valdivia caused massive damage in Southern Chile.

Internationally, the USA aimed to align Latin American nations with itself rather than with the USSR. To accomplish this goal, President John F. Kennedy launched the Alliance for Progress, a program that proposed policies to improve quality of life in the Americas, including land reform. After the earthquake, Kennedy's administration conditioned aid to Chile under the Alliance for Progress. Domestically, the left gained a lot of ground. Within the Christian faction they gained support from within the Christian Democratic Party (*Democracia Cristiana*; DC) and externally with rising coalitions such as the Popular Action Front (*Frente de Acción Popular*; FRAP), which preceded the Popular Unity, Salvador Allende's party. There were also independent groups of *Pobladores*, peasants, as well as workers' unions. The reform was passed by the congress in 1962. It was aimed to fulfill the requirements of Alliance for Progress, to appease leftist groups that were pushing for redistribution, and to create a rural middle-class of landowners (*Ley N° 15.020*, 1962). However, the reform laws were not implemented during Alessandri's and Frei Montalva's governments. In 1970, Allende's administration began carrying out the reform in earnest, following Frei Montalva's amendments of 1967 and the requirements of the Kennedy administration.

Once the reform had begun, other movements beyond the government's oversight promoted the reform. Grassroot movements and peasants, especially in the Araucanía and Los Lagos regions, became involved. This time, *tomas* became a key practice of protest and

for the repossession of land. These *tomas* accelerated the process of expropriation, permanently transforming landowning structures. *Tomas* were heralded as a symbol of recovery of ill-gotten land in rural contexts. The notable *toma* that inspired the rest, however, happened in the población *la Victoria* in downtown Santiago. Urban *tomas* reclaimed public or vacant space for habitation making them less politically charged. However, *tomas* proved to be very controversial, fueling the fears of the property-owning class before the *coup* and their hatred and brutal retribution afterwards (Bengoa, 2016; A. Valdés & Foster, 2015).

The *coup*, which brought Pinochet to power in 1973, was in great part supported by the elites due to their fear of this land restructuring. They used the *tomas* as a pretext to mobilize the military first against civilians and then against the Popular Unity government. However, the Pinochet administration did not undo the reform entirely. They gave back some land to owners but did not permit its full return to a *latifundista* model. Instead, Pinochet's land ownership model transformed the legacy of previous governments by erasing most of the social guarantees of collective ownership and reinforcing private property and land market institutions that would accelerate the exploitation of land while at the same time eliminating all collective ownership arrangements (Mallon, 2005). In short, the process of the agrarian reform defined the struggle and legal structure around land ownership and use according to a neoliberal model.

Within a few years, this vision of land ownership taking root in the rural areas would be enforced in urban areas as well. The violent reconfiguration of Allende's land reform by the *coup* government was a turning point for rural and urban *Pobladores*. As they resisted the neoliberal agrarian program, they also defined common goals and practices of protest and resistance, which have reemerged before and after 27F (Chonchol Chait, 2018; A. Valdés & Foster, 2015).

3.3. Housing policy

Chilean housing policy has been mostly reactive, this means that it has been defined by its responses to crises, rather than from proactive planning. Therefore, these crises have defined policymaking; unmet housing demand when the cities industrialized, natural hazards reducing and damaging housing stock, and the political crisis that led to the Agrarian Reform. This reactiveness necessitates government intervention. However, this resulted in a conundrum when the Pinochet administration attempted to reduce government interference in housing. Despite the efforts of all administrations since then, the Chilean state still needs to exert a huge influence over this domain, using the subsidy model as a proxy. Dr. Voltaire Alvarado Peterson (personal communication, 7 July 2021), an expert on Chilean housing policy and faculty member in the Department of Geography at the University of Concepción, elaborates on the problem of natural disasters for housing policy:

In Chile. There is a structural deficit of housing, [a] product of the vulnerability [of the country] to tsunamis, earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, [and] landslides [and], in Concepción there is also fire hazard from wine and eucalyptus plantations, throughout the peri-urban zones.

He then goes on to emphasize the added challenges of regulating housing supplies in the context of Pinochet's neoliberal regime and its ongoing legacy:

Chilean neoliberalism needs the state or it would not exist. [This is because] Chilean financialization is based on three pillars. The first are pension funds ... which invest an important part in real estate capital [and development]. [Thus] the Chilean state does not construct housing; it demands that the private sector [does the] construction which the government will subsidize under a specific normative framework.

In this context, housing stock in Chilean settlements are in a constant state of vulnerability. Because of this, the government has never been able to fully retreat and leave housing to the private sector. Instead, it heavily regulates and finances many aspects of the real estate

market directly or indirectly by integrating previous frameworks with the demands and needs and practices of citizens, which some have described as a subsidy-based system.

Pressure on the Chilean government increased with national modernization, especially in urban areas where housing was promoted as a legitimate means of social mobility for the lower classes and considered fundamental for the healthy development of the middle and upper classes. As laws such as the N° 1838 on worker's dwellings (1906) were ratified, political participation in housing increased, including citizen involvement in tenant's and housing rights struggles. In 1925, the law N° 261 was passed, fixing rent prices, and forbidding real estate speculation on urban land. By the 1930's, when the Ministry for Welfare – *Ministerio del Bienestar Social* – was established, a permanent expectation of government involvement in housing emerged (Hidalgo Dattwyler, Paulsen, et al., 2019).

While some housing policy instruments were being developed in early 20th century, the actual construction and procurement of housing was still completely detached from government. For instance, in Concepción, one of the first workers organization was the society Homes for Workers – *Habitaciones para Obreros* – which procured land to build *poblaciones*. In these settlements, workers got small dwellings, which they paid for in monthly installments. The fact that most factory workers were *Pobladores* made housing a key issue as they could gather support from unions. This tied both workers' organizations with housing organizations, causing labor unions and *juntas de vecinos* to have overlapping members and responsibilities (Goicovic Donoso, 2016; Oliver Schneider & Zapatta Silva, 1950).

In this context, the neighborhood of Pedro del Río Zañartu set the tone for the rest of Ribera Norte and for the urbanization of Concepción's urban periphery in general. The land for the neighborhood was granted to the municipality of Concepción in 1908 by Pedro del Río Zañartu himself. Later, he granted and/or sold additional land to a housing



Figure 5. Diorama of Concepción after the 1939 Chillán earthquake, locally known as the Ruin. Credit: Rodolfo Gutiérrez Schwerter “Zerreitug” (2021) at Concepción Gallery of History.

cooperative to build the settlement, which the workers then named *Comunidad Obrera de Habitaciones “Pedro del Río Zañartu.”* The neighborhood exists to this day, now called *Junta Vecinal de Pedro del Río Zañartu N° 5* (Mihovilovich Gratz & Fuentealba Domínguez, 2020; Oliver Schneider & Zapatta Silva, 1950).

Throughout Concepción’s industrial corridor, other neighborhoods also came into being in this way. A business owner, such as Zañartu, or a business would purchase a small plot of land near to the river and usually allow the works to do the construction. The neighborhood of Aurora de Chile also started in a similar way in 1919 when workers of *Paños Biobío* settled the land surrounding the factory and created a neighborhood, which was known for many years as Barrio Biobío. Eventually, some businesses built solid housing developments for their workers, including the thermoelectric power plant and the local mill.

As represented by Zerreitug's diorama (Figure 5 p. 49), the earthquakes of 1939 (Chilán) and 1960 (Valdivia) devastated the new urban areas, however, these events also created opportunities for the *Pobladores*. In Ribera Norte, workers gathered rubble left by the earthquakes to fill in the river with a more solid land and to expand their holdings (Figure 6 p. 59). This period of reconstruction also helped to lay the foundations for disaster-response policy in Chile's housing sector. In 1939, the administration of Pedro Aguirre Cerda (1938-1941) created the Reconstruction and Aid Corporation (*Corporación de Reconstrucción y Auxilio*; CORRA), the first disaster policy agency and a precursor to the present-day National Office of Emergency of the Interior Ministry (*Oficina Nacional de Emergencia del Ministerio del Interior*; ONEMI).

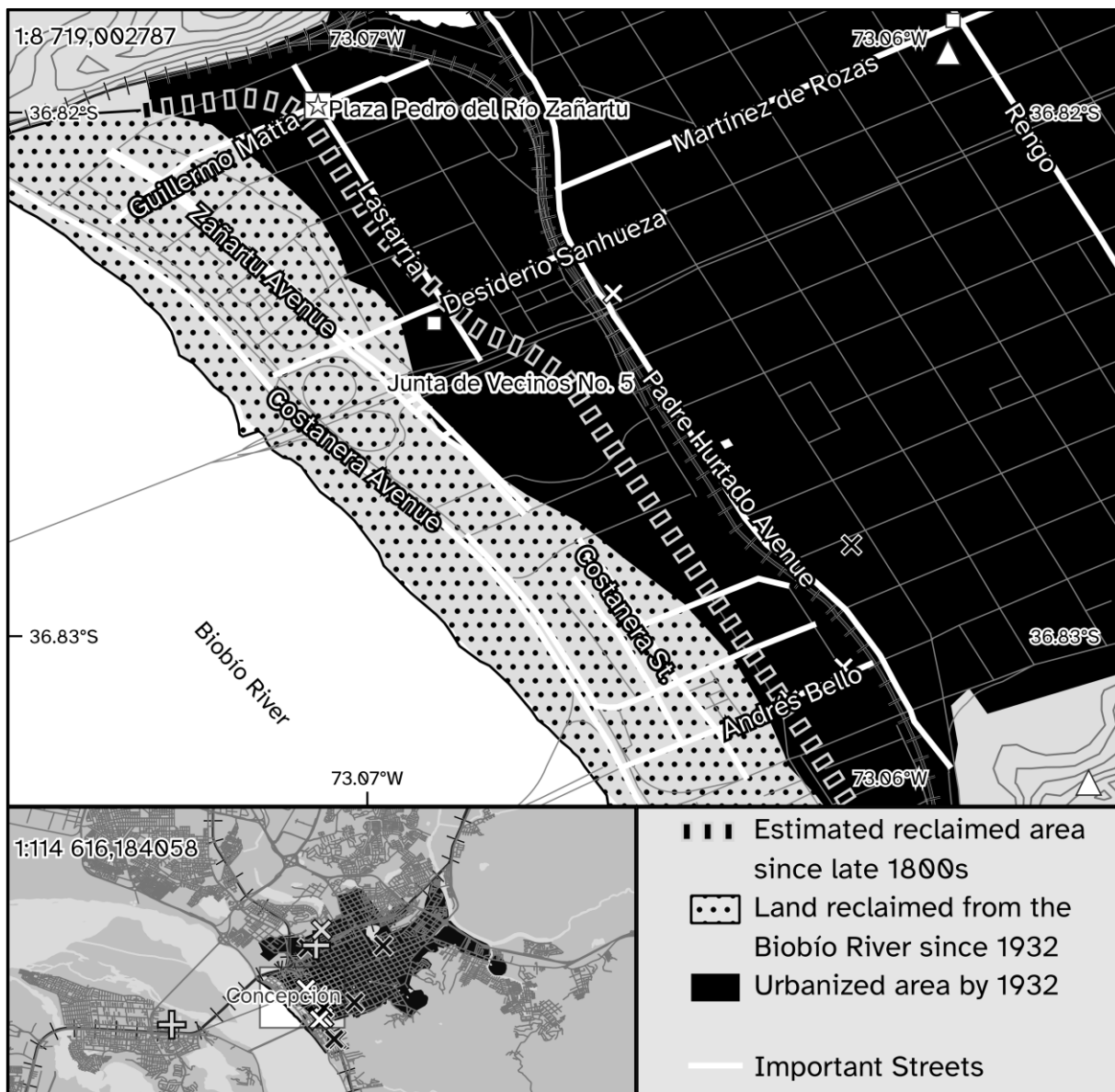


Figure 6. Map of Ribera Norte's reclaimed land from the Biobío River. The river was slowly reclaimed by *Pobladores* since the early 20th century, debris from 1939 and 1960 earthquakes was used as a foundation to this reclamation effort. Generated in QGIS with data from Chile's National Library, Patrimonio Industrial Biobío, JAXA, and Mihovilovich Gratz & Fuentealba Domínguez (2020).

Luis Herrera Reyes, a lawyer working for the municipality of Concepción, took charge of the reconstruction efforts after the 1939 earthquake (the Ruin) and later resigned to manage the CORRA in Chile's Biobío and Malleco Regions. After the earthquake, several organizations and *mutualistas* of middle and upper-class citizens gathered for a series of meetings which resulted in the creation of the Association for the Defense and Development of Concepción.

This organization aimed to further the economic and social development of the municipality by facilitating coordination between the many public and independent organizations involved in the reconstruction process. This alliance set a precedent. In order to recover from 1939's The Ruin, local businessmen and industrial enterprises cooperated with the regional government to accomplish the goals set by this association:

- a) Further the construction of the *Huachipato* Steelworks.²³
- b) Construct a frigorific [refrigerated wharf] in Talcahuano.
- c) Supply roads.
- d) Further popular housing and urbanize the city.
- e) Regularize the Biobío and Andalién rivers.
- f) Provide a forestation plan for the surrounding area.

(Oliver Schneider & Zapatta Silva, 1950, pp. 361–384)

While the aftermath of The Ruin saw a reemergence of the industrial-commercial sector, the only neighborhoods able to adequately rebuild in the approximately 10 years after the earthquake were those belonging to skilled workers and the middle class including 6 communities in the urban core of Concepción. Pacheco (1997, p. 77) remarks that “it can be concluded that the mechanisms to bring the work of reconstruction to working-class sectors did not exist then. [The working-class] was the most affected [demographic] by the earthquake [as] it worsened the phenomenon of precarious marginal constructions known as *poblaciones callampas* [where the workers were living].”

In contrast, after the 1960 earthquake, Chile's Housing Corporation (Corporación de la Vivienda; CORVI, which absorbed the CORRA) built emergency housing in Hualpencillo and accelerated the construction of the *población* Camilo Olavarría in Coronel. Later, the CORVI started plans to redevelop and renew working class sectors of Concepción while constructing

²³ The Huachipato Steelworks is an important factory in the Greater Concepción area, however, it has become more of an industrial hub rather than a single factory.

housing in San Pedro, across the Bío-Bío river. The 1960 earthquake also saw an increase of housing supply from the private sector, which came with the novelty of midrise buildings and earthquake-resistant foundations. Beginning in this period, the private sector began to build infrastructure like the bridge Juan Pablo II (Pacheco, 1997). While the response to the Chillán earthquake created a precedent for private sector involvement in post disaster reconstruction, it was only after 1960 that a systematic reconstruction response was carried out by the government, with the strong support of the private sector. This was the beginning of the public-private approach to reconstruction and became a development characteristic of Chile in the years that followed.

The reactive nature of housing policy in Chile has led it to be dependent on crises to evolve. Each time attempting to provide for the most urgent ones, these changes have had mixed results. Since the industrialization period, this lack of action has led the working class to carve their own spaces from the urban fabric. In Concepción, this has meant slowly claiming land from the river. In other cities, it has meant recovering urban vacant land through *tomas*. This reactionary focus has meant that major crises such as the ones caused by natural disasters, from floods and fires to earthquakes, have had a major influence on shaping this kind of policy. Hence, the ministries of housing and emergency management (MINVU and ONEMI) are intrinsically linked together, its predecessors were created after major earthquakes. Thus, not only the foundations of Pedro del Río and Aurora were built over the ruins of an earthquake, but also the foundations of these ministries.

The largest change came after the Valdivia earthquake of 1960 when these organizations started to shift to a more active role. This change was evident in Concepción after a particularly bad flood in Pedro del Río in 1970. Before the flood, most housing was built by

Pobladores and citizens themselves,²⁴ or by the industrialists. After the floods, however, the Urban Improvement Corporation built an apartment complex for the affected citizens. Al-lende, president at the time, delivered the units in person to the affected *Pobladores* of Pedro del Río in 1972. Sadly, the beneficiaries were expelled a year later to house public functionaries under the dictatorship's administration. Since then, the government has been more proactively involved in the construction of new housing and in the support of reconstruction. Thus, there was an expectation of preparedness and solutions from the government, even during the dictatorship. By 2010, the points of debate regarding reconstruction were not if the government was able to help offering housing units but to what extent, where, and how they were able to do so.

3.4. Summary

The industrialization of Concepción greatly defined the urban morphology of Greater Concepción, it shaped the physical and social landscape of the region during for the 20th century. This process directly influenced housing policy; it prompted the first housing crisis due to the lack of housing for *Pobladores*. This set the pace for a policymaking focused on reacting to crises. Then the crises resulting from the earthquakes of 1939 and 1960 generated the creation of the CORRA – which was replaced by ONEMI – and the earliest mechanism of disaster response and reconstruction. The other major defining phenomenon was the Agrarian Reform, a different struggle for urban *Pobladores*, the outcome of the reform and counter-reform was a clearly defined model of transition to ownership and land uses; one that prioritized the middle class, and defined land as a commodity. The product of these changes was the subsidy model, a housing policy that provides the framework for housing development and acquisition, as well as for its reconstruction.

²⁴ The reader may note that sometimes I distinguish between *Pobladores* and citizens. This distinction is to make clear that although all *Pobladores* can be considered citizens, not all citizens are *Pobladores*.

These changes represented a great overall improvement to the conditions of housing access and post-disaster response before the 1960's. However, policymakers were pushed into action by civil society through their own practices of resilience and protest. In this way, *Pobladores* and other groups of civil society forced the hand of politicians. The greatest example of this was the Agrarian Reform, especially its application during Allende's administration, though *mutualistas* and unions advanced housing policy before that as well, in order to provide proper housing for industrial workers. In Concepción, this was done by many neighborhood councils and unions, the *Junta N. 5* as one of these. Hence, *Pobladores* became the main actors in the social movements related to access to land ownership and have been at the core of the struggle ever since.

4. Resisting Repressive Policies During the Pinochet Regime

Salvador Allende was elected president in 1970 as the candidate from the Popular Unity coalition. The election was perceived as a victory for most urban and rural *Pobladores*, as the new government quickly implemented Frei's agrarian reform in its entirety. Besides, the government opened new avenues for ownership, including collective and cooperative forms, it ramped up social housing construction at an unprecedented pace. Some authors (Bengoa, 2016; French-Davis, 2010; Mallon, 2005) point out that it is difficult to determine accurately the impact of these policies, as they were passed in an exceptional moment, and then cut short by internal conflict and the *coup*. Nonetheless, these bold policies were undoubtedly a popular triumph as it was the first time that the interest of *Pobladores*, peasants, and industrial workers were represented at the national level (Goicovic Donoso, 2017; Mallon, 2005; Winn, 2016).

When President Allende was overthrown in 1973, the military government undid most of the social progress achieved until then. Pinochet's administration, however, did not attempt to return to the policies that preceded Frei's administration (1964-1970). Instead, it imposed policies that would have been impossible to pass under ordinary circumstances, including the neoliberal policies of the Chicago Boys which reversed decades of union organizing, dismantled public institutions, privatized state enterprises and services, and erased collective forms of ownership. Moreover, the neoliberal program completely excluded impoverished sectors of the population, condemning them to an unprecedented period of precarity. *Pobladores*, peasants, indigenous people, and factory workers, found themselves losing the results of decades of hard organizing work and becoming the targets of state-sponsored persecution. As a result, this period resulted in a harsh environment for already vulnerable groups, while simultaneously narrowing the possibilities for social organizing. Moreover, Pinochet's economic policies set the foundations for the instruments used in the

development of new housing and allocation of subsidies, the very same instruments that were relied upon for the reconstruction after 27F (Hidalgo Dattwyler, Alvarado Peterson, et al., 2019; Klein, 2008; Stern, 2006).

When the military government imposed restrictions on workers unions and social organizations, the practices they had been using to promote mutual aid and express discontent faded away. As the situation worsened for social leaders, most grassroots activities stopped, leaving a few kinds of organizations and activities – soup kitchens and neighborhood councils. During the dictatorship the only organizing that was permitted and sometimes encouraged was charitable work such as that of Teletón or CEMA Chile, often linked to the Catholic Church. Nevertheless, many Chileans stayed organized out of need and despite the risks because they could only endure the increased hardships caused by neoliberal policies through mutual aid. Pinochet's reforms failed to sustain large segments of the populace. While initially this meant a silent endurance and a reliance on *ollas comunes*, in 1982 Chileans took to the streets to express their dissatisfaction. New women leaders also arose during this period in which the *Pobladoras* continued to be drivers of change (Oxhorn, 1995; T. Valdés & Weinstein, 1993).

This chapter is divided into two sections. The first explores how the land use and urban policies implemented during the dictatorship fostered an environment of division and vulnerability. Specifically, I explore how the municipal and labor reform passed after 1973 eroded community organizing, and how the new policy of urban development led to the displacement of *Pobladores* from urban cores. With the onset of the *coup*, *Pobladores* were targeted by the military regime as they were at the forefront of the struggle for housing and unionization. As the dictatorship advanced the neoliberal project in the 1980s, policymakers set to fully integrate urban cores into the logics of financialized real estate. The second section highlights the lived experience of *Pobladores* enduring these changes, as well as the

start of a new reawakening a decade after the *coup*. In this section, I consider the testimonies of *vecinos* from Pedro del Río, as an organized, working-class neighborhood they were in one of the most difficult positions during the dictatorship. In Pedro del Río the continuation of organizing was mostly through *ollas comunes* and the support of charities through the Catholic Church.

4.1. Policies of Vulnerability

After the *coup*, the military *junta* aimed to quell any type of organization and to fully disarticulate and suppress progressive social organizations, especially any struggles for labor rights and land reform. This de-structuring came at the national level through the Decree Law 198 (1973) that redefined the conditions under which unions were able to act. In practice, this was a ban on all organization and political activity while giving power to businessowners and corporations. At the local level, this came with the Decree Law 1289 (1975) that transferred the leadership of *juntas de vecinos* and other kinds of independent organizations to the municipalities, co-opting most grassroots organizations, or placing them under the scrutiny of municipal governments. The only avenues for social organization were compromised as a result, leaving conservative religious charities and women's organizations as the only options for addressing social problems. The control sought by the government was embodied by the dictator's decision to appoint his wife, Lucía Hiriart de Pinochet as the national authority for social aid, managing charities, voluntarism, and funneling all forms of goodwill through the government with a strict policy of apolitical *asistencialismo*²⁵ (Oxhorn, 1991; T. Valdés & Weinstein, 1993).

²⁵ An institutional approach to provide aid to those in vulnerable conditions, by the government, charities, and NGOs. However, this approach could not address systemic issues or changes, and often overlapped into clientelism.

As part of the consolidation of power in municipalities, the dictatorship appointed mayors, overriding previously elected officials. In Concepción, the post of mayor was given to the local councilor Enrique van Rysselberghe Martínez, who had been mayor before, and was also a member of a prominent family from Chiguayante. The van Rysselberghe's had been mostly involved with the materials and construction industries. Enrique's father, Max founded the family business in the early 1900's, after marrying Isabel Martinez, daughter of Chile's Minister of Public Works, and later, he purchased land in the area to exploit a quarry. The family was now well positioned in the construction industry. Enrique's work was consolidated by his son Enrique Jr., who strengthened the family position by winning an elected office, founding several construction companies and leading the local office of the charity Cáritas, as well as serving as the director of Chile's Institute of Housing. Enrique Jr. also joined the Party of the Independent Democratic Coalition (*Partido Unión Democrática Independiente*; UDI), thus merging the corporate real state interest of the with politics. In short, the van Rysselberghe family was instrumental to the consolidation of conservative power in Southern Chile (Van Rysselberghe, n.d.; Resumen, 2009).

Since elite fear of a land redistribution to the working class and peasants was one of the major drivers in the overthrowing of the Popular Unity administration, the agrarian counter-reform was highly prioritized by Pinochet. As mentioned in the previous chapter, this counter reform did not rollback all of the changes of the reform. *Latifundios* were gone for good. Pinochet's agrarian policy was one of the few that retained influence from Allende's administration. The other was the expansion of housing and state-owned copper mines (Valdés & Foster, 2015; Valenzuela, 2013). Hence, these policies fall into some contradiction as they have influence from both left-wing and right-wing administrations. As a result, Pinochet's agrarian policy was tailored towards creating small landowners and incorporating all rural land into the market while erasing all traces of collective ownership. This opening of

the market, along with the thousands of new small landowners without access to credits, development grants, or machinery, caused massive land concentration as corporate land owners – some of whom were former *latifundistas* – bought smaller parcels (Bengoa, 2016; Chonchol Chait, 2018).

Like the rest of Pinochet's economic policies, the reform of the landowning system excluded working-class sectors. In the rural context, this resulted in a brutal end to the struggle of peasants and the consolidation of corporate ownership. In the urban context, however, this meant erasing all traces of previous policies and extinguishing of the achievements of *Pobladores* and previous governments, from Alessandri's to Allende's. All previous guarantees of collective ownership, housing as a right, and cooperatives, were erased. The only model of ownership was private and market-oriented. This shift started as soon as Allende's government was overthrown, but was only consolidated after the National Policy of Urban Development – *Política Nacional de Desarrollo Urbano* – was published in March 1979 (Chonchol Chait, 2018). Under this plan, housing development and other areas of urban infrastructure were granted to contractors and the government was relegated to the role of overseer and funder. This was consolidated by the credit-based subsidized housing policy (hereafter, the subsidy model) that developed during the dictatorship.

As mentioned in chapter 3.3, most of Chile's housing policies have emerged as a reaction to crises. The involvement of government in the construction of housing really started with Alessandri's administration after the Valdivia earthquake and reached its peak with Allende's Agrarian Reform. By 1973 the government did most of the tasks related to housing development and reconstruction. Although Pinochet rolled back many of Allende's policies, it continued to attempt to provide housing for the working-class. Under Pinochet the role of the state in housing development was slowly withdrawn, and many mechanisms and subsidies were created to allow the private market to build the nation's housing stock.

These were codified in 1988 under the Regulation of the General System for Unified Housing Subsidy. However, the subsidy model was engineered to steer the tenant middle-and-upper classes towards homeownership, aiming to create a stable consumer class while disregarding popular sectors (CChC, 1994; Hidalgo Dattwyler, Paulsen, et al., 2019; E. Valenzuela, 2013).

The subsidy model was also tied to the national financial sector indirectly, via the retirement funds reform created by José Piñera Echenique. The Piñera family has been a renowned conservative family, well established in several parties as functionaries and prominent within the Catholic Church. José Piñera was also one of the leaders of the Chicago Boys. He helped to create a national retirement system dominated by private enterprises and integrated with the financial system. The system was developed and implemented when José Piñera was Minister of Labour, these private enterprise are known as *administradoras de fondos de pensiones* (*pension fund administrative enterprises*; AFPs). The AFPs profit by charging fees to individual workers to administer the funds, and they also charge commissions on earnings without providing any protections for pension holders. AFPs are relevant to this study because they are an important source of finance capital for real estate construction, contracting, speculation, and development, all of which is connected to the national housing subsidy model deployed after 27F (CChC, 1994; Hidalgo Dattwyler, Alvarado Peterson, et al., 2019; Mallon, 2005).

Finally, national disaster response policy also changed significantly during the dictatorship. The ONEMI was well established by then, and in the 1980s it took a technocratic approach following international trends (Remes, 2016; Saavedra, 2021; V. Sandoval et al., 2021). However, it was put into almost complete dependence upon the national army, significantly expanding the role and influence of the latter. This led to the creation of the Hydrographic Institute of the Chilean Navy (*Servicio Hidrográfico y Oceanográfico de la Armada*

Chilena; SHOA). From then on, the ONEMI was subordinated to the SHOA where almost all of its new research partnerships, early-detection services, and prevention programs were done in collaboration with the navy.

Although there were no major earthquakes during the dictatorship, a smaller quake shook town of Algarrobo in 1985 (See Figure 2 p. 8). The town, situated a few kilometers south of Valparaíso, suffered significant material damages in its downtown. The 1985 Presidential Address explicitly exposes how the new structural policies were set to benefit the military and the private sector by syphoning off international aid via contracts. In the aftermath of the earthquake, the government sought to further its economic program which consisted of:

... Redistributing public spending, favoring investment, and reducing outgoing cashflow. This policy has been accentuated in consequence of the earthquake from last March, as this forced us to redouble our investment efforts. We will also prioritize clear excessive government regulation, with the goal of allowing for a much agile and faster performance of the private sector [in the reconstruction].

(Pinochet Ugarte, 1985, p. XVI, 27–31, 547)

Erradicación

In the most optimistic case, *erradicación* can refer to the dissolution of a camp when its inhabitants have obtained a collective subsidy and moved into it. In the context of the dictatorship, *erradicación* implies mostly dispossession. Government infographics and documents refer to *erradicación* as the relocation of camps into permanent housing – not necessarily in the same area – so this is where the term takes its name from as a concept of the government from a poverty eradication policy.

In addition to the various neoliberal policies and programs described above, the government also created policies to dispossess and displace *Pobladores* from their neighborhoods. This was done through the incorporation of all land into a market-based system of

private ownership. This program started in 1973 and lasted until 1976. First, the Decree Laws 208 and 1600 allowed the dispossession of surviving union and reform leaders from left-wing sectors of the population. Then, Indigenous land was subjected to commodification in 1979 with the Decree Law 2.568 (of Indigenous Protection and Agricultural Development). This law was passed along with the National Policy of Urban Development (Canales Tapia, 2020; Chonchol Chait, 2018; *Decreto Ley N° 1289 (MININTERIOR)*, 1975). By 1979, most land, urban, rural, or indigenous, was included within the market-based land structure. In tandem with the municipal reform that put *juntas de vecinos* and local organizations under the administration of municipalities, these policies gave national and local authorities the power to reshape the urban landscape as they saw fit. This was the writing on the wall for *Pobladores* (T. Valdés & Weinstein, 1993).

As the Pinochet administration prioritized profitable land uses and urban expansion, *poblaciones* located in the inner city were deemed too valuable to belong to *Pobladores*. Moreover, the work neighbors did to improve these *poblaciones* also added value to these areas. Framing landownership in this way led the Pinochet regime to initiate programs of *erradicación*, meaning the displacement of *Pobladores* from their neighborhoods to lower-valued land in urban peripheries. The catalyst of the displacement campaigns was the Map of Extreme Poverty, written by Miguel Kast Rist (1975). The Kast family arrived in Chile after WWII when Michael Kast Schindele, Miguel's father, a member of the Nazi Party, fled from Germany. His son Michael acquired connections in conservative politics, paving the way for his own sons, Miguel and José Antonio, to participate in politics. As one of the Chicago Boys, Miguel Kast Rist held various high-level posts during Pinochet's government. Principally, he was assigned as director of the National Planning Office (*Oficina de Planificación Nacional*; ODEPLAN) from 1978 to 1980.

The Map of Extreme Poverty detailed ODEPLAN's methodology for poverty reduction. Some *erradicaciones* took place directly afterwards, as the displacement process accelerated. The MINVU was assigned to the administration of emergency housing to carry out this process. The Housing and Urban Planning Service (*Servicios de Vivienda y Urbanización*; SERVIU) is the branch of the MINVU tasked with planning, overseeing, and implementing urban and housing policies. It was created in 1976, mostly to provide subsidies and managing contracts. In 1979, SERVIU was given the power of “assigning, selling, collecting, or expropriating the social housing and all the operations necessary to eradicate extreme poverty in the aspect of housing” (*Decreto Ley N° 2552 (V. Y U.)*, 1979).

These measures were used to send *Pobladores* towards the peripheries, providing them with emergency housing units unsuitable as permanent dwellings. The amplification of urban areas into farmlands – only possible because of the counter-reform – greatly expanded the reach of this process, displacing *Pobladores* to even more peripheral areas. The *erradicación* then fulfilled a double role for the state: an expansion of land available to the market, and a pretext to disarticulate the myriad of grassroots movements *Pobladores* were participants in (División de Desarrollo Urbano, 1979; Torres Díaz, 2020). ODELPAN's approach to poverty reduction was not to improve conditions for citizens or to address structural issues that led to it, but to reclaim valuable urban land from popular sectors, and to develop the space for the middle class and the real estate market. At its core, it was just another process of dispossession.

Finally, it is important to note that most campaigns of *erradicación* during this period took place in Santiago's urban core. This is also why the Movement of *Pobladoras* and other social movements were concentrated there during the 1980s. There were *erradicaciones* in most major cities. In Pedro del Río, the one that marked *vecinos* the most was the displacement of the *Pobladores* who were given the apartments by Allende in 1972. These *Pobladores*

obtained a collective subsidy after their homes flooded, however their new apartments were stripped away from them when Pinochet took power.

All in all, these policies made social organizing a difficult and dangerous endeavor. The kinds of organizations that remained were put under the control of appointed functionaries from municipalities or were linked to the Catholic Church. With a weakened civil society and Pinochet's land reforms in place, the project of displacement and urban transformation was set in motion. However, not all organization disappeared, practices of mutual aid resurfaced out of need due to the precarious conditions experienced by the working class. Then, resistance to *erradicaciones* were among the principal struggles that re-emerged during the dictatorship, restarting widespread community organizing after the crisis of 1982.

4.2. Civil Reawakening in the *Población*

This section starts with an account of the grievances of *vecinos* from Pedro del Río as they experienced hardship and persecution during the dictatorship. Despite the hardship they endured, there were avenues for acts of mutual aid. Then, I use the testimonies of my interviewees to highlight how solidarity was practiced in the neighborhood amongst *vecinos*, as well as with the support of charities and the Catholic Church.

By 1973, civil society had developed a wide repertoire of practices of resistance and networks of organizations, these grassroots organizations were essential to the victory of Unidad Popular. *Pobladores* were at the center of this networks, accumulating a wealth of knowledge based on experience. Some of the key practices were strikes, *tomas*, and protests, all means of direct action aimed to disrupt public services. Other efforts were *ollas comunes* – soup kitchens – a form of fulfilling basic nourishment in *poblaciones* and mitigating the misery of poverty. These practices allowed them to mitigate hardships and

pressure policy makers to pass policies that benefited them, such as the law 16.625 that allowed agricultural unions (Andrade & Pérez, 2017; *Ley N° 16.640*, 1967).

The level of organization achieved by 1973, was perceived as a major threat by the military regime and their economic project. According to the Shock Doctrine (Klein, 2008), in order to apply the new neoliberal economic paradigm, states require the fragmentation of previous social cohesion. Hence the Pinochet administration went to great lengths to uproot any undesirable ideologies and to dismantle, or transform previous structures of welfare, collectivization, or regulation. The previous section exposed some of the policies passed to achieve this goal, in addition the dictatorship also repeatedly used brutal counterintelligence tactic against any semblance of resistance (McSherry, 2009; Stern 2006). The violence of these tactics had a toll on the population, one which was felt the most by those involved in social organizing and their close ones. Ernestina, as the daughter of a social leader and union organizer, spoke about her personal experience of living under dictatorship:

Ernestina Gatica: Those who came after the '73²⁶ from rural areas to the city had a different relation with the dictatorship; [it was about] survival and that was it. They had nothing to do with the struggle, or with the ones who suffered the costs of it. My father was a leader of the *Junta de Vecinos*, a resident of the worker's union of the public works ministry, and a militant of the Communist Party. Like him, many others here in the neighborhood [suffered] – we know them, we know who they were – who got killed, who was disappeared.

Then, those who were not involved [in the struggle] tackled the matter of Popular Unity by blaming the government of President Allende when it was a matter of the right that overthrew and attempted to boycott his government, as I think can happen with Boric. ... Different realities [are being told here] in the neighborhood, but we, the ones who lived the struggle, were the ones who suffered, lamentably...

²⁶ Pinochet's *coup d'état*. People colloquially refer to it as 'the '73' as it happened on September 11, 1973.

Marcela Peñaloza, another member of one of Pedro del Río's *Junta* N. 5, expanded on Ernestina's idea, remarking how violence was not limited to urban areas and *poblaciones*, repression was also brutal in rural areas:

Marcela Peñaloza: The thing is, those who lived in the '73 had it complicated. It was impossible to be in a bubble. ... When I was around 6 or 7 years old, I saw how they [the dictatorship's military] took away the friends of my sister, my neighbors, when their mothers came back with their clothes full of blood, because they gave them [just the clothing] back.

Ernestina Gatica: Yes, it was very intense in San Rosendo.

(E. Gatica, C. Silva, M. Peñaloza, personal communication, 20 January 2022)

These testaments show that violence was one of the main methods to suppress organization, however, *erradicaciones* were also used to divide communities, as it happened in Pedro del Río briefly after Pinochet took power. The apartment complex situated beside the *Junta* No. 5 in Pedro del Río was built by the Urban Improvement Corporation (now MINVU) after several severe floods in 1970. The day before, Ernestina explained me why these buildings were so important, as they were given to some of the poorest *Pobladores*, who were reclaiming land from the banks of the river – now the *Costanera* Street (see Figure 6 p. 59) – when their shacks got swept away. The improvement that their new apartments represented was immense and brought a lot of hope for the *población* as a whole.

The housing complex was a turning point in two aspects. First, it was among the earliest projects of housing reconstruction made by the state itself, setting a precedent of intervention. Second, the *erradicación* of these *Pobladores* was a turning point for life in the neighborhood. In many aspects, the community was atomized, conditions worsened, and ongoing social struggles faded. María Valdés, leader of the *Junta de Vecinos Remodelación Zañartu*, remarked how she noticed the social division, as many of the functionaries that moved into the neighborhood after 1973 were her neighbors:

María Valdés: Our *junta* was formed by the end of the 90s, because there were a bunch of neighbors who got expropriated. [When talking to my neighbors] I realized that I talked with the son of Olgita, the other neighbor, but they did not talk to each other. No one looked at each other, no one greeted one another, nothing, absolutely nothing. I said [to them] ‘Good evening’ and [they ignored me], complete apathy. That changed after 2010.

Luis Alfoso Oñate: Most of them were *milicos*.²⁷

Ernestina Gatica: Los *Cuicos*.²⁸

María Valdés: There were many soldiers, marines, professors – well, in those years professors also believed that they belonged to another status.

Ernestina Gatica: The elite.

(María nodded)

Ernestina Gatica: Those are the buildings I told you about [She pointed at the buildings through the windows]. Those are the ones that President Allende was building for *Pobladores* of the Costanera. When the *coup* happened, they gave them away to public clerks of order and security, the army, marines, but not to *carabineros*.²⁹

María Valdés: There are also *carabineros* where I live.

Ernestina Gatica: Of course, then they were in a poor neighborhood, those who believed that they were of the high society, because they fenced up [their living quarters], so that the poor ones over here would not steal from them. There were a lot of fights. It was difficult, the acceptance. ... Before ‘73 it was a united neighborhood, working for the single objective of improving it.

The ‘73 marked a lot of people. They became self-absorbed. They started to distrust one another, [and] they taught us to distrust [as well]. It shames me to see mean spirited acts of people. But if you call to their conscience and solidarity, they do help and they start to support. However, the dictatorship damaged [our trust] profoundly and people don’t realize [it].

²⁷ Soldier.

²⁸ Derogatory term to refer to rich, conservative Chileans, or those who aspire to belong to this group.

²⁹ Militarized police.

(E. Gatica, M. Valdés, L. A. Oñate, M. Muñoz, A. Peñaloza, personal communication, 19 January 2022)

Carolina Silva, another *vecina* and member of the *Junta* N. 5, provided a different perspective as she is younger and grew up in a more conservative family. She emphasizes her family's fear of violence even when it did not occur:

Carolina Silva: My mother was a kid in the '73. She only remembers the queues. Because they were kids, they had to go to the store. ... The thing that [my mother's family] were afraid the most that my grandfather would not come back from work. What she remembers the most is that they had neighbors in the block.

Then, my grandfather worked at Huachipato Steelworks. There was an attack on the buses, precisely in the one whose workers died on that date. My mother thought he was dead, but my grandfather says that he got out late and had to take another bus.

Marcela Peñaloza: That's the thing, it is another reality because you lived then from the other front, because your family blamed Allende, deep inside, because for what you are saying, they blamed the ones on Allende's side that something happened to you.

Carolina Silva: Yes of course, because my grandfather never talked of politics. My mom says that in her house they were not allowed to talk [about] politics.

(E. Gatica, C. Silva, M. Peñaloza, personal communication, 20 January 2022)

The dictatorship created a brutal environment for *Pobladores* and social leaders. The networks of solidarity weakened, leaving an atomized population, stifling community organizing and almost erasing all sort of political activity. Social organization was never the same after 1973. Magda Sepúlveda (2011) analyzed several works of literature to explore the defeat of *Pobladores*, arguing that their role as a folk figures and forces of change was over. Instead, many saw a dreadful end of their lives in a ditch. In the same vein, the rural *Poblador* saw an even more vicious retribution, one that might have killed peasantry itself in Chile. As Bengoa (2016) puts it:

Defeat was profound. [Peasants] had hit the center of power itself ... that audacity had awful consequences ... like what happened in Paine, close to Santiago, where the Kast family was involved. ... Local police knew since the beginning. They did not need to read Marx or Althusser to know they were the repressive force of the bourgeois state. ... Because landowners would become owners again, you could smell that in the stench of 1973's savage spring.

(p. 25)

Despite the dire situation for *Pobladores* and Chileans as a whole, community organizing and acts of mutual aid did continue in several forms. However, the *poblaciones* that had previous experiences organizing were the neighborhoods where a semblance of organization and resistance remained, and where in spite of the danger, there were those who confronted the agents of the state. This fact motivated Victor Vivallo to move to Pedro del Río in 1973, he narrated that he went there from the town of Bulnes, because he heard that in Pedro del Río *Pobladores* often resisted the oppression:

Victor Vivallo: When did I came here? In the year '85, well, in reality, I got here when the dictatorship started. I stayed three months hidden in a house and when I came out, I was paler than paper (laughs).

Ernestina Gatica: And where did you come to hide! they were persecuting people here (smiling sarcastically).

Victor Vivallo: But look (Nodding), I heard that the old men from this *población* [confronted the *carabineros*], I imagine your dad was among them, and this gentleman... Don Juan Soto!

Ernestina Gatica: Gaete too!

Victor Vivallo: They and others, identified the repressors who were looking for people and they planted themselves on them, harassing them with their presence until they left. That was the way in which, I think, I chose the neighborhood. ... It is because of that relation that was between *vecinas y vecinos* that I benefitted from and had the opportunity of experiencing, even though I was not from here. ... That relation was very familiar, it was very solidary and very collective.

(V. Vivallo, E. Gatica, personal communication, 20 January 2022)

I consider that Victor's experience is an indicator of how organization remained, in some sort, in the most united neighborhoods. The rest of this section describes how this organization took place among neighbors and with the support of the Catholic Church. However, it is important to mention that this kind of organization had lost its reivindicative approach and many of its tactics, it was focused on survival and mitigating the abject economic conditions. Even in well-organized neighborhood, there was hardship, as Mirtha Muñoz, leader of the *Junta de Vecinos Santa Madre de Dios*, experienced. As Victor, she also moved to Pedro del Río, although a few years before the *coup*. When she arrived from Santiago, she noticed that her husband's family was very united, and later realized that the whole community had a strong sense of unity and solidarity. Even with that sense of unity, the living conditions under the dictatorship worsened:

Mirtha Muñoz: I got married and moved here. Then I realized how apathic people were in Santiago [because] here people were so loving, [so devoted to] solidarity, at least [compared to] where I lived [before]. My father-in-law worked in the electricity company. In my husband's family there are 5 brothers. All of them are very close. In the time of the *coup*, one of my brothers-in-law was arrested, detained in the national stadium [in Santiago]. He was beaten up, [it was] horrible. That year I got pregnant with my first son so it was very hard for me to get a call from my husband in Huachipato telling me that he was not coming home because of the *coup*. It was so hard to live that process...

(M. Muñoz, personal communication, 19 January 2022)

Life in *poblaciones* has always been difficult, especially in the more informal ones. Although the military regime amplified hardship, adversity was always accompanied by solidarity. During the two interviews, I noted how *vecinos* from Pedro del Río always contrasted their difficulties with the support of their communities. Luis Alfonso, *vecino* and treasurer of the *Junta* N. 5, recounted his experience living first in a more informal part of the *Población* and later moving to a new government-built apartments in the early 2000's. In his testimony, he

highlights how strong was the sense of community despite the difficult living situation. Ana Peñaloza, member of the same *junta* as Luis Alfonso, agreed with him:

Luis Alfonso Oñate: [Before moving to our apartments] we lived overcrowded, because there were [no streets], only alleys. All houses [and shacks] were cramped, all together. If one burned, everyone burned. That was all of us, ... however we lived happily, in any case. The bond between neighbors was super rich. In Christmas, there was a special party. We closed the passages in New Years' Eve, we took out the chicken that we cooked outside, and we celebrated with the neighbors. They were very beautiful moments, despite living with the little and nothing that we had.

... When we saw the apartments [in 2002], I was really proud because the word "apartment" did not exist for us. Those were for people with money. Then, looking at it all painted up, [it] was marvelous, like living in paradise for us. ... However, if the conditions would have been a bit better over there [in the first informal housing], I would have stayed there because of the community with our neighbors.

Ana Peñaloza: I lived in the railway sector because my father worked there. They gave him a bit of land and they made him a house. ... What Poncho says is very true; it was so united that there were those who went to the fields and brought plums. Then they gave away plum juice.

(L. A. Oñate, A. M. Peñaloza, personal communication, 19 January 2022)

However, these practices of mutual aid and organization were not new to *Pobladores*. As mentioned before, *Pobladores* worked to improve their neighborhood, this meant improving the built environment as well as the material conditions of *vecinos*. They did most of this by themselves. These communities had developed a strong sense of self-reliance and know-how. As a consequence of government neglect, they usually toiled their way into urban inclusion. In Ribera Norte, these spaces had to be literally constructed, as Aurora de Chile and Pedro del Río were slowly reclaimed from the river, instead of being taken through a *toma*. This is why the first inhabitants consider themselves as pioneers of this urban space (Revista NOS, 2015). Furthermore, all *poblaciones* were self-built to some degree, constructing

sewage, electric lines, or drawing the cadasters by themselves. *Vecinos* of Pedro del Río and Aurora perfectly understand the process of constructing the neighborhood in the social and literal sense. Victor remarked that although he arrived in Pedro del Río during its industrial prime, the quality of the housing for *Pobladores* was still precarious:

Victor Vivallo: I knew the neighborhood [Pedro del Río] in its industrial prime. That was not so long ago, if you realize. There was a pier because the coast was very irregular. It was filled with little *poblaciones*, small houses built on stilts, deep into the wetlands.

(V. Vivallo, personal communication, 20 January 2022)

In addition, Luis Alfonso narrated how it was mostly the work of the neighbors that improved the built environment in the *población*, as they carried out the brunt of the work even when they collaborated with local authorities:

Luis Alfonso Oñate: In those times [1970's], there were no *tomas*, but people took a site and fixed it. For example, [the did this] by filling it with gravel, this thing they call *escoria* [slag] that the machines throw away. With that we filled the terrain. I remember that when we lived there our place was filled with that and many families started the day filling their terrains to build a dwelling. [After getting rebuilt from a fire] we got a two-story house from the CEMA Chile. [These] were larger than the *mediaguas*³⁰ they give today, and we started to rebuild *la población*. We didn't have water or sewage, and only got a streetlight at the corner of every passageway. ... Little by little, they got us water ... and when they started with the sewage all of us – men and women – dug the canals. [Then] we had to connect it to our homes ourselves.

(L. A. Oñate, personal communication, 19 January 2022)

Then, *vecinos* had to perform all these tasks by themselves. Although *Pobladores* did this out of need, due to a lack of attention by the government, it resulted in active communities

³⁰ A small wooden structure used as emergency housing in Chile. Usually is just one 3x6m room with no bathroom or utilities (Ministerio de Planificación, 2010).

that were used to organize and collaborate to overcome hardship. During the dictatorship *Pobladores* had to do even more work as the Pinochet administration reduced government involvement in most areas. However, this had the unintended effect that in Ribera Norte, *Pobladores* surveyed and regularized their own neighborhoods, which aided them to dispute displacement attempts a few years later during the development of the Ribera Norte Project (Francisco Cordova, 2012).

As most acts of organization were forbidden during the dictatorship, *ollas comunes* became the sole environment that allowed reorganization, the only place in that could sustain some kind of social cohesion safely. Similarly, *juntas de vecinos* became the only type of organization left after the prohibition. Through them, aid from charities, volunteers, and religious organizations, was funneled to the most vulnerable and persecuted populations.

From 1934 to 1980, Chile's economic situation deteriorated, leading to the crisis of 1982. However, in their attempts to mitigate hardship and survive oppression civil society started to organize again with whatever means they had left. The crisis entered its tipping point in the late 1970's, at the same time Miguel Kast Rist started to carry on the displacement of *poblaciones* in major urban cores. The protests of 1982 started as a response to these *erradicaciones*, prompting the first period of protest since 1973 (Angelcos & Pérez, 2017). *Pobladores* re-emerged, embroiled in the struggles for housing and democracy. Even before the protests of the 1983, *Pobladores* coordinated their associations to renegotiate with the Housing Commission of the Metropolitan Region. Then, the number of organizations of *Pobladores* grew. However, during the dictatorship most *Pobladores* were concerned with surviving the repression and misery. By 1980, they had lost their revindicative approach. After 1990, some of them reaffiliated to politics. Despite all odds, they had managed to maintain their social fabric, leaving a precedent for the following generations (Oxhorn, 1991; T. Valdés & Weinstein, 1993).



Figure 7. *Pobladoras* organizing the *Olla Común* in the Cardinal Juan Francisco Fresno Camp, Santiago. Credit: Kena Lorenzini (1984) at the Gabriela Mistral Cultural Center, Santiago.

Although social leadership was decimated after 1973, social organization survived in the memory of what once was, as well as in the remaining fragments of some movements. *Juntas de vecinos*, although mostly under the jurisdiction of municipalities, retained some organization. As *ollas comunes* were mostly led by women, *Pobladoras* took the leadership as the heads of the sole safe environment for community organizing. They were usually the ones organizing *ollas comunes*, *mutualistas*, and in neighborhoods like Pedro del Río, women's unions. With the help of the Catholic Church and charities, *Pobladoras* used their experience to provide nourishing to their families and *vecinos* in need (Oliver Schneider & Zapatta Silva, 1950; Oxborn, 1991; T. Valdés & Weinstein, 1993).

According to Ernestina, before the *coup*, the *Junta* N. 5 and most other neighborhood councils were led by men. *Pobladoras* became leaders out of need, mainly because many were single mothers in *poblaciones* and had to provide for their children, hence, organizing

was imperative in order to survive the economic misery that followed 1973 (T. Valdés & Weinstein, 1993). As shown by Kena Lorenzini (Figure 7 p. 85), *ollas comunes* became part of everyday life in *poblaciones* during the dictatorship. Then, in the period from the 1982 crisis to the plebiscite of 1988, social change was led by women, mostly organized around *ollas comunes* and with the support of some sectors of the Catholic Church (Oxhorn, 1995). In the following exchange Ernestina emphasized how in Pedro del Río, this support came from a group of Belgian nuns, who organized one the soup kitchens in the neighborhood and aided those who were persecuted. She contrasted the aid the nuns provided to persecuted *vecinos* with the betrayal from members of the Christian Democratic Party, who gave-in and collaborated with the dictatorship:

Ernestina Gatica: These nuns played a preponderant role in times of dictatorship because, independently of the fact that the neighborhood was persecuted, given [the fact] that there were communists, socialists, *miristas*,³¹ [and] members of the *frente patriótico* [Manuel Rodríguez], the worst were those from the [Christian Democratic Party] that sold out the *vecinos*, my father among them. The *momios*,³² we called them, they sold out the *vecinos*, [giving their first] names and last names ... to the *milicos*. Then, the nuns played a super important part [in protecting people].

Mirtha Muñoz: Mother Luisa!

Ernestina Gatica: The blind one, Bernadette, Bernarda? They were of the Christian Doctrine³³ and they set up a canteen. They protected victims of the repression and hid people. The soup kitchen and the thing with the cheese –

(All nodded in agreement and listed the things given by the nuns: cheese and butter, clothes, milk, flour, eggs...)

³¹ Member of MIR.

³² Informal way to refer to a politically active conservative person.

³³ Ernestina did not refer to them as adherents of Liberation Theology but this is likely what they were. During the Cold War, advocates of Liberation Theology were very active in Latin America where they offered aid to left-leaning organization and marginalized citizens and were themselves persecuted by authoritarian regimes.

Ernestina Gatica: Just in the '90s, I remember, they gave me a knitted shawl because I had to be warm and healthy to work [outside] in the neighborhood.

María Valdez: They were Belgian.

Ernestina Gatica: I would say that they saved a lot of lives, especially those families that were more precarious, like those in the Costanera Blanco Norte. ... They even gave me an envelope with money when they found out that I had cancer. ... They were always attentive, always concerned.

Another participant explained how she was mostly absent from community organizing and political activity, but was able to receive and provide aid volunteering for the *olla común*, organized by the Catholic Church:

Undisclosed Participant: I met Ernestina through my husband. He went to the meetings. ... I was always isolated. My approach was with the religious community of Pedro del Río; I was friend with them because I had always been very Catholic. [Catholic] mass I never missed. I started to work with the nuns, teaching catechism to kids, to go out a little. ... The nuns had a canteen and that is how I started.

Ernestina: A solidary soup kitchen for kids.

Anita: Yes, on Lastarria. In fact, that canteen saved lives in times of dictatorship.

The undisclosed *vecina* then recalled that she volunteered with the nuns when they aided striking workers at the mill, even organizing an *olla común* for them:

Undisclosed Participant: It was a beautiful and secret work that the nuns were making. We reunited and discussed all the problems of the *vecinos*. I was there participating. ... There we looked at the problems of those in economic need. I recall when there was a strike at the Santa Rosa Mill workers were there for... I don't know, two or three months without pay. They didn't get salaries because they [wanted] improved conditions.

María Valdés: And they also did *ollas comunes*.

Undisclosed Participant: Then the nuns were in the soup kitchens. We went in the evening to knead and we made loaves like this [showing me the size of a large loaf]. We gave away a loaf of bread per family.

They also pointed out how other religious organizations helped, even providing recreative camps for youth, giving access to scouting development to all children. Finally, Ernestina speculated that a lot of this aid was possible because there were nuns in charge, instead of priests:

Ernestina Gatica: The nuns also built an organization, what is it called?

(‘CEVAS’ the rest replied – a Solidary Vacation Center)

Ernestina Gatica: Then, they took the kids to camps.

Undisclosed Participant: CEVAS, then there were The Friends of Jesus for the little kids, The Helpers for teenagers, but all of us worked for the same cause – kids, parents, everyone.

Ana Peñaloza: They [CEVAS] went in the morning to the fair at Vega Monumental to ask [for donations].

Undisclosed Participant: yes, we had partners there that gave us donations!

Ana Peñaloza: And then they gave us a little bag with vegetables to take home, to everyone.

Ernestina Gatica: Despite that the Church is also sexist because the priest does it all –

Undisclosed Participant: But at the time, there was no priest. Then, we worked in secrecy to help.

Ernestina Gatica: When the coup happened, only the nuns were left. [They were] doing a very important job and I think that if there would have been a priest they would not have been able to achieve what they did. At the time, there [existed] only them and the CEVAS, this group... Tralahuapi, of scouts, it is worthy to highlight them because they helped many out of hunger and cold.

(E. Gatica, A. Peñaloza, Undisclosed Participant, personal communication, 19 January 2022)

In short, some sectors of the Catholic Church collaborated with *Pobladoras* and *juntas de vecinos* not only to organize the *ollas comunes*, but to support in other ways and to provide spaces for safe social organizing. Although most political organizing was still out of the

picture, these spaces allowed *Pobladores* to maintain basic forms community organizing in order to mitigate the hardship of the regime. During the dictatorship, *vecinos* also kept regularizing their neighborhood, improving the material conditions for those in the *población* despite the difficulty of the regime and the constant floods.

The experience of *Pobladores* performing a continuous labour of reconstruction, as well as with community organizing, has made them extremely valued in intersectional social struggles. As such, they, along with students, have been at the forefront of social organization. The dictatorship stifled past social advances, organizations, and took away a lot of the experience acquired up to 1973, however these sectors of the population were key in restarting these processes. In the late 1980s and during the 1990s, educational institutions and *poblaciones* were the places where the organization of civil society was re-rooting itself.

4.3. Summary

Before 1973, the means to respond to natural disasters was shared between citizens – through their networks and practices of solidarity – and increasingly the state would participate as well through.. However, the oppression of grassroots organizations caused the atomization of Chilean society, which led a loss of organizations and practices of solidarity. Moreover, despite the government's attempts to build a solid technocratic apparatus for disaster resilience, housing, and reconstruction, it fell short. This technocratic framework failed because the resources and capabilities needed for these institutions to work were absent in the neoliberal system. I call these policies of vulnerability because they produced left a legacy of vulnerability in the lives and communities of Chilean citizens. When the dictatorship ended in 1990, the remaining disarticulated civil society as well as the eroded Chilean state did not have the proper methods for a resilient response and reconstruction.

The policies that affected social organizing the most were the Decree Laws 198 and 1289, the first restructured or outlawed unions while the second gave control of *juntas de vecinos* to municipalities. These policies weakened communities, relegating the social organizing that remained to apolitical charities, municipally appointed *juntas de vecinos* and organizations linked to the Catholic Church. Moreover, Pinochet's marked-oriented counter-reform facilitated a consolidation of land in the hands of corporate groups and many *Pobladores* were displaced. While the neoliberal housing policies of Pinochet's government put *Pobladores* in an even more precarious situation, it was also his policies that prompted widespread protest and reignited social organizing (Chonchol Chait, 2018; Torres Díaz, 2020; T. Valdés & Weinstein, 1993).

As ODEPLAN carried out *erradicaciones* and the economic situation deteriorated, causing the economic crisis of 1982, social organization re-emerged, supported by the Catholic Church and NGOs (Oxhorn, 1995). The experiences of *vecinos* from Pedro del Río are a testament of both the hardships *Pobladores* underwent during the dictatorship and of their resilience, as they held on to whatever means to organize they had left. The displacement of their neighborhoods in 1973 and the persecution of the left-leaning leadership deeply marked the *población*. Despite this, their *junta* remained organized – under the influence of the municipality – and they relied on NGOs and the Catholic Church to mitigate precarity.

From the 1973 to 1982, women slowly reorganized civil society through *ollas comunes*, one of the few practices of organization still allowed by the dictatorship (T. Valdés & Weinstein, 1993). In Pedro del Río a group of nuns and volunteering *vecinas* organized this. *Pobladoras* became the leaders of the new cycle of protest from 1982 onwards. Despite that since the dictatorship civil society has struggled in a more adverse environment, with less means of organization, the memory of past organization remained, it reignited in 1983, and has continued to rekindle ever since (Angelcos & Pérez, 2017).

5. Social Reawakening from the *Concertación* to 2010

The economic crisis of 1982 caused a series of protests, the firsts were in response to the *erradicaciones* of *Pobladores* carried out by ODEPLAN. However, as time passed these protests included other struggles which focused on the poor management of the economy and the dictatorship's human rights abuses. Then, with the support of civil society, a political movement started to form which brought together which brought together a center-left political coalition that aimed to depose Pinochet. For many reasons, the dictatorship permitted this movement known as the Concertacion to sponsor a plebiscite in 1988. When the plebiscite passed, rejecting the continuation of the dictatorship, it prompted national election, and in 1990, the first post-dictatorship government came into office, led by Patricio Aylwin (1990-1994). Aylwin's government was the first of four consecutive administrations led by the Concertación, from 1990 to 2010.

When the Concertación first came into power, hopes were high. However, these administrations did not live up to the expectations of Chileans, as the new post-dicatorship government continued the economic project set by the dictatorship. As well, the Concertación permitted and at times encouraged the consolidation of corporate arrangements and socioeconomic structures. These administrations built upon, and expanded, Pinochet's neoliberal project. The advancement of the neoliberal project under the Concertación was marked by the expansion of financialization in more areas of Chilean society, including housing policy. As regulations became more flexible, financial systems became incorporated into more aspects of the real estate market, and the role of corporations in the real estate market expanded. The result was an erosion of social housing and an increasingly stratified urban morphology, subjected to the market. Hidalgo Dattwyler et al. (2019, p. 397) define this transformation as housing extractivism.

The continuation of Pinochet's economic policies was a source of frustration for many Chileans, especially vulnerable sectors of the population and the left. Grassroots participation was a major factor on the victory of the Concertación in the plebiscite of 1988 and the elections of 1989 was due to the overwhelming support by the MIR and Chile's left-wing parties. These organizations were greatly supported by *Pobladores* and the de-commodification of housing was part of their agenda, hence, for these sectors, the continuation of Pinochet's policies represented a reversal on the Concertación's campaign promises (Oxhorn, 1991; Özler, 2012). That said, in contrast with the dictatorship, the Concertación attempted to mitigate economic hardships, ramping up the housing subsidy program. However, the reduction of poverty and homelessness was unachievable without a departure from the neoliberal model. The social housing program created segregated urban landscapes, where *Pobladores* lived in apartments without access to services, infrastructure, or jobs, isolated from the urban fabric. This situation caused the rise of the concept of 'housing with city.' The Concertación's reformist approach to housing policy led to the post-dictatorship housing crises of 1997 and 2004 (Fuster Farfán, 2019; Hidalgo Dattwyler, Alvarado Peterson, et al., 2019; Hidalgo Dattwyler, Paulsen, et al., 2019; P. B. Rodríguez, 2019).

The objective of this chapter is to give the reader a clear understanding of the consequences that the continuation of Pinochet's policies in housing had in the pre-27F socio-economic context. The processes I focus on in this chapter represented the unwillingness of the Concertación to transition away from the dictatorship, reproducing and expanding upon its neoliberal basis. For vulnerable sectors of the population these policies meant perpetuating their cycles of hardship, and for the middle-class it meant tying their futures to acquiring debt. This prompted the immediate political climate before 2010, which was marked by the emergence of social movements in response to problematics caused by Chile's neoliberal economic model. Hence, these processes are key to understand the

immediate context by 2010, as well as some of the actors and policies that shaped the reconstruction and the social movements that emerged after 27F.

The period that followed 1990 was very active in many fronts, especially during the 2000's, as such I decided to focus on the interplay of three processes related to Chile's housing policies. The first process is the consolidation of Chilean housing development policy – remarkably social housing – under the subsidy model, this model is the main framework for housing development and acquisition in Chile. The subsidy model is a key set of policies essential to understand housing policy. It was under the framework of this model that the reconstruction after 2010 was applied, hence, the reconstruction process itself was constrained by the inherited limitations of this system. The second process is an overview of the Ribera Norte Project, a development project that attempted to permanently change the urban structure of Concepción at the expense of *Pobladores* from the neighborhoods of Ribera Norte (Pedro del Río Zañartu, Aurora de Chile). It is important to note that this was the same project that was used by functionaries to push for post-disaster gentrification after 27F. Lastly, a brief portrait of the landscape of social organization during the transition period (1988-2010). At the local level these movements continued the practices of self-reliance and organization of *Pobladores* in Ribera Norte, factors that shaped the citizens' resistance to gentrification after 27F. At the national level, the neoliberal status quo was put into question, with particular resistance to processes of financialization. After 27F, these national movements were key in propelling the reconstruction to the national level.

5.1. The Subsidy Model

The subsidy model for housing was codified by Supreme Decree N. 44 of 1988. This decree consolidated the many ways in which the government subsidized the development of new housing, and it became the base framework of housing policy ever since. This subsidy model is peculiar because it attempted to fulfill the housing goals of Pinochet's administration

under a privatized system. In short, this system is a collection of policies that allow citizens to split the cost of purchasing a home between a deposit, a mortgage, and a subsidy, diminishing upfront costs. The system was originally meant to provide home ownership to the middle classes, while also provided some forms of subsidies for working-class families. Since then it has expanded, including many forms of social housing, collective housing, and reconstruction subsidies for materials, relocation, or rebuilding. This section examines the subsidy model as a way to understand the contradictions and tensions between two kinds of state impulses with regard to housing: interference in the economy to ensure the development of housing on one hand and on the other hand, attempts of policymakers to allow the market to manage housing according to a neoliberal framework. This is Chile's housing conundrum. Moreover, this system is the most important precondition that defined the way in which the reconstruction was conducted by the government after 2010 earthquake.

The subsidy model emerged in a complex political environment, marked by the economic crisis of 1982. By then, the extremely precarious economic reality of many Chileans by 1982 proved to be a clear failure of the dictatorship's early economic policies. Despite the oppression and threat of violence, community organizing restarted, which lead to a snowballing effect of coalitions between social organizations, NGOs, and political parties, resulting in the Concertación. The Concertación and other social movements paved the way for the plebiscite of 1988 that was held to determine if the military government would continue. The result was 'no.' Despite the fact that this marked the end of Pinochet's government, Chilean society was already completely rearranged, consolidating the *latifundistas*, businessowners, and policymakers into a corporate elite (Bengoa, 2016; Mallon, 2005; A. Valdés & Foster, 2015). As Soederberg (2010, p. 82) explains, this reconfiguration "is more than an economic institution and a legal structure over which either managers or financial capitalists

possess effective control ... Beneath this veneer lies a complex and dynamic social relation that reflects, and is rooted in, the power, struggles and contradictions of capitalist society.”

The Concertacion’s attempt to continue the neoliberal model of the dictatorship produced many contradictions in the Chilean subsidy model. The subsidy model attempts to create a small owner-class, providing access to land ownership to the middle class. The subsidy model was envisioned as a way to achieve this within a neoliberal system, limiting state intervention. The model relies not only on subsidies, but on mortgages and private capital to function, as such it is now embedded into Chile’s financial sector. Although the system has been heralded as a success, it is still dependent on government intervention and aid, especially due to the hazard-prone geography of Chile (French-Davis, 2010; Hidalgo Dattwyler, Alvarado Peterson, et al., 2019; Piñera, 2009).

How does this system work for citizens? The subsidy model relies on the so-called perfect triad: savings, mortgage, and subsidies. There are many modalities, which are established by the Ministry of Housing (MINVU). Once a citizen has access to any of the modalities, they can apply directly to the MINVU for the subsidy. Once approved by the MINVU, its Housing and Urban Planning Service (SERVIU) takes over the process. Under most circumstances the applicant should have a down payment and a pre-approved mortgage with a private bank, once approved SERVIU covers a portion of the cost, usually for a new or used unit. In the case of collective subsidies, once a group of *Pobladores* are established in a sector they can demand for it, in that case the SERVIU will provide the land³⁴ and *Pobladores* will select a certified private construction firm to design and develop the project. Most reconstruction subsidies give vouchers to purchase materials on big-box hardware stores.

³⁴ In the case of *poblaciones* the land can be acquired by a *toma*, then legalized through the SERVIU. However, in many cases the SERVIU just offers new land in urban peripheries (Hidalgo Dattwyler, Alvarado Peterson, et al., 2019; Tapia Zarricueta, 2011).

Those whose housing is deemed uninhabitable by a local government can apply for a subsidy to purchase a new unit in a risk-free area. If an entire neighborhood is affected, citizens can apply for a collective subsidy to redevelop their neighborhood. All subsidies, except those for reconstruction, are accessible only once in a lifetime (CChC, 1994; Dattwyler et al., 2021; Tapia Zarricueta, 2011).

The subsidy model's provisions that allow collective bargaining and ownership resemble those established during the mixed-economy period (1958-1970). However, under present-day provisions the state role is relegated as an overseer and a funding source (CChC, 1994; P. B. Rodríguez, 2019). The dictatorship reduced the role and faculties of the MINVU, and also consolidated the re-structuring of urban space, merging financial systems with housing policy, opening the way for corporate consolidation of real-estate markets. In conjunction, these two factors made the collective provisions more difficult to achieve and strengthened the familial networks that were being developed by the 1970. The absorption of the MINVU and other government systems into the corporate model, resulted in a "commodified, individualistic, and spatially fragmented welfare" (Hidalgo Dattwyler, Alvarado Peterson, et al., 2019; Hidalgo et al., 2020). To many Chileans, the willingness of the Concertación to further this project was a defeat, a sign of the success of the dictatorship in maintaining and reproducing the capitalist extractive system and local structures of power. Pinochet's counter-reform continued the goal that led Alessandri and Frei to establish systems of transition to land ownership: that of creating small landowners, and consumers.

In their opinion piece, Medel and Alfredo Rodríguez (2009) reflect "[We] Chileans do not count with a proper affordable housing policy: we have one of financing cheap houses," while signaling at the shortcomings of the housing policies and their focus on increasing the quantity of housing units, the authors lament not only the lack of quality on the units built, but the lack of integration and segregation of affordable housing, producing what

Chilean academics call ‘housing without city.’ They ends their article with the phrase “And the poor, each time further away,” as they get pushed to the peripheries and are deprived of access to services and infrastructure that would otherwise mitigate their situation. I emphasize this as building as many homes as possible has been a staple promise of all administrations since Frei until now, never reaching the goal of 100 thousand units (V. Alvarado Peterson, personal communication, 7 July 2021).

Initially, the Concertacion’s focus on subsidizing cheap social housing projects led to a reproduction of peripheries surrounding urban centers, creating fragmentated and segregated urban landscapes that generate a myriad of new problematics for the citizens that are new owners. For former *Pobladores*, the initial model of the 1990’s evolved; after the 2000’s, it became a tool to gentrify pericentral areas and to consolidate real estate capital (Fuster Farfán, 2019; Hidalgo et al., 2020).

While the subsidy model may have been useful, providing many Chileans with access to ownership, it has serious shortcomings. First, as Dr. Voltaire Alvarado (personal communication, 7 July 2021) explained, the model attempted to consolidate a multitude of pre-existing paths to landownership, while also being the framework for future ones. This caused an intricate model, which is difficult to navigate:

The Supreme Decree N° 44 of 1988 was the last decree that the dictatorship passed. Its objective was to stay in a monolithic form, as a model to reproduce all urban subsidies. ... None of the post-dictatorship governments modified it, with exception of the first decade of the Christian Democratic [Party]. Not only they do not alter it, but they formulate everything that they pass on the decree 44. The Chilean State, to the years 2009-2016, had 27 programs and subsidies working almost simultaneously. [In contrast] the Mexican and Colombian cases had 3 paths, the Argentinian 2 paths, Uruguay had 1, and Brazil 1 path with branches. ... The Chilean case gets absurd!

Under the dictatorship these subsidies were mostly individual and tailored towards the middle-class. However, there were some grand-fathered-in modalities from previous administration, providing debt-free subsidies. Later, the Concertación worked to increase in the inclusion of low-income sectors on the subsidy model. This included collective subsidies, which are the ones most commonly applied by *Pobladores*. However, most of these low-income subsidies are partial, and debt-free subsidies are disappearing. Dr. Voltaire Alvarado then explained to me why in Chile the struggle for housing in Chile is not for four walls and a roof, but one against ‘housing without city,’ as under the Concertación, the subsidy model served to expand financialized housing logics, indebting low-income Chileans for poorly built housing units in segregated urban peripheries:

The fundament[al quality] of the subsidy is that it does not correspond to the complete value of the house. [Although] there [exist] what we [understand as] social housing without debt, [which] is disappearing. [In contrast] mortgage-based subsidies are strengthening. Today [the latter] is called subsidy for the emerging sector, and it comes hand in hand with the Decreto Supremo N°1 of 2011.

Rodrigo Hidalgo claims that in Chile housing is built without city, and sometimes, without organization. ... What subsidies have involved the state in a market, that without its intervention [the market] would be too volatile.

(V. Alvarado Peterson, personal communication, 7 July 2021)

Even though some of the pre-1988 subsidies can be found grandfathered-in, most were consolidated under the Supreme Decree No. 44 of unified subsidy, as Dr. Alvarado explained. The application of the subsidy model to non-affordable housing made it a tool to expand the financial market and open the way for subsidized gentrification. Although it initially had provisions to ensure that subsidies only went towards new units, in 1993 the unified subsidy model was expanded with a rent-to-own program called *Leasing Habitacional*. This reintegrated otherwise established rental properties to the market through real-estate companies

through a bank or AFPs, consolidating the financialization of all housing (*Ley N° 19.281 (V. Y U.)*, 1993). As Dr. Alvarado points out, the contradiction of the subsidy model is that it attempts to fulfill and adapt to the diverse demands of citizens, while still safeguarding corporate interest and beholden to the market. This has resulted in a model which is exceptionally complex as well as, simultaneously, radically utilitarian, and radically ideological. This complexity translates into an additional barrier for those without readily access to specialized knowledge of the intricacies of this system (V. Alvarado Peterson, personal communication, 7 July 2021; Hidalgo Dattwyler, Alvarado Peterson, et al., 2019).

Although some actors have worked to include methods in which the citizenry can negotiate and request the implementation of their demands, it is all within a model that reproduces the financialized logics of market-economies. Here, actors such as real-estate enterprises, subsidiaries, and construction corporations, have the upper hand as they are fully integrated within the statutes of housing policies. Meanwhile, civil society also has access to this model, but often lacks tools to navigate its extremely complex bureaucratic environment. Although there is a strong presence of professional voluntarism, it is a fragmented and tough model which can be hostile to citizens; even more so for those seeking to preserve communal ownership and collective housing arrangements. In addition, in Chile, the attempts to introduce as much of the population as possible into the financialized system in tandem with the deregulated financial market, has pushed an unsustainable indebtedness among the population. The amount of capital that has consolidated through mortgages, subsidies, and the value of real estate itself, has made of developers and real estate companies a major pillar of Chilean financial system. On the whole, the expansion of extractive corporate models on the housing market represents a conundrum by itself, its ramifications of the context of post-disaster aggregated with the myriad of challenges that come

with the process or reconstruction alone (Casgrain, 2010; Hidalgo Dattwyler, Alvarado Peterson, et al., 2019; Lefebvre, 2003).

The subsidy model is an essential part to understand Chile's housing policies as a whole as well as the reconstruction process, as it was completely applied under the same framework. The subsidy model provided the policy basis that defined who was able to benefit from the reconstruction process, and to what extent. However, due to its intricate links to Chile's financial sector, the subsidy model also expanded the reach of financialized logics onto previously unreached *poblaciones* or already established ones.³⁵

5.2. The *Ribera Norte* Project

During the 1980's, the northern shore of the Biobío River was greatly regularized, mostly by the efforts of the citizens of Pedro del Río and Aurora de Chile. Although *poblaciones* are sometimes perceived only as shantytowns, it was different by the 1990's. For instance, there were rising middle-class sectors, mostly belonging to those families that became established at the start of the 20th century. Most *Pobladores* came from the farmlands and replicated their ways there. They had large terrains with animals. With the decades, these terrains were transformed into well-built and spacious homes. While the debris of 1939 and 1960 earthquakes were used in the reclamation of the river, it was after the embankment done by citizens in 1975 that the waterfront was really stabilized. Subsequently, it greatly reduced the risk and scale of flooding, as well as of tuberculosis outbreaks. To illustrate this, María Valdés (personal communication, 19 January 2022), a *vecina* of Pedro del Río, described the situation before the embankment as one of constant struggle and risk:

³⁵ This can be considered a process of expansion because many of these *poblaciones* were never formerly introduced into the real estate market. Instead they were a result of a *toma* or river reclamation in Ribera Norte, passed directly to *Pobladores* through a collective subsidy. Once owned, these properties usually remain in possession of the family.

[The river] reached until the railway, which was further away where the regional government is today. I remember from pictures that homes were made of cardboard, nylon, a lot of homeless people lived near the river ... they looked for refuge and made homes over the river. I even came here in the '82-'83 to help people when it flooded. The river reached the *plaza*, and then they channeled it and built [the levee]. [But] my point is, people were taking life from the river, to build the *Costanera*, but they were dying too, because they came, made their homes, and it happened that when it rained the little houses fell. I even remember that it happened to people with babies.

During the early 1990's, the government built a dike, expanding the Zañartu Avenue. This prepared the coastline for the construction of the Llacolén Bridge and further reduced the risk of flooding. Although that has been positive for the neighborhood, it also cut their access to the river. As previously mentioned by Luis Alfonso, citizens had expanded the coastline and started to regularize it (See Figures 6 p. 59 & 8 p. 102), they also installed the sewage, public lightning, built sidewalks, paved streets, and drew their cadasters. The neighborhood was so consolidated that even the Municipality of Concepción rented buildings there, overcoming the informality of the sector (Ampuero Cárdenas, 2016; Revista NOS, 2015). By the 1990's, Ribera Norte had become a desirable location. However, the urban transformation of Greater Concepción added to this. There was a growing need of connection to Chiguayante, and growing suburbs like Andalué and El Venado across the river (See Figure 11 p. 146). In consequence, the importance of the Costanera as a transit corridor exploded. It was a perfect connection between the core of Concepción to the southern shore and a direct route between the cities of Chiguayante and Talcahuano (Matus Madrid et al., 2016; MINVU, 2001).

The central status of Concepción in Southern Chile elevated these interests to a nationwide priority. Hence the government of Patricio Aylwin (1990-1994) planned the Urban Recovery Project *Norte Río Biobío*. It was latter implemented by the administration of Frei Ruiz-Tagle (1994-1999). The renovation program brought together funding of all levels: municipal, regional, federal, and even international funds. This resulted in a quasi-utopian plan

for the riverfront. This United Nations-sponsored program aimed to improve the urban environment of Ribera Norte. For this program, Ribera Norte was delimited as a long stretch on the northern shore of the Biobío, from the river delta in Hualpén, to Hualqui in the east (MINVU, 2001).



Figure 8. Comparison of Ribera Norte before the Ribera Norte Project started (1995) and the contemporary state of the area (2022) Left: A bird's-eye view of Pedro del Río and Aurora de Chile in Ribera Norte (1995). Right: Satellite Imagery of Ribera Norte (2022). Generated in QGIS with data from MINVU (2001).

The underbelly of the project was the question of who the benefited party would be. There were three sections destined to social housing in Pedro del Río. Three sections in which they were explicitly designed to house the families of Cerro Chepe, Pedro del Río Zañartu, and Aurora de Chile. Although the plan included apartment blocks for *Pobladores*, most of them would lose their plots of land. By the 1990's, the sector was more developed, leaving only a few patches of shantytowns. When the Ribera Norte Project started to be developed, it became evident that the solution for citizens was only an afterthought as officials mostly attempted to work participatorily in order to organize the eviction of the citizens. Their priority was not to establish the families in better conditions, but to increase the economic potential of the area by opening the land reclaimed by *Pobladores* to the real estate market. The government tried to push the proposal with an apolitical rhetoric while using the partnership of the United Nations and the language from the Habitat II and III conferences to convince the citizenry that they were benefiting from the program. The project managed to recover some lands, especially those belonging to the railway company where they built the Civic Neighborhood and gathered investments for the *Mall-Plaza Mirador Bío-Bío*. Neighbors, however, did not budge. The project relied on a private-public model and self-funding – which depended on the recovering and sale of recovered land. Without incoming funds from additional land acquisitions, the project stalled, as it was unable to create a real-estate offer (Baeriswyl et al., 2017; Matus Madrid et al., 2016; MINVU, 1996, 1999, 2001).

While interest was consolidated in the riverfront of Concepción, towards the east in Chiguayante, a process was repeating itself. By 1970, most of the municipality was designated as farmland, however during the 1990's it started to attract rural immigrants as the influence of Concepción expanded. As time went by and the influence of Concepción grew, Chiguayante did too. The city is situated in a key position along the northern shore of the Biobío River. In the south-eastern corner of the city is the *Población* of Villa Futuro, securing

a privileged position. It developed as a united working-class neighborhood and saw an unimpeded period of advancement from camp to neighborhood, from the 1990's to 2010. Barbara Orrego was among those who moved to Villa Futuro and built the neighborhood. She is also a former union leader and current representative of the *Junta de Vecinos Villa Futuro*. She told me how these interests have influenced the *población*:

Villa Futuro was born in the nineties. ... We got here in the nineties, to the periphery, because this was the periphery of Concepción. Then, we applied [for a subsidy] to SERVIU. At the time, we applied directly, paying dividends for 15 years, and we had some apartments which fell with the earthquake. ... So, we got here. As I told you, this *población*, which was peripheric, was worthless and nobody gave a peso for it. We were organized and we lived here from the 90's until the earthquake. Everything was organized, no one was thinking of leaving. We raised or children here. All of us were a family, but with the earthquake everything changed. Now we are building a new villa.

... With the years, we improved [the Población], and an interest for the river emerged. There were projects to make a bridge, a highway, a park. Then we saw there was an interest, an economic interest from the government of Sebastian Piñera to take the terrains declaring them vacant lots. That meant that the developers would buy at a very low price. It was a gravy train because the directors of the SERVIU that Sebastián Piñera appointed were all entrepreneurs, owners of construction companies ...

(B. Orrego Gallegos, personal communication, 8 January 2022)

Although Orrego makes the connection to the earthquake early on, the basis of these interests for the whole Ribera Norte were set, even before the project was announced. They only started to materialize when the conditions converged under the Frei Ruiz-Tagle, especially political interests, as the displacement of *poblaciones* was difficult, even to the dictatorship and their brutal tactics. The hopes for the stakeholders were that the optimism of the Concertación would smooth the process as it did in the other projects that consolidated neoliberal logics. Finally, Orrego's mentions of Piñera and his appointees at the SERVIU heralds a trend that it is important to pin down, which is the involvement of real-estate and

construction industries in politics, consolidating corporate power and logics in government. While the van Rysselberghe family is the clearest example of this at the local level, the Ribera Norte Project is an example of how under the Concertación the practices of displacement developed during the dictatorship were still occurring, albeit in a less oppressive form.

5.3. Social Organization During the Transition

This section is an overview on how the transition to democracy reignited social organizing after the most repressive years of the dictatorship, and how some housing struggles re-emerged years after. The formation of the Concertación and the deposition of Pinochet were the largest nation-scale struggles by the late 1980's. The transition to democracy, was a process that according to official accounts ended when the Concertación stated its government in 1990 with Patricio Alwyn's administration (1990-1994). However, many still referred all the following governments as governments of the transition because they continued the processes that the dictatorship set in motion. That continuity implied a failure to successfully transition to democracy, away from the structures set by the military regime. The systemic issues caused by the continuation of the neoliberal model led to a re-emergence of housing-related struggles and other nation-wide movements in the 2000's, these movements resisted processes caused by the neoliberal model and were key in supporting and informing the movement for the reconstruction after the 2010 earthquake.

In many neighborhoods, the idea of transitioning to democracy in the late 1980's led to a reinvigoration of participation in politics. In Pedro del Rio, this moment revitalized their *juntas de vecinos* and led them to re-democratize the *Junta N. 5*, as it had been under jurisdiction of the municipality due to Pinochet's municipal reforms. It is important to notice that many neighborhoods first got organized during the plebiscite of 1988. This was the case for Ana Peñaloza's neighborhood. Peñaloza's experience is an example of how this process was lived at the local level, this is important as the Concertación was only successful due to an

overwhelming support from grassroots organizations. However, this goes beyond the *Concertación*, as most neighborhood remained involved afterwards, leaving reconnected communities with experience organizing. Ana Peñaloza was instrumental in the re-democratization of the *Junta N. 5*. She told to me how civil participation for the plebiscite led her and her friends to democratize the neighborhood council:

Ana Peñaloza: It started when I was young. It all started with a group of youth, in a house by the river. I don't know how I ended up in that house, but I fell in love with the *cabros*.³⁶ They were *cabros*, junkies you see. They were making their house and I arrived in that precise moment, ... but in the inside they were clean and had strong willpower. That was during the [years of] '84, '85. So I started to stick with them and they sang. We would sing until dawn. ... but do you know what hurt them? They won [small grants], a radio, a TV, and they wanted to grab it and take it out, to get high, but some resisted. Until one day, three or four years later, they got into a fight and they dismantled the house, dividing the house, a pile of planks each, because they fought for the radio and TV.

In that group was Marcelo Gaete and Elvira. We [got together] and discovered politics. [There were others] interested and wanted us to go to their reunion, but we told them to come here to get their feet dirty, in a poor house surrounded by filth. [There was] a bunch of trash outside, but I think I liked it because of the unity of the people. Then it was the campaign for the 'no' and this thing with the president.³⁷

Ernestina Gatica: The candidates for the senate, deputies, and the president of the republic.

Ana Peñaloza: What was the name of the president?

Ernestina Gatica: Patricio Elwyn.

Ana Peñaloza: It's hard for me to pronounce it, and you know what? We [gave it all] working on that. They lent us a house in Desiderio Sanhueza and we went there every day. I don't know how I could be all day in the streets, we went out every day. Then we went tagging and I was watching. They were tagging cars

³⁶ Colloquial term to describe young boys or kids.

³⁷ Here she refers to the plebiscite of 1988 and the presidential elections of 1989.

and then the *tiras*³⁸ arrived ... with machineguns. In dictatorship, I had never seen a machinegun so close. They detained us. They wanted to dismantle us. There was nothing else to do, but a bunch of us said ‘but how are we going to go home and not organize the *junta de vecinos*?’ and then it was born. [At the beginning] I didn’t know Ernestina. We thought she had an angry face, but then Mr. Soto arrived and saw her and told us ‘No, I know Ernestina. She is the daughter of a friend of mine.’ Then we realized that it was possible and people rallied for the elections.

(A. Peñaloza, E. Gatica, personal communication, 19 January 2022)

After getting organized to support the plebiscite against Pinochet’s administration, and subsequently the elections for the Concertación, represented by Patricio Elwyn, their *junta de vecinos* remained not only together but democratic. The first group leaders of the democratized *Junta N. 5* can be pictured in Figure 9 (p. 109). Then, a few years later in the mid 1990’s, as the Ribera Norte Project started to take form, Ernestina told me that they struggled as they wanted to take away their clinic to make space for the project. Vecinos not only managed to maintain their clinic (now known as the Family Health Center Juan Soto Fernandez) in the neighborhood, but they also managed to obtain a terrain to build a community center for the elderly and house the *Junta N. 5*. This process was mostly led by Ernestina Gatica. She narrated me how she was able to obtain the space they currently have, maintaining it as a sort of communal property for the *Junta N. 5* and the community process, carrying out all the paperwork and land transfers herself:

It was a struggle with the communal authority. When organizing the neighborhood, what happens is that you face all kinds of proceedings and authorities. In the case of social leaders who are critical, autonomous, independent, it’s difficult to relate with authorities because they want submissiveness. They want you to serve them, not the other way around, and it is the opposite here.

Then, we had this conflict for this space [the communal center we were in] in the time of Proyecto Ribera Norte, of *erradicación* of the *Pobladores*. We claimed

³⁸ Colloquial word for soldier.

this in the year '98 when they wanted to remove the clinic. ... There was a conflict between the communal health authority and the health authority of CESVAM, the clinic back then, because they took the decision in secret to remove the clinic from here. ... I was recovering from cancer back then and Mr. Soto was replacing me, but he died then.

Everything came together, and the neighbors came and told me, so I contacted the mayor Don Ariel Ullóa. We did the meeting and he told me [to propose something], and I did. I told him about this terrain [from *Bienes Marítimos*]³⁹ which was a vacant lot and that we had to work to obtain it for the clinic. He made some quick calls. He was neurotic and efficient. He told me that they can't do it themselves, that I had to handle it. The *junta de vecinos*, then *Bienes Marítimos*, passed the land to *Bienes Nacionales*.⁴⁰ From there, we demanded it be transferred to SERVIU – and they are the owners of this block. ... Then SERVIU managed the process to give it to the municipality, with the condition of that this space as well as the infrastructure from the old clinic went to the *junta de vecinos*. That's how it got written and consecrated by all authorities. Then, when we fought to get the resources for the new clinic they moved there and some of the buildings left were left in the hands of the *junta de vecinos*, in commodatum.

(E. Gatica Fuentes et al., personal communication, 20 January 2022)

³⁹ Property of the Navy.

⁴⁰ Nationalized property.



Figure 9. The first democratic leadership of the *Junta N. 5* holding a meeting during 1989. From left to right: Juan Soto Fernández, Mario Gaete, Ernestina Gatica, Camilo Fernández, Ana María Peñaloza, and Marcelo Gaete. Credit: Ana María Peñaloza Puelles.

The Concertación administrations were an improvement over the dictatorship in many areas. For one, community organizing was no longer persecuted. Most evident here are provisions which allowed *vecinos* of Pedro del Río and Villa Futuro access to some form of agreement to maintain land for the community outside of the logics of the real estate market. Despite this, these were exceptional cases. These administrations saw a steady advancement of neoliberal policies, which reduced access to modalities within the subsidy model that permitted collective ownership and ownership without debt. Moreover, the advancement of financialized logics into more aspect of the Chilean welfare, as well as the consolidation of corporate social relations with policymakers, brought a social malaise. Since the late 1990's this malaise started to manifest in several movements, some of which were supported and informed by the struggle for reconstruction after 27F (V. Alvarado Peterson, personal communication, 7 July 2021; Ampuero Cárdenas, 2016; P. B. Rodríguez, 2019; Soederberg, 2010).

The first post-dictatorship social movement was one led by *Pobladores*. It was in response to the poorly built social housing units built by the Concertación. In addition of their lack of quality of the apartments and their poor integration to the urban fabric, these neighborhoods were vulnerable to natural hazards. This prompted the first Concertación housing crisis 1997, due to the El Niño,⁴¹ which affected thousands of newly built social housing units. This crisis exposed the intimate associations between politics and the real-estate corporate class, which is fully manifested by the Chilean Chamber of Construction (CChC) and the Ministry of Housing, with the appointment of the head CChC as Minister of Housing of the Concertación. Despite the fact that there was no accountability for this case, it highlighted problematics of Concertación's housing model. These shortcomings caused the first post-dictatorship reemergence of an organized movement of *Pobladores* (P. B. Rodríguez, 2019).

In Concepción, a similar story developed with some Penquistas that formed the Flooded Citizens of Concepción Movement (*Movimiento Ciudadanos Inundados de Concepción*, hereafter Flooded Citizens) after constructions on the Andalién River increased the risk of flooding, which happened in the mid-2000s. Although the movement was inactive by 2010, some of its members, among them a leader named Antonio Mena, retook activities to support the struggle for reconstruction, sharing their expertise and experience of the catastrophe (E. Ampuero Cardenas, personal communication, 4 October 2021).

At the national level, there was a growing resistance to neoliberalism, particularly to processes of financialization. The largest post-dictatorship movement before 2010 was the Student Movement of 2006, also known as the Penguin Revolution. It was a response to the increasingly liberalization and financialization of Chile's educational system, specifically

⁴¹ Meteorological phenomenon that causes increased temperatures and rainfall in the Pacific coast.

higher education. These students demanded “free education, the defense of public education, the rejection of the for-profit educational providers, and the elimination of schools’ discriminatory practices” (Bellei et al., 2014).

Students were spearheading a general sense of discontent that was brewing under the administrations of the Concertación, as many sectors of civil society and the left yearned for a transition away from the neoliberal project. From 2004 onwards, Chile had a politically charge and tense social environment, and as Eduardo Ampuero (personal communication, 4 October 2021), students were always the early indicators of emerging broader struggles:

In the context of 2010, we had had 20 years of transition to democracy. Organizations were barely waking up again because, during the ‘90s, everyone waited. There was affluence in society too; it does not mean that people were getting rich, but there was a lot of [currency] circulating due to the rise of neoliberalism that the dictatorship established. It started to take force during the transition, with the privatizations, ... the introduction of vouchers, credit systems for education and its privatization. ... People got deeply indebted, and then we passed to the 21st century with a discontent population that was waiting for social mobility to jump to another condition, another class, but some things had happened. [One of these was] the mobilization of subcontracted mining workers, ... subcontracted forestry workers.

... Along with the heat of the fight for the reconstruction, the student movement developed. That was coming since 2006 with the revolution of high school students. ... That turmoil always anticipates things, student movement – especially those of secondary education – always gives signals of a state of mind. But, in 2011, it took form in all levels of education. ... Our movement for reconstruction] started in a context of a climate of social awakening, but with a huge absence of organization.

As Ampuero mentioned, there was a general environment of social awakening, and there were many fronts, the main one being the students. While Flooded Citizens and those who suffered floods from El Niño before were the first housing-related movement, which happened to be also disaster related, the first nation-wide housing movement was that of the

mortgage debtors. Just as the students, mortgage debtors were resisting a process of financialization as well. This process was happening in many fronts, with the developers that took away that role from the state, which are known as Housing Management Entities (*Entidad de Gestión Inmobiliaria*; EGIS), this reduced the role of the state in the development of social housing and also funneled the funds of subsidies towards the private sector. Then, as mortgage-based subsidies became more common, some of the mortgages were given with extremely high interest rates, that doubled or tripled the value of their homes.

After the housing crisis of 1997, the transference of mortgages to the banking sector in 2000 saw a dramatic increase in interest rates and defaults. Citizens organized to resist this process which prompted a *toma* of the Mapocho river by the FENAPO, the second longest *toma* after the dictatorship - the first one was the *Toma de Peñaloén* (which lasted from 1999 to 2019). Afterwards, the National Association of Mortgage Debtors (*Asociación Nacional de Deudores Habitacionales*; ANDHA Chile) organized, eventually consolidating into a political party. They became instrumental in the struggle for reconstruction and took representation to politics first as their leader Roxana Miranda was nominated for the presidency of the republic, later joining the coalition *Frente Amplio*⁴² (Casgrain, 2010; W. A. Imilan, 2016.; Özler, 2012).

Although the transition to democracy did not mean a transition away from Pinochet policies, it did allow for a safe environment for social organizing to take root again. By 2010 the disillusion of Chileans with the decisions taken by the Concertación was evident, as such the earthquake came in a politically charged environment, one in which these movements had begun to take root years before. In short, the movement for the reconstruction after 27F

⁴² "Wide Front." This is the coalition that represented the current president Gabriel Boric Font.

did not start from zero, instead, it was informed and supported by the movements highlighted in this section.

5.4. Summary

The subsidy model was the result of the coalescence of the agrarian reform and Chile's pre-dictatorship housing goals. Although these goals continued even during Pinochet's government, the mechanism to achieve them were locked-in to neoliberal logics by the Supreme Decree No. 44. Despite the fact that the subsidy model has allowed paths for collective ownership and transition towards ownership without debt, these are dwindling. Instead, new amendments provide paths to fully integrate new housing into the real estate and financial markets, ensuring the expansion and reproduction of a system of private ownership that advantages corporate interests (V. Alvarado Peterson, personal communication, 7 July 2021).

Moreover, the subsidy model was used to syphon public funds towards the public sector, a key contributor to the housing crisis of 1997. Then, it became evident that the system was compromised. Businessmen in the real estate and construction sectors held political posts, causing alarming conflicts of interest. Enterprises receiving subsidies were sometimes owned by the granting functionaries or their connections. They were often financed by AFPs, gathering public funds from both housing subsidies and retirement funds. This saw a massive construction boom of social housing with poor quality units and no urban integration. For the reconstruction, this configuration of the housing system had two consequences. First, this consolidation of the corporate class, the construction, and real estate industries, tied corporate interests to regional development and politics. Second, it established the subsidy model as the main means of transition towards ownership and eventually reconstruction, while doubling as the framework under which these corporate interests operate (R. A. Hidalgo Dattwyler et al., 2016; P. B. Rodríguez, 2019).

Whereas the Concertación focus to increase the number of social housing units led to an expansion of the subsidy model, it also led to the expansion of uneven urban morphologies, where the vulnerable sectors were pushed towards the peripheries without urban integration. Furthermore, the Ribera Norte Project led to the attempted displacement of *Pobladores* of Pedro del Río and Aurora de Chile, undoing decades of hard work. These two factors indicate made evident that, policy wise, the Concertación did not differ significantly from the Pinochet, as such corporate interests and extractive uses of urban land were prioritized before the needs and well-being of Chileans, especially vulnerable sectors of the population. While the Ribera Norte Project represents a continuity of the displacement policies led by the dictatorship, it is more relevant to my research as it is an immediate precedent to the post-disaster gentrification attempts after the 2010 earthquake.

The transition to democracy, particularly the process leading up to the plebiscite and the elections of 1989, was a catalyst for the reactivation of civil society. In Pedro del Río this led the re-democratization of their *junta de vecinos*, led by Ana Peñaloza and other *vecinos*. By the mid 1990's, the council was democratic. With the effort of Ernestina, they managed to obtain a communal space to maintain activities. These were some of the specific factors that had contributed to the well-organized status of the neighborhood. In consequence, when the Ribera Norte Project targeted the neighborhoods of Pedro del Río and Aurora de Chile for *erradicación*, they were able to resist the displacement while the project was put on hold. In Chiguayante, Villa Futuro was just establishing itself. *Vecinos* worked hard to improve their *población* and their quality of life. However, they had not experienced any attempts of displacement yet, thus, they did not have experience resisting *erradicaciones*.

In a wider scope, the expansion of the neoliberal project under the Concertación led to discontent in some sectors of the population. The struggle for housing re-emerged after just seven years, due to the bad quality and poor urban integration of the units built during

the Concertación. The first housing struggle after the dictatorship was led by flooded *Pobladores* in 1997, a different movement of flooded citizens emerged in Concepción during the mid-2000, these were also the first post-disaster related movements at least since 1973. Another housing struggle emerged nation-wide was that of the mortgage debtors, which was led by ANDHA Chile. What is particular about this movement is that it was mostly comprised by the middle class. It also represented a resistance to structural factors, in this case the financialization of housing and the privatization of mortgage debt. The largest movement before 2010, was the student Penguin Revolution, this coincided with ANDHA in the sense that both resisted processes of financialization, in this case of education. However, the student movement also pointed out to deeper societal failures due to the continuation of the neoliberal project. These movements were essential at informing the movements that arose after the 2010 earthquake.

Together, these three aspects provide a clear picture of the immediate sociopolitical context by 2010. These aspects are also connected and affect each other. The subsidy model is at the crossroads, functioning as the tool which expands the financialization process, as the main method of access to home ownership for many Chileans, and finally as the system that adapts to fulfill the increasingly complex needs of the market and the populace. Under the Concertación it also functioned as a palliative for displacement projects, giving *Pobladores* access to home ownership in urban peripheries. While the subsidy model is a manifestation of neoliberal logics in policymaking, the Ribera Norte Project was meant to manifest these logics in Concepción's urban fabric. The movements that arose during the transition to democracy as well as in response to the continuation of Pinochet's economic policies under the Concertación are a testament of the retained collective memory of Chileans. This lingering memory has been a base for the reignition of social organizing on several occasions, while the 1988 plebiscite is the clearest example, student, *Pobladores*

resisting *erradicación* in Ribera del Río, flooded citizens, and mortgage debtors, are movement that not only intersect but echo past struggles, just as the fight for a just reconstruction did.

6. Self-Organization in the Aftermath of 27F

When the earthquake hit the coast of the Biobío Region in 2010, it brought not only summer to an abrupt end, but also the social slumber that Chileans were coming from after two decades of expectations under the *Concertación* administrations. Before the abrupt awakening of the earthquake, there were signs of this period coming to an end due to the *Concertación*'s lukewarm approach to undo Pinochet's policies. Most notorious of these signs was the Penguin Revolution, the country's student protests of 2006. Decades earlier, in 1997 the first housing crisis of the *Concertación* brought back organized *Pobladores* using the *toma* as a key practice of protest and transition to land ownership. At the time, these movements did not manage to transform themselves into a national reawakening nor to influence policymaking. Nevertheless, these movements introduced new actors to the political scene and brought back old ones as well (Angelcos & Pérez, 2017). This chapter is focused on the immediate response to the earthquake by the state and local people who were affected. The government response showed a lack of preparedness and care for the wellbeing of Chileans. In contrast, for citizens this was a moment that served to foster solidarity and rekindle social organization, helping to break the long process of entropy and atomization caused by Pinochet's government.

This chapter explores aspects of spontaneous organization which occurred after 27F as survivors sought to fulfill their immediate needs and recreate practices of solidarity. The chapter draws in particular on the accounts of Mauricio Sáez, a sociology student and volunteer after the earthquake, and from the *vecinos* of Pedro del Río who organized themselves to provide for their neighborhood. As the chapter will document, many aspects of the citizens' exemplary response were catalyzed by a lacking response by the government, which caused *Pobladores* to be skeptical of the government's ability to handle the short and long-term aspects of the crisis. Moreover, this process of disaster citizenship was disrupted by

the government's attempts to regain control of post-disaster reconstruction and to protect private property. I argue that the ruptures in the handling of the crisis showed the limits of the Chilean welfare system and also prompted the alternate citizen-led responses.

This chapter is divided into two sections and a summary. The first section explores the immediate response to the earthquake by the state and its shortcomings. These shortcomings were a consequence of the paralysis of the government apparatus in the immediate aftermath. After the immediate emergency settled, the government focused its efforts to protect private property and public order, leaving those in dire need of basic necessities fend for themselves. The second section is the response of citizens to the earthquake itself, and to the neglect shown by the government. In this section I describe the several form in which citizens banded together to provide for their basic needs, occupying public spaces, and recurring once again to *ollas comunes* – soup kitchens.

6.1. State of Exception: A Paralyzed Government Prioritizes Private Property

Despite being one of the most seismic-prone countries on earth, Chilean earthquake early warning systems failed in 2010, leading to 500 deaths mostly in the vicinity of Dichato, a town within the Greater Concepción Area. This failure was compounded by the miscommunication between the agencies (SHOA and ONEMI) responsible for alerting and informing the office of the president. Aside from being underfunded, the ONEMI depended on approval from the navy (SHOA) and the presidency to act. When communications were cut, the ONEMI was unable to respond independently. President Bachelet, just a few days away from leaving office, attempted to maintain an image of control and normalcy. In reality, the state apparatus had been disconnected from its regional and municipal agencies and was unable to respond (Farías, 2014; Ramirez & Aliaga Sandoval, 2012).

This paralysis of the state was not limited to the early detection system. In the most affected regions, all levels of government were inoperative. Although this was partly because government functionaries were affected by the earthquake, Chile's top-down governing structure also limited the agency of lower levels of government, impeding horizontal collaboration. Despite the absence of government, "society could not submit to a state of pause of waiting; on the contrary, the same population created and experimented with different forms to solve their problems (Ampuero, 2016: 21)." To look out for their basic needs, citizens in affected neighborhoods organized *ollas comunes* and emergency camps. Well organized neighborhoods such as Pedro del Río and Villa Futuro managed to obtain a semblance of order and even collaborate with the municipal governments and *territoriales* - functionaries from the municipality that collaborate with neighborhoods and local organizations. Otherwise, the only presence of government was the army in the most affected areas. Naturally, after days of neglect, without functioning infrastructure or basic services, citizens did not trust that the government would fulfil their needs. Some resorted to looting supermarkets in the vicinity of Concepción (Bornstein et al., 2013; Ramirez & Aliaga Sandoval, 2012; SHOA, 2000).

When the government finally managed to re-organize and have a presence in the affected areas, its focus was in protecting private property. This indicates that decision makers in regional levels of government did not attend the root causes of the looting: a virtually non-existent governmental response during the immediate aftermath of the earthquake and the situation of precarity that many *Pobladores* faced even before the earthquake struck. As one of Concepción's larger supermarkets (*Líder*, subsidiary of Walmart) is near Pedro del Río, *vecinos* witnessed the looting firsthand. Marcela Peñaloza (personal communication, 20 January 2022), a *vecina* from Pedro del Río explained how the earthquake amplified the fear and desperation of people from the neighborhood:

I went downtown because I had to work, to see the office. In the following days it was hard to walk and seeing everything destroyed disoriented you. It was pitiful and new to know that the mill was destroyed, all the wheat there and the [rubble from the Alto Río Building; See Figure 15 p. 189] on the ground. It was the end of the month and people already saw themselves starving. It was evident that we would not have food in the future. Nothing. And then the supermarket, they started to loot it. A lot of people live check to check, and people felt a horrible panic. Besides the earthquake, they dreaded a future economic crisis, hunger.

Ernestina Gatica (personal communication, 19 January 2022), pointed out that as the media reported on the looters, the *Pobladores* of Pedro del Río got the blame, when in reality people from all sectors were looting:

In the middle of everything, functionaries went to loot. They treated me like I was stupid because I didn't loot, and here in the neighborhood we were blamed [by people saying:] '[the *Pobladores* of] Pedro del Río did all the looting,' that we were delinquent. But I saw functionaries that were in the administration of Miss Jacqueline, a bunch of them, my colleagues. They did not have the need, and [yet they] went to loot.

Luis Alfonso and María Valdés added to her point, indicating how other sectors looted for personal gain, including businessmen:

Luis Alfonso Oñate: Here, there were those who looted, taking trucks filled with merchandise to San Pedro [de la Paz].⁴³ Some business owners stocked [their shelves] with what they stole.

María Valdés: And those were selling yeast and candles for 1000, 1200 pesos, the same is happening now [with the COVID-19 pandemic].

The media not only criminalized the looters but contributed to a collective panic by exaggerating the scope of the looting, even claiming that there were bands of raiders targeting citizens. This narrative was also pushed by the government and media, as it deflected the attention of citizens towards protecting their own possessions. During my discussion with

⁴³ A middle and upper-class municipality in the Greater Concepción area, across river in the Biobío's southern shore.

Luis Alfonso and María, an Undisclosed Participant interjected, sharing that for them the worst part of the immediate aftermath of the earthquake was this campaign of misinformation:

Undisclosed Participant: We got out with tents, to sleep by the rail line, and something more intense started the second or third day, because a policeman arrived, who was well-known in the neighborhood, and told us ‘You have to get into your home because there are bands coming to attack the homes’ —

María Valdés: That was stupidity!

Undisclosed participant: Then, a collective panic started, desperate people making their own bayonets to defend themselves... They believed him ... [and they believed] people were looting. Then, they wanted people to be at their homes taking care of their own stuff so they could not go and loot [the malls]. The whole situation was invented. But it was terrifying, nobody slept, all scared, desperate.

Then, not having water was the hardest, but that’s when the solidarity came. Even I ran out of food because I hadn’t gone to get groceries. I only had yogurt and cookies for my grandkids.

Maria Valdés: No one had groceries because it was the end of the month— I only had a kilo of sugar!

(L.A. Oñate, M. Valdés, Undisclosed Participant, personal communication, 19 January 2022)

These quotes allow us to understand why citizens’ trust in governmental institutions was eroded by the government’s policy to control looting. Not only did the government mishandle the lootings, but they also were clearly prioritizing private property over the wellbeing of citizens. This partiality towards the private sector became more evident when Sebastián Piñera took office a few days afterwards. The younger brother of José Piñera, Pinochet’s Labor Minister, Sebastián did not have experience in public administration since his career had been dedicated to finance and entrepreneurship. His partial attitude to the private sector was evident immediately as one of his first actions as president was to declare a state of emergency to stop the looting. While President Piñera focused on looting, those in rural

areas suffered from the absence of government or organization. Ernestina noted the stark contrast between her neighborhood and the conditions in rural areas, which she had a chance to witness as one of the few government employees sent to these areas:

Ernestina Gatica: Pedro del Río was an oasis in comparison to what I experienced going to other places –

María Valdés: Because the tsunami didn't hit us!

Ernestina Gatica: [In] places like Lota-Coronel, Coliumo, Dichato, Talcauhano, Chiguayante, people [were] begging for a glass of water to give to the children, and here I was arguing with people because they were using the water to wash their cars and rugs. I was conflicted [when I] saw all the *vecinos* of Avenida Zañartu making bread, eating steak with whisky from the lootings, giving everything away because it was an oasis here. Whereas, in other places, there wasn't even water for a baby. [The] situation was shocking to me with [such extreme] human misery [in the rural area, while here we were] living the moment intensely without worrying about other places... because of the solidarity of the neighborhood, but it [the solidarity] was not for the outside. The *vecinos* didn't set up campaigns, nor did the *junta de vecinos* at that time...

Then, what happened was that there was no solidarity to the outside, to help people in other places, because I visited many municipalities where the municipality didn't go to – because the functionaries didn't want to... We got there in Lota-Coronel to some desolated places, very far, where people didn't have food [or] water. We had a little box which was their hope, their hope of life, the boxes that the municipality made. [However] I saw many functionaries stealing, honey jars, [and] a lot of [what was sent to assist the victims of the tsunami]. [There was] tons, and tons of assistance but a lot of theft.

There was no planning, no order in public institutions. In that moment, I worked [for the government] and everyone was all over the place. There was no teamwork. How were we going to attend the emergency [like that]? They were there, just stuck, and nothing else. The same thing happened with wildfires: people lose everything but [the functionaries] are content to give them a *mediagüita*, a little shack, and everything else? 'Make do with whatever you have,' [they say].

(E. Gatica, M. Valdés, personal communication, 19 January 2022)

Ernestina's account of the abject state of some rural communities demonstrates that government action was misdirected towards protecting private property – which some functionaries themselves stole – over the basic needs of the citizens. However, there was a sector that the government did not neglect. The industrial sector saw an extremely swift response and reconstruction. For example, in 2010, President Piñera assigned Jacqueline Van Rysselberghe as the *intendenta* – head of a regional government – of the Biobío Region. At that time, Van Rysselberghe was already quite influential politically and in the business sector having been mayor for ten years and being a member of a family with strong influence in the construction sector.

Under Van Rysselberghe's leadership, private industry was favored from the first days of the reconstruction. One of her government's first actions was to meet with the leaders of different *gremios* to organize the early reconstruction efforts and to meet with local industry leaders to develop an action plan (Escobar Arrigada, 2010; C. G. Sandoval, 2010b). The business leaders and their allies in government prioritized the re-establishment of key transport connections and infrastructure rather than the immediate needs of the victims of the disaster. For example, businesses who received contracts to carry out the reconstruction of infrastructure received a 'megafund' of 120 million USD as early as April 2010, while inhabitants of Dichato had not even received *mediaguas*, or working electricity, by late May of the same year (Salazar, 2010; Ulloa, 2010). Government support for the needs and interests of the area's citizens came only after the state's neglect in Dichato sparked nationwide discontent and protests. The situation in Dichato was one example among many in which business leaders profited from reconstruction either on their own or with the assistance of the new right-wing government.

Piñera's administration also took the opportunity to profit politically from the economic recovery that the reconstruction brought while also using it to funnel funds towards

the private sector. Mauricio Sáez, a sociologist who was studying at University of Concepción during 2010, remarked on how opportune this was for businesses as a way to mitigate some of the effects of 2008 financial crisis:

There was an economic crisis in Latin America., The GDP of several countries was falling [and], others had very low levels of development, economic growth [around 0 to 1%]. [In contrast] Chile was projected to grow around 6 to 7%, but with the [2008 financial] crisis [the forecast] went down to [0.1 to 1%]. Piñera used the earthquake to give money to private enterprises. He gave the money away without a clear policy, saying ‘people want to rebuild, here’s a bonus, a card with a thousand dollars so you can rebuild your home, but you could only use that card on 3 big-box stores. What about those who don’t have those stores in their cities? What happens with the local economy? [Pinera’s solution] was only benefiting those big conglomerates. Sebastián Piñera took state’s money and gave it to his group of entrepreneur friends. That set the tone for the reconstruction. Then, because he gave out so much money, the crisis wasn’t felt as much, it even exceeded expectations and people said that it was a good government because there was a reactivation [of the economy], but it was not because of Piñera. The country after living [through] an earthquake, lived a process of reconstruction, [which required a great deal of labor, and this is what resulted in the post-disaster economic growth]...

(Personal communication, 6 July 2021)

In short, the lack of readiness and the multiple levels of top-down dependency, aggregated with the physical damages caused by the earthquake, prompted a brief collapse of the systems of early detection and disaster response in Chile. Early post-disaster policies developed by the Pinera government favored corporate interests and political elites. Over time, it became obvious to many that the corporate programs and top-down approach were not only ineffective but did not take seriously the needs of Chileans who had survived the disaster and were badly in need of support.

6.2. Citizens Fulfill the Role of the State

Recalling Solidarity

For *Penquistas*⁴⁴ and those mostly affected by the earthquake, the shortcomings of the government were evident, and they saw greater potential in post-disaster mutual aid programs than in the government's policies and programs. This was particularly evident in more organized neighborhoods in which inhabitants had experienced the government's neglect in normal and post-disaster circumstances. This combination of factors led to an immediate voluntary response from citizens in the aftermath of the disaster in the form of many individual and later collective spontaneous acts of solidarity. In this section, I describe a series of examples that illustrate how neighbors, friends, and strangers found different ways to support each other in the immediate aftermath of the earthquake.

The first couple of examples are experiences involving hospitality, which reflect an altruistic set of values and sense of responsibility shown by Chileans in the aftermath of the disaster. Soon after I arrived at Concepción, I met with one of my interviewees, Eduardo Ampuero, former teacher, now artist and social leader. We met near *Plaza Perú*, where we had a long conversation about Chile, in which he explained that visitors have a special place there. Being geographically isolated, between the Pacific Ocean and the Andes Mountains, Chile is seldom a center of attention for foreigners or for the rest of the world. This makes Chilean hospitality one of a kind, something I can attest to. Being in an environment so isolated, and so hazardous, causes people to feel a sense of responsibility for visitors. When the earthquake hit, Mauricio Sáez, was celebrating the end of the summer in Santa Juana with some friends from Concepción. When morning came, he felt responsible for his guests and specifically to return them to their families in Concepción. After the earthquake, he immediately prepared to return them to their families:

The urban area of my [home] town, Santa Juana, is about 6000 inhabitants and the rest of the rural sector has like 7000-8000 [inhabitants]. There are a lot of

⁴⁴ Citizens of the Greater Concepción area.

municipalities in Chile with small populations, and I was [at one of these] during the earthquake.... I'm also a scout— why is that relevant? [As I told you], two of my friends were not from Santa Juana. They were staying with me [and the next morning after the earthquake] we had breakfast, and I came out with my bag, tent, sleeping bag, a bit of food, [and suggested] ... the idea that we were going to walk to Concepción. When we were walking we coincided with the father of one of them, who was able to cross the bridges because he had a small car, and he took them back to Concepción.

(M. J. Sáez Cuevas, personal communication, 6 July 2021)

Mirtha Muñoz, whose son was in another city during the earthquake, experienced a similar situation, in which her nephew hitchhiked to Concepción bringing supplies as well as her son who also received the aid of friends he was visiting and gathered donations from strangers on his homeward journey:

For me, my sons studied in Salesian Schools and my daughter in one of the Immaculate Conception. After all these years every now and then someone comes [telling me:] 'Auntie Mirtha! It's me, Rodrigo! Do you remember? You lent me 50 *pesitos* for a phone call.' Young professionals, they came with groceries and other things. ... Then my nephew came hitchhiking to know if we were alright, and in his way here people gave him things, he could barely close his backpack.

[Also], one of my kids was in Hualqui, [a town south of Chiguayante], he went to a wedding. For me it was terrible because [during that] first night we didn't know his whereabouts. Our cellphones were dead. The next day, they brought him [to Concepción] in a truck. It was very difficult for the parent to get here, but he listened what I told his wife: 'When your son is here, I take care of him, so when mine goes there, [you may] take care of him too.' And the truck was also full of donations, because the same [happened for him]. They gave him things when he passed through, and we shared those with our neighbors.

(M. Muñoz, personal communication, 19 January 2022)

While links of kinship and the sense of responsibility – especially for visitors – were key factors in encouraging mutual aid, *plazas* – public squares – and other public spaces proved to be geographical anchors to organize the popular response. The following examples

highlight how plazas served as spaces of spontaneous organization in the immediate aftermath of the earthquake, functioning as ideal points for community organizing where provisional processes of citizenship could be safely enacted. (Mitrénique, 2014). Hence, *plazas* became one of the main public sites for rendezvous, communication, and congregation in the post-disaster moment.

Plazas were sites where vecinos gathered to communicate and to help each other at a time when most state communications and infrastructure were not functioning. Mauricio, who I mentioned above, explained how he and his fellow boy scouts adopted the *plaza* as a site of *de facto* organizing site. They developed a project to distribute newspapers to the public who gathered there and to help the people send messages to friends and family living elsewhere:

During that week I travelled every day to Concepción. I would go at like 5 AM, hitchhiking. I went to Radio Bío-Bío to leave messages. Before the earthquake that was the main radio for Southern Chile, but [after] the earthquake it became the most important station of Chile. I [would go] every morning to Radio Bío-Bío. The rest of my fellow scouts from 10 to 18 years old received the messages in the *plaza*. The *plaza* had a tourist information center that we took over, without anyone's permission. Because we didn't have much electricity, Santa Juana's radio station only worked a couple hours a day. That was when they informed the people that if they needed to send a message to family or inform them of what happened to their family in Santa Juana, they could leave their messages at the *plaza*. Then, the scouts would take [the messages] every day to Radio Bío-Bío.

(M. J. Sáez Cuevas, personal communication, 6 July 2021)

Mauricio's experience is an example on how, spontaneously, and independently, citizens started to attend basic needs. In his particular case, this was the need of communication, whether facilitating his friends to go back to Concepción to know the whereabouts of their families or taking over the *plaza* as a reliable point to gather and distribute information.

Plazas also hosted emergency shelters and soup kitchens, especially in neighborhoods like Pedro del Río that have several plazas.

However, a *plaza* is not just a convenient place to aid logistics and organization. They are also spaces with history and cultural significance to their communities. In Pedro del Río, for example, the main *plaza* is located on the intersection of Lastarria and Guillermo Matta, near the Cerro Chepe, and features a bust of Pedro del Río Zañartu himself. When I was conducting my fieldwork, Ernestina invited me to an event in which a functionary of the SEREMI of Housing and the mayor of Concepción, Álvaro Ortiz Vera, attended. The mayor referred to the *plaza* of the neighborhood as a *plazoleta* – a mini-public square –, which was promptly corrected by Ernestina. She argued that the diminutive (‘-oleta’) minimized the plaza’s importance as a civic space and its role to the neighborhood. *Plazas* have been central points for organization and congregation since the early days of leftist organizing in the city, and they are especially important to working-class neighborhoods like those in Ribera Norte. After the earthquake, these spaces retook that earlier meaning, doubling as places to distribute goods and food from *ollas comunes* – soup kitchens. However, Marcela Peñaloza, member of the *Junta* N. 5, recalled that there were other sites that also served as points of congregation, as not all *vecinos* have a *plaza* in the immediate proximity:

[After the earthquake] we stayed outside in front of my mother’s home in a tent for like a week, [or] a bit more than a week. They were [open] ‘tents’ because we are like – well, my sister *la Ana María* [Peñaloza] – is like very sociable, and we put, like, some big tent, some awnings, and [for people who did not fit] in the tents we put some mattresses under awnings and covered the whole thing on the sides. And neighbors came to sleep [in any spot that opened], like, you left (it happened to me), and you lost your space. [When] you came back and there was a grandma there, [you couldn’t do anything]. That’s how we spent the first days [after the earthquake].

(Personal communication, 20 January 2022)

During another interview, Ana Peñaloza explained how everyone helped with what they could. As there was no electricity, she provided candles so those staying outside her home could have a bit of light at night:

Ana Peñaloza: I just had learned to make candles a month before- I had thousands of candles which were very ugly –

Undisclosed Participant: But they worked!

Ana Peñaloza: I lived in [Manuel] Garretón [Street]. Over my mother's home the fence fell [and people stayed there]. I went tent by tent putting candles on plates, and when they melted I took the plates away. Everyone had light. But the solidarity was unique, the bread, food...

Undisclosed Participant: Nothing was missing, our neighbors acted.

Then, she explained how the older women spent the night at her home:

Ana Peñaloza: My mom was not here, just my dad, and the *vecinas*. It was cold, the sun wouldn't come up, it was like 11 AM and still dark. Then, all the old ladies from my block came by [my mother's house]. Then my dad was looking around [outside] reviewing what happened, [and he got startled] when he opened the door and all the old ladies were [sleeping] there!

(A. Peñaloza, Undisclosed Participant, personal communication, 19 January 2022)

In the communities of Dichato and Talcahuano, it was commonplace after the earthquake that citizens worked in a self-directed manner, organizing spontaneously and autonomously (Simon and Valenzuela-Fuentes, 2017). The people responded to the immediate needs of the community and under the uncertainty, some emergency camps occupied not only *plazas* but public buildings like schools. There was a generalized feeling of abandonment and reduced respect for private property as citizens prioritized achieving minimal living conditions while the state was absent. When the state did get involved, policies and government workers actually disrupted ongoing and spontaneous processes of organization (Ampuero Cárdenas, 2016). Labor historian Jacob Remes (2016) describes accounts of this kind in the aftermath

of a massive port explosion which took place in Halifax, Canada in 1917. He also makes an important consideration, that the slow response of relief managers was also because they themselves had needs they had to attend to, which is reflected on the fact that both Ernestina and Marcela were working as functionaries during the time.

So far, I have recounted how Mauricio and the Peñaloza sisters turned public spaces into key places for communication and shelter; how Ernestina went to other municipalities delivering aid; and how Luis coordinated organization in his street. Missing from this list are María and Victor, who also helped neighbors to organize, and provided water to *vecinos* and passersby. Lastly, Mirtha who continued to look after some elderly people that she had been assisting before 27F She told me:

Mirtha Muñoz: The next morning, I got up and told my daughter ‘I’m going to see my old ladies that live alone.’ They didn’t want me to go because of the aftershocks [but] I went where Lady Chayito lived, and the [pieces of the] house was on the ground. I asked the *vecina* [about Chayito and she told me:] ‘no, the house on top of her. The lady died.’ She had just moved back three weeks before. She was living with her daughter, but she sent her away because they didn’t get along. The daughter was super conflicted and in shock because she had told her mother to leave. [Lady Chayito] was alone [then, at the time of the earthquake] and the house fell. She died [inside], crushed. Then I went to see Don Benito, who also lived alone. When I see the house [it] was split in half and [there was] a giant sinkhole in the ground. [Don Benito] was consternated. ‘Mirthita,’ he called out to me. He was so scared. Then other *vecinos* came to see him but [he was worried about the size of] that hole.

Ernestina Gatica: [The sinkhole] demonstrated that Pedro del Río was filled from the river.

Mirtha Muñoz: After that, I went walking to see Miss Mendez, Charlie’s mom, and she was calm. Then I went back home.

(M. Muñoz, E. Gatica, personal communication, 19 January 2022)

Out of need, citizens carried out these acts of solidarity and this helped to re-unite many of the communities otherwise atomized by a long period of directed social disorganization. The communities of Pedro del Río and Aurora were particularly noteworthy for the levels of solidarity shown by the people. The extent of solidarity in these communities was an extension of previous experiences of community organizing, which would also inform the people to better navigate the difficulties that would later unfold during the reconstruction. This first stage was mostly structured around *plazas* and emergency camps – *aldeas* –, with the aid of voluntaries, charities, and neighborhoods, and in some cases local authorities, collaborating with the leaders of the *aldeas*.⁴⁵

Ollas Comunes

As emergency camps established in *plazas* and public spaces, new leadership formed in the aftermaths of the earthquake. This organic form of organization made many neighbors connect with each other, even if they didn't know each other before. By the third day, many new networks of cooperation were established which led to neighborhoods with basic organization, natural leadership, distribution systems for supplies, and even improvised systems of communication. While those practices played an integral role to community organizing in the aftermath, *ollas comunes* – soup kitchens – were the paramount form of organization during this stage of the response. Mostly established in *plazas*, *ollas comunes* were critical to fulfill the basic needs of communities and provided opportunities for further organizing.

However, *ollas comunes* became so important precisely because the deep level of the abandonment of the populace. Hence, natural leaders emerged out of need, from communities without previous leadership, or replacing those that did not exercised their leadership (Simon & Valenzuela-Fuentes, 2017). The success of the *ollas comunes* was also the

⁴⁵ Although *aldea* literally means 'village', for the purpose of this thesis I refer to *aldeas* exclusively as emergency camps.

result of historical experiences, as soup kitchens and communal canteens have a long history mitigating precarity and uncertainty in Chile. They have also served as a tool for resilience and organization during and after the dictatorship. They were some of the few organizing practices that were kept active during Pinochet's government. That said, in Dichato, a city without a long history of organizing which was strongly affected by the earthquake, *ollas comunes* were one of the points of convergence for a new set of social leaders. Although the practices of community and solidarity can be wholesome and fulfilling, Bárbara Orrego (personal communication, 8 January 2022), who emerged as a leader of her community after 27F, explained that citizens and leaders do so not by choice, but out of need:

By obligation, we had to organize. And women played a leading role because we were the ones leading the *ollas comunes* and all of that. Women were empowered by the earthquake and... many [women] leaders emerged. [...] It always has been like this. Despite [the fact] that we [women] have many roles, we have the capacity to make time for community organizing, which is very important so we can get many things done. The housing committees that we always have had were almost always led by women. [A common] theme of the *mediaguas* and the *aldeas* [was that] they were all led by women. Women are more dedicated in that sense.

Bárbara's comments also underscore the gendered nature of the work, which was necessary for sustaining the *ollas* municipalities, and by extension the people. *Ollas comunes* served before as a place to organize. During the dictatorship, *Pobladoras* led the nationwide *Movimiento de Pobladores* from their *ollas comunes* and many of the neighborhood organizations involved in the past housing struggles had these soup kitchens as a standard practice to mitigate hardship (T. Valdés & Weinstein, 1993). *Vecinas* of Pedro del Río had experience organizing them as they aided the nuns during the dictatorship.

As Bárbara and the *vecinos* from Pedro del Río told me, these *ollas* were usually organized around squares but, if none were available, then wherever there was enough space.

They were overwhelmingly led by women, usually with past leadership experience, but not always. Sometimes, there would be a fire at the *olla común* where neighbors would bring whatever needing cooking. Often though the ollas municipalities served as sites for distributing nonperishables and meals that people cooked at home. During a group interview, *vecinos* of Pedro del Río explained the many ways people contributed to the *ollas*. Luis Alfonso, for example, explained how those who had food or businesses shared:

Luis Alfonso Oñate: There was organization. We got organized and later functionaries came and organized us. For example, I was in charge of the street Desiderio Sanhueza. They gave us a vest and a hat and we were authorized to move around.

Ernestina Gatica: [There were restrictions] because of the looting.

Luis Alfonso Oñate: My point is [that] the earthquake also showed that there was solidarity. [... People] organized *ollas comunes* and everyone participated. Here everyone shared. For example, the guard of the mill, he was a close neighbor, he told us: ‘You know what, Poncho – nickname for Alfonso –, the boss came [to the mill, and] before they start looting, we will open the doors so people can take it [the flour].’

María Valdés: Yes, that was shared.

Luis Alfonso Oñate: My mom had five sacks of flour. She gave them away. And my nephews from the butcher—, they just had bought four cows the day before. What were they going to do with so much meat? What did we do? *Asado!* Roast it! We got some saws and started cutting and giving it away. He gave away three million pesos of meat. What else was he to do? It was going to go to waste anyways. He gave it all [away]. [...] Then, we were organized. I think we had never eaten so much meat! People demonstrated unity.

Luis Alfonso’s experience is an example of how neighborhoods organized to provide for others. Some business owners shared instead of attempting to profiteer with the lack of supplies. Others, who received supplies from donations and other sources also shared them. Mirtha shared the aid she received from the members of her daughter’s religious group and the *vecinos* would exchange whatever they were missing at the *olla común*:

Mirtha Muñoz: [My daughter lives] in Santiago. There she is part of a Christian community, from her church. Those evangelists are so united – they sent two boxes of groceries [...]. We received a lot of things. Then, in the street, neighbors set up a fire and there people shared everything. For example, I had flour but not yeast so we exchanged. And the most impressive is that everyone, all neighbors, cooked and we shared [what we had made] between everyone.

However, given that many in the *población* were in precarious situations, they had nothing to contribute. This was one of the main drivers of the looting:

Ana Peñaloza: I went to loot ho! ho! ho! (Everybody laughed) Just kidding! I went to the mill. They gave away the flour. Do you know what's it like to carry a sack on your back? Thinking it was easier for me to take it away [because of my electric wheelchair], they gave it to me to take home and we made bread. My son came back for the holiday, and he went for meat, but it was gone, so they gave him *chicharrones* – fried pork rinds. Then we ate bread with the *chicharrón*. The people and kids came in line with their cup to eat some beans and it was exciting so see some kids that we knew to be *pato malos* – delinquents – ...[who were telling people] 'here, take these beans, take this yogurt.'

(L. A. Oñate, E. Gatica, A. Peñaloza, M. Muñoz, M. Valdés, personal communication, 19 January 2022)

Anita's comment shows that people brought their supplies from home to the *ollas comunies* whether cooked or in raw form. It also showed that there were those who partook in the looting – the *pato malos* – in order to share with others. In sum, the decentralized organizing that took place in the ollas municipalities brought together people from all backgrounds, which contributed to inciting solidarity and the process of rebuilding the community itself.

Spontaneous acts of solidarity, volunteerism, the organization of *ollas comunes* and the occupation of public spaces to set up the emergency camps, and even the lootings, were all autonomous acts of resilience realized out of need and in accordance with previous experience organizing. Sadly, part of this previous experience is government neglect, as mentioned by *Pobladores*, several NGOs, and social leaders. This expectation of government abandonment fueled the lootings and desperate actions of many citizens after the

earthquake. The expectation was proven correct not only by the slow and disarticulated approach of the Chilean government's response, but also by the strong top-down focus of government which aimed to preserve order and protect private property without taking the needs of Chilean citizens into account, much less the needs of the most vulnerable or the causes of vulnerability. (Ampuero Cárdenas, 2016; Bornstein et al., 2013; Dussaillant & Guzman, 2015; E. Gatica Fuentes et al., personal communication, 19 January 2022).

6.3. Summary

When the earthquake struck, previous experiences of government neglect led many citizens, especially *Pobladores*, to take independent action. However, others immediately lost hope and acted in despair. The desperation and uncertainty of affected citizens came mostly from the lack of confidence in the government to fulfill the needs of the population, especially the needs of marginalized populations. Their skepticism was well-founded as the government was neither able to properly convey the early detection alerts nor to coordinate a proper response to fulfill the basic needs of citizens after the earthquake and tsunami. In turn, citizens self-organized to supply emergency shelter, working water, resources, and food to those in need. With infrastructure and communications disrupted, citizens also found ways to stay informed, from using the *plaza* as places to gather news, to traveling, to sending news and aid with hitchhikers.

Eventually, local agencies started to collaborate with civil society including *territoriales* and volunteering functionaries such as Ernestina Gatica. Low level state functionaries entered the scene later on, and at times they would interrupt the community level organizing taking place in the most affected areas. Although the entry of Piñera's administration and the state of exception interrupted the organic process of self-organization between the *aldeas*, affected citizens, and municipal institutions, it did not stop it. As noted by Ernestina, solidarity was mostly seen in neighborhoods with solid pre-existing networks. While other

acts of solidarity emerged internationally and within Chile, organized aid was mostly limited by the previous experience with community organizing as well as by geography. In consequence, geographically and socially isolated communities did not receive enough relief. Despite all, the process of social re-organization continued. By early 2010, the root causes of vulnerability were not discussed yet, but the post-disaster organizing and growing social cohesion was creating a path that would evolve and merge with long-standing intersectional struggles.

7. The Struggle for a Just Reconstruction

All that we conquered was a product of a lot of work, my say is that: unity, organization, and struggle, equals victory. For all we have proposed as a neighborhood, we have achieved.

(Ernestina Gatica, personal communication, 19 January 2022)

This chapter explores the final link between past struggles and the struggle for reconstruction during the months and years that followed 27F. During this time, social organizing regarding the reconstruction underwent a transformation, consolidating into a cohesive social movement, transitioning from attempting to solve short-term specific problems to addressing societal systemic issues. This re-emergence of social cohesion connected the reconstruction movement with other long standing social struggles.

The processes I discuss in this chapter took place from early 2011 onwards, as major irregularities became evident in the allocation of reconstruction subsidies and the delivery of ‘permanent’ housing units. During this period, grassroots movements revealed that greedy regional authorities were attempting to profit from the reconstruction by passing off temporary housing – *mediaguas* – as permanent and by convincing homeowners to rebuild when a repair would have been sufficient. These activities brought the attention of citizens and the press. Citizens recognized the collusion that was taking place between government authorities, construction companies, and the private real-estate market including linkages with the international financial sector. Hence, the struggle was not only for the reconstruction but to resist the forceful introduction of these historic *poblaciones* into the financialized real-estate market.

The re-emergence of social organization in response to the problems presented by the reconstruction brought many new leaders and actors into contact with one another. The leaders of the movement arose out of necessity with actors from past housing movements or adjacent grassroots sectors. The increasingly critical lens through which citizens regarded

the reconstruction and the process of re-learning and informing one another of this through the sharing of experiences and past struggles contributed to a more general and systemic approach to making demands in a wider movement. This shift caused a process of aggregation with the various other movements, resulting in the first unified, national-scale movement for a reconstruction. This national mobilization aimed to pressure policy makers to implement significant change and action.

In this chapter, I explore how a myriad of specific and localized struggles came together to become a national organized movement. This was a difficult process, as for most communities, the practice social organizing had been dormant for many decades. I explore the actions citizens took to bring attention to their concerns and generate dialogue between communities and policymakers. To conclude, I briefly discuss the results of the reconstruction, exploring the limits of the movement and Chilean policymaking and how, or to what degree, the process of the reconstruction influenced Chilean politics and civil society thereafter.

Although the reconstruction effort was formally supervised by the Chilean government through its Ministry of Housing (MINVU) and Ministry of Emergencies (ONEMI), in coordination with regional and local authorities, many other actors and organizations were involved at every level of Chilean society. This chapter draws heavily from interviews with Eduardo Ampuero, an artist and leftist activist who was also one of the social leaders of *RED Construyamos* and with Bárbara Orrego, a former union leader, and leader of the associations of neighborhood councils from Villa Futuro⁴⁶ since the reconstruction. As well, the chapter elaborates on the work of the neighborhood councils of individual *aldeas*, which Simon and Valenzuela-Fuentes (2017) define as Autonomous Popular Organizations (*Organizaciones*

⁴⁶ Villa Futuro and Aurora de Chile were the *poblaciones* that collaborated most with RED Construyamos during the reconstruction.

Autónomas Populares; OAP) and with the work of municipal and local organizations most notably include Dichato Citizens' Assembly – *Asamblea Ciudadana de Dichato* –, the aforementioned *RED Construyamos*, and at the national level, National Movement for a Just Reconstruction (*Movimiento Nacional por la Reconstrucción Justa*; MNRJ). The largest housing movements which supported the MNRJ were the National Federation of *Pobladores* (FENAPO) and the mortgage debtors' movement (ANDHA). Finally, the chapter also attends to the work of student federations and the many charities which were involved in the reconstruction, most notably *Fundación Techo Para Chile* and *Hogar de Cristo*, both organizations affiliated with the Catholic Church.

7.1. Shortcomings of the Early Reconstruction

Weeks after the earthquake, the government started to facilitate the construction of temporary housing for affected citizens. Specifically, the Piñera administration created emergency camps which they euphemistically described as *aldeas* – villages. Within the camps, Chileans were outfitted with simple emergency housing units known as *mediaguas* which consisted of four walls and a roof. These structures were made of prefabricated wood panels that can be quickly assembled by a small group of people. These dwellings were meant to be an improvement on self-built shacks and tents that people had built for themselves after the earthquake (Ministerio de Planificación, 2010).

Mediaguas, as structures and results of policy, reflect both Chile's social housing policy and the way the reconstruction was carried out after 2010. This section will expose two main problematics of the early reconstruction that revolve around *mediaguas*. The first problem was the intention of government officials to use *mediaguas* as a permanent solution. The second problem was the use of *mediaguas* by government officials to advance corrupt schemes, especially in the Ribera Norte Area.

Aldeas de Mediaguas: Emergency Housing is not a Permanent Solution

Mediaguas have been used mostly to provide emergency housing or to improve the conditions of impoverished *Pobladores* living in camps. The introduction of these structures as a solution to such problems can be tracked down a few decades to the work of a few Catholic charities that started to build for marginalized communities in the past, mainly *Hogar de Cristo* – Home of Christ. This charity was founded by Alberto Hurtado (1901-1952) ‘the communist priest.’ Hurtado’s spiritual successor is Felipe Berríos, who started the Roof for Chile Foundation (*Fundación Techo Para Chile: TECHO*) in 1997, aiming to improve the lives of *Pobladores* living in camps in Curanilahue, the main coal mining sector still active in the Biobío Region since Lota-Coronel stopped activities. For Berríos, his involvement with *Pobladores* was a testament that the end of the dictatorship did not bring the change that many had hoped:

Blinded by the enthusiasm of the 90’s, there was a hidden reality for most of the country. ... In the arrogant moment in which Chile was considered the “jaguar of Latin America,” we didn’t talk about those who still lived in poverty. Much less of the ‘ancient’ *poblaciones callampas*, that looked like a thing of the past.

(Berríos del Solar, 2006)

The importance of Catholic charities during the reconstruction is hard to over-estimate. This is partially because during the dictatorship, churches were one of the few social sectors that remained active. Other organizations that used to provide or push for housing, including unions and citizen’s committees, were disbanded, and parts of their activities only remained active within religious charities and *juntas de vecinos*. In addition, for urban *poblaciones* volunteers were the only realistic source of professional services, and the Catholic Church is one of the main conduits for channeling volunteers from student organizations to urban communities. Over the decades these charities have been active, their use of *mediaguas* as a housing solution and their reliance on volunteers have been adopted by sectors of the

government. While a detailed elaboration of these dynamics is beyond the scope of the thesis, it is important to mention because emergency housing units were in great part built by the efforts of these NGOs and student volunteers. For example, Mauricio Sáez, a university student who had been living in Concepción for several years (personal communication, 6 July 2021), remembered working with other students to draw maps of the damage in rural municipalities:

In the first month [after 27F], brigades to help the affected sprung up. In those was my brother who was studying architecture at the university, finishing up. ... He got to coordinate the municipality of Santa Juana to make the cadaster (survey) [of the damaged areas]. Then I got assigned to his team...I helped him and afterwards, I went with another group to guide them through the town.

In less than 15 days, the three universities of the Region: University of the Biobío, *Universidad del Desarrollo*, and the University of Concepción, organized and divided the Region's territory so that the students could make that cadaster. They received funding from the local and regional government and emergency funds [...]. The leaders were architecture students or people in the process of finishing their degree. [...] In the case of Santa Juana, it was meant to be done in 7 days, with 12 students, but we finished in 4 days. Then they went elsewhere to help other towns [to map the damage caused by the earthquake and tsunami].

The primary work of the NGOs and volunteers during the reconstruction was to build *mediaguas* and to distribute the materials which would allow others to build them. Unfortunately, and despite much commendable effort and good will by many of the students and NGO workers, *mediaguas* turned out not to be a sustainable solution. Aside from being only a short-term measure, the distribution and construction of *mediaguas* was compromised by lack of government organization, and by attempts to profiteer from some of the NGO's (CIPER, 2011; Echenique & Ramírez, 2011; Mostrador, 2011; Ulloa, 2010). Furthermore, the conditions of life in *mediaguas* were abject. Citizens feared that they would be forced to remain permanently in ostensibly temporary housing (Simon & Valenzuela-Fuentes, 2017). Fearing

this result, Bárbara Orrego (personal communication, 8 January 2022), explained that she decided not to leave her apartment:

People wanted to go out to the *mediaguas* because it was summer... but there were people that resisted and never left their apartments because they had all their stuff there— bathroom, lights, water, [etc.]. In contrast, [with the] *mediaguas* it was very cruel because the bathroom was outside--far [outside and that is where] they had to go to the latrine. It was a big change.

Women got empowered and organized because we had delegates for each *aldea*. There were like five [for each *aldea*]. They were temporary [delegates], but it lasted, like, two years. Then winter came. [Between the] winter, rain, rats, trash, [and] the latrine, it was a complete change because going from your apartment to that [was a stark difference].

They had to go to a *mediagua*, because there was no other way, then wait for them to reconstruct your place. One [household] had to wait at least two to three years. It was super painful. I didn't experience that because I never left my home. Some people took that option [to stay in their original apartment], but many didn't have [the choice]. I told the neighbors [that] it's like we went back 10 years in history, from having surpassed ourselves and accomplished so many goals back to zero. And today with the pandemic, [it] is the same.

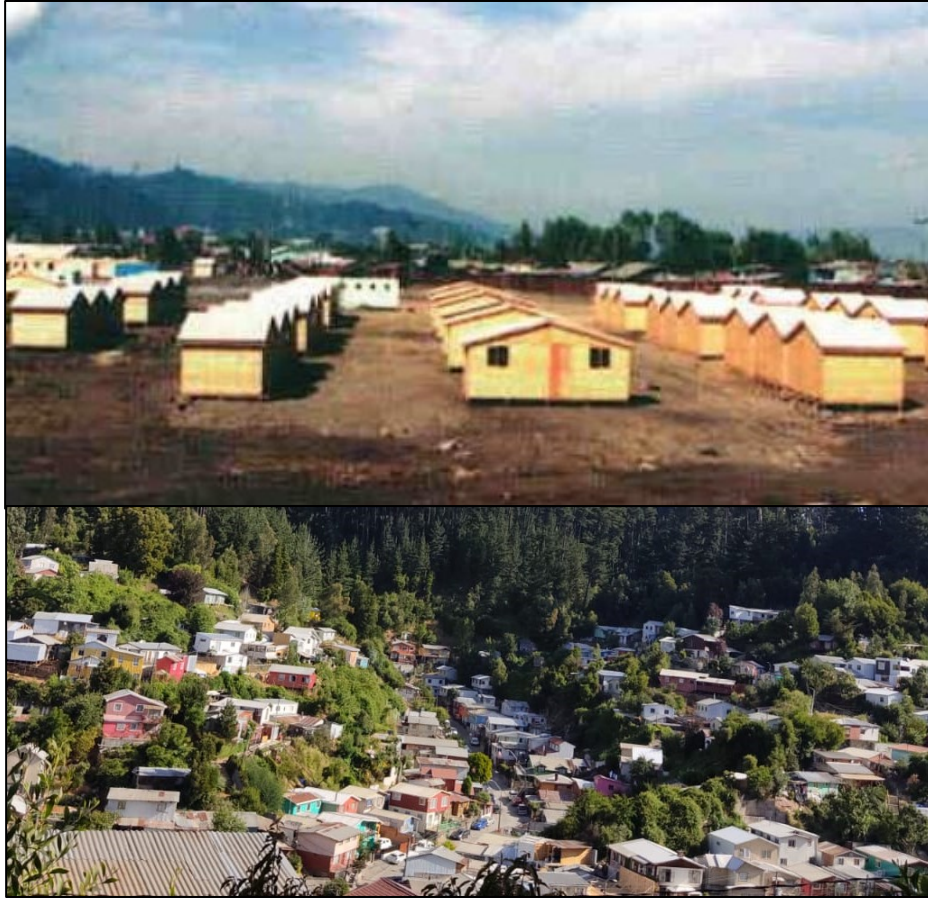


Figure 10. Two *poblaciones* in Concepción. Top: A camp of *mediaguas* Ribera Norte during the late 1990's. Credit: MINVU (2001). Bottom: *Población Agüita de la Perdiz*, next to the UdeC and Cerro Caracol in Concepción a settlement that still has *mediaguas* as the majority its permanent housing units. Taken by author in 2021.

Many affected citizens were caught choosing between frightening situations: staying in their damaged apartments hoping they would not collapse and moving into a *mediagua* with the risk of never recovering the kind of home they had built before 27F. As months went by, these fears materialized more and more. First, some citizens struggled to even get their *mediaguas* built, and when they did, they were of poor quality. This is best exemplified by Dichato, where the reconstruction failures of both the government and NGO's prompted *pobladores* to occupy the streets and protest. This brought together many *aldeas* and they formed the Dichato Citizens' Assembly. The protests only ended with the intervention of Chilean military police

(*carabineros*). Months later, when the Minister for Housing announced the reconstruction plan and Piñera's government delivered the first permanent units, they were only marginally better than the *mediaguas* (González, 2011; Mackenna & Iacobelli del Río, 2010; The Clinic, 2011; Ulloa, 2010). The difficulties which occurred during the reconstruction in Dichato are emblematic of the kinds of problems that affected other communities around Concepcion and elsewhere in Chile after 27F. In fact, protests and social mobilizations in Dichato helped to ignite the national level movement. As such, Dichato Citizens' Assembly was one of the main organizations that spearheaded the National Movement for the Just Reconstruction (*Movimiento Nacional por la Reconstrucción Justa*), a quick starting movement that extended throughout the Chilean territory.

As the months went by and the government was failing to build emergency units, let alone permanent units, the reconstruction turned into a disaster itself, causing small ruptures and dissatisfaction across communities in Southern Chile. The national government and the media showed a different reality in which the reconstruction advanced in high gear. As Mauricio Sáez (personal communication, 6 July 2021) explained to me, Felipe Kast Sommerhoff, nephew of Miguel Kast and head of the reconstruction committee, was an adept in transmitting that positive message, until he quit in late 2012 to form his own political party:

[Felipe Kast] had a use of language, very efficient, which attracted the masses. He was on the TV screen every day with a discourse of 'the reconstruction IS being done.' If I had lived in a place other than Concepción, I would've [thought that] Sebastian Piñera's government is reconstructing.

The reality, [however], is another [one]. To me it was evident because by 2011 it was more than a year from the earthquake [had past], I was in this movement, which was known worldwide, the student revolution of 2011. [We occupied] the university [for] seven months. At least once or twice a month we received some *Poblador* to give talks in the university, *Pobladors* from the social movements of [those] affected by the earthquake. ... Their relevance was that they were

affected by the earthquake and were organized locally like the homeless, or those living in emergency camps.

The initial reconstruction of emergency housing by NGOs and volunteers was commendable but insufficient. Even leadership at the involved charities were aware that the solution *mediaguas* represented was just a temporary one. However, as the government got more involved, it sometimes disrupted the collaboration between local community organizations and NGOs, lengthening the waiting time to obtain *mediaguas* and permanent housing units. As the government failed to provide temporary housing in time, many citizens resigned themselves to the new conditions adapted their *mediaguas* for permanent inhabitation (Ampuero Cárdenas, 2016; Özler, 2012). The low quality of the *mediaguas* and the government's attempt to induce citizens to take emergency housing as a permanent solution were issues that emerged in a larger political context. In this case it was a continuation of the Concertación's approach to social housing, of quantity over quality, and a rushed reconstruction aiming to show an efficient technocratic apparatus. However, politics were not the only aspect that compromised the reconstruction, corporate interests, especially of some local functionaries, caused a more insidious conflict that finally prompted the need for a structured nation-wide movement.

A Distasteful Solution: Local Government Attempts Post-Disaster Gentrification

Corporate interests interfered with the reconstruction in many ways, however, the reactivation of the Ribera Norte Project was the most glaring example. As mentioned in section 5.2, over decades, the *Pobladores* of Pedro del Río and Aurora de Chile had created a lot of value in Ribera Norte through their hard work, having reclaimed land from the Biobío River's floodplain, building the services and utilities of the neighborhood. These were thriving *Poblaciones* transitioning from informality into an emerging middle-class neighborhood. This value was seen by the corporate class since the 1990's, and when the Ribera Norte Project stalled in the mid-2000's, these interest did not disappear, but were hidden. The

2010 earthquake was the perfect opportunity to force this project through, as the bridges that connected Ribera Norte with the Biobío River's southern shore were heavily damaged (CIPER, 2013; E. Gatica Fuentes et al., personal communication, 19 January 2022; B. Orrego Gallegos, personal communication, 8 January 2022; Revista NOS, 2015).

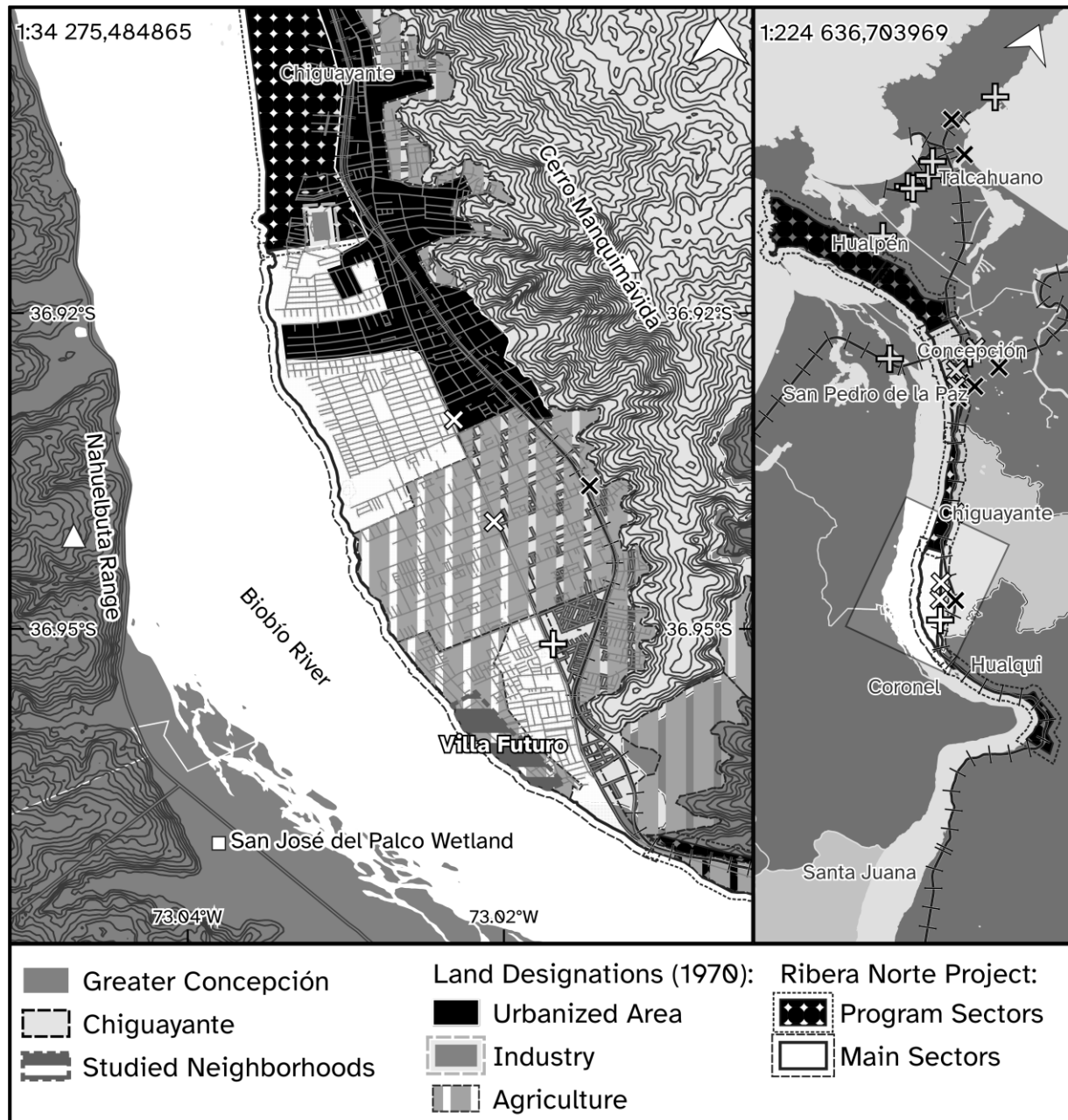


Figure 11. Map of the Ribera Norte Project and the Municipality of Chiguayante, indicating its land designations in 1970. Most of Chiguayante was designated agricultural land 50 years ago, the *población* Villa Futuro established in agricultural land in the 1990s. Generated in QGIS with data from Chile's National Library, Patrimonio Industrial Biobío, JAXA, and Chile's National Planning Office (1970).

Since the early days of the project in the 1990's, much had changed in Greater Concepción. For one, the Ribera Norte Project was resuscitated not as an urban redevelopment project for political reasons, but as a massive landgrab that would benefit corporate and political elites with invested interests. The context of the post-disaster also changed three other factors: first, as in the rest of Chile, reconstruction would be carried out through the subsidy model, and this made subsidies key instruments to carry out the post-disaster gentrification. Second, the shock of the tsunami drew attention to urban riverfronts, as they were valuable properties that would not be exposed to future tsunamis. Finally, Villa Futuro itself had developed significantly. In the 20 years since the establishment of the población, the numbers of people, in Villa Futuro and specifically in Chiguayante (See Figure 11 p. 146), had grown explosively and the scope of the project grew too.

I quickly understood why interest in Chiguayante increased when I traveled by bus to interview Bárbara Orrego. The bus route which extends from downtown Concepción to Chiguayante is called *Vía Láctea* – Milky Way. Along the scenic ride beside the Biobío River, I could appreciate how the river stretched, as well as the wetlands and mountains on the southern bank of the river (See Figure 12 p. 148). At the archive, I learned that the land in which Villa Futuro sits was not long-ago agricultural land. Bárbara Orrego confirmed this to me and made clear that it was 'solid' land, unlike the sector of Ribera Norte in Concepción built atop the river floodplain. She praised the terrains of her *población*:

Omar A.: ... Was there any reclamation from the river here?

Bárbara Orrego: No, these terrains are very good, very apt [for construction].

Omar A.: ... Just as the *vecinas* from Pedro del Río told me, there are very few working-class waterfronts in Chile.

Bárbara Orrego: Exactly, that is a great triumph for us, a triumph of social struggle. The river took a lot of importance after the earthquake. When the sea came, the tsunami, people got very afraid of the sea. Then they got interested here in the river 'nothing happened at the river' [people said]. The river has a lot of importance here in Chiguayante. We have two green lungs, the waterfront, and now they are designing a park. That's why we want social housing here. The problem for [developers] is SERVIU, because the land is from SERVIU and the state. [Hence] these are properties of the state and all Chileans, not of a private enterprise. That's what we argue.

(B. Orrego Gallegos, personal communication, 8 January 2022)



Figure 12. View of the Biobío River and the Nahuelbuta Range from Villa Futuro. Photo by author (2022).

Despite all the changes that Greater Concepción went through from the 1990's to 2010, some things remained similar to the pre-1990 *status quo*. There was a member of the Piñera family in a high-ranking position in government pushing for financialized welfare. There was a member of the Kast family in charge of carrying out *erradicaciones*. There was a member of the van Rysselberghe family in Concepción's government, strengthening the position of the family in the construction industry. And finally, albeit with small differences, the same old Ribera Norte Project, resurrected, still aiming to displace *Pobladores* from the areas of interest.

During the mid-1990's, the Ribera Norte Project was focused mostly on the neighborhoods of Pedro del Río Zañartu and Aurora de Chile. Even then the project aimed to include a long stretch of the Biobío's northern shore, from the mouth of the river to the municipality of Hualqui. However, as mentioned before the city of Chiguayante developed during this period, as such, Villa Futuro was not a target for displacement during the initial Ribera Norte Project. Hence, the displacement attempts after 2010 earthquake were a first for this *población*, inhabitants of Villa Futuro did not have the experience resisting displacement that those of Pedro del Río and Aurora had and were unable to identify the displacement process early on (Baeriswyl et al., 2017; MINVU, 1999).

After the 2010 earthquake, politicians saw an opportunity to restart the Ribera Norte Project through the reconstruction process. This effort was spearheaded by the former mayor of the city, Jacqueline Van Rysselberghe. However, this was not merely political, as her family had deep connection with both the real estate and construction industries. She attempted to profiteer from many fronts including an opaque reconstruction 'pilot project.' This project led to the displacement of more than a thousand families in Villa Futuro. In Pedro del Río *pobladores* identified an underlying intent in the new reconstruction schemes. Victor Vivallo, one of the local leaders back then, was contacted regarding by the government just days after the earthquake:

Victor Vivallo: Because I was a social leader back then, I received a call one night. In that time, we had a mayor who later became *intendenta*, Lady Jacqueline van Rysselberghe. She had these functionaries called *territoriales*. So, the *territorial* of our zone, Mister Pedro, called me one day around midnight. I picked up the phone and the conversation went as follows:

'Don Victor, how are you?'

'Good, and you?'

'Well, good, good... you know what? We're thinking, looking for a sector – how is your *población*?'

‘We have some damaged houses. Some fell [completely while] some others are [just in a] really bad [state], but not many [are seriously damaged]. Let’s say our *Población* has 104 homes. We have six completely destroyed and around 10-15 with a lot of damage, mine among those. So around 20 homes [total] that are [in a very] bad [state].’

‘Look, we have this pilot project, and we will rebuild the whole *Población*, all 104 [units].’

‘My friend, to be honest we have only 20 or 25 homes with damage. We would be thankful [if] those [and the] six that fell [were] rebuilt, but the rest are intact.’

‘No, no, no, but this is a pilot project. We will launch it here and we will rebuild all your *Población*.’

Victor Vivallo: I had to let him know that I did not agree to that. Most likely my *vecinos* wouldn’t agree to that plan either. A bit later, [Jacqueline van Rysselberghe] was named *intendenta* and in that position it was discovered that she was making the same [offer]... to other neighborhoods in other sectors.

Ernestina Gatica: Was she given away by *Aurora*?

Victor Vivallo: No, she [was discovered because] of a problem in the town of Bulnes, Santa Clara, a councilor from [her political coalition gave her away]. In *Aurora de Chile* there was a *funa*,⁴⁷ which was public and everything, but she fell in a program of *Tolerancia 0* in Santiago. [Then her scheme] at the regional level was dismantled.

Ernestina Gatica: And to what end [was she doing this]?

Victor Vivallo: To generate profit for construction companies — plus to generate political clout, gratuitous political clout because there was no need. There were many other priorities, if you [think about it].

(V. Vivallo, E. Gatica, personal communication, 20 January 2022)

By 2010, van Rysselberghe had been mayor of Concepción for the last 10 years. She and her family had been spending those years consolidating their role in the construction industry

⁴⁷ A protest aiming to reject and shame a particular individual or group.

and climbing the UDI's ladder. Her family also expanded into the financial sector during the transition period, always yearning for their settler roots and naming every other enterprise they set up as *Comercial Belgic* or *Inversiones e Inmobiliaria Belgique* (CIPER Team, 2015; van Rysselberghe, n.d.). Thus, the van Rysselberghe Family then fully represents the disparate private interests and their integration at this point of connection into a corporate elite and logic throughout government structures. These conflicts of interest were exposed by van Rysselberghe's attempts to carry out several land grabs in different towns, but most notably in Ribera Norte. The local newspaper *Resumen* (2012) described her *modus operandi* as:

The *intendenta* offered extraordinary benefits ... like donating *mediaguas*. ... After the chaos of the earthquake, the regional government argued for the uninhabitability of the units, making some neighbors accomplices, [but] to what end? For the *población* to abandon the terrain. She had the same *modus operandi* in Centinela, Villa Futuro, and Camilo Olivarría, promising benefits with the condition that people left their homes, or even destroyed them. ... However, this [was] fraud [because the houses] did not have the corresponding certificates of uninhabitability.⁴⁸ In short, they were empty promises.

Among those who did not let themselves be fooled by this 'benefactor', there was concern. They saw a group of *Pobladores* – often the poorest without the tradition of the founders – ceding to the whims of a woman of the elite who turned them into her political clients. These groups, without conscience, took over the neighborhood and, for promises and little gifts, gave away the efforts of generations. Then [other *Pobladores*] decided to ... record one of their meetings, recording the promises that she made in those meetings. Being questioned by the opposition, and even by her political party, she had to quit.

Van Rysselberghe's scheme was ambitious due to two reasons: the amount of funding delegated to housing (USD 500M according to Riffo & Véjar, 2010) and the misuse of the subsidy model to finance these landgrabs. Additionally, those who partook in van Rysselberghe's

⁴⁸ This means that the buildings were not deemed as uninhabitable by the Ministry of Public Works, hence, inhabitants would be unable to claim a subsidy after having agreed to a buyout under market price, locking them out of access to the promised subsidies (Lecaros, 2010).

scheme allied themselves with those who hoped to revitalize the Ribera Norte Project. This unholy alliance had three important implications which should be taken into account:

1. This project implied a process of gentrification. These historic *poblaciones* are often the only way in which working-class citizens can obtain affordable housing near downtown areas. Moreover, a successful landgrab by van Rysselberghe would have broken an ongoing process of land tenure and citizen-driven formalization of the neighborhood.
2. A hostile advancement of the Ribera Norte Project would have erased the popular public heritage of the industrial past of the neighborhood. Up to that point, this industrial corridor was not only identity-defining for the region, the city and the neighborhood, but it also sustained a living history for the families of workers. *Vecinos* of Pedro del Río were especially fond of their flour mill, *Paños Bibío*, and the hydroelectric power plant.
3. Finally, for those who were hit by the earthquake or were tricked-out of their homes, there was also the threat of permanency within the initially temporary *mediaguas*.

As explained in the previous chapter, during the immediate aftermath, the government prioritized protecting private property and fulfilling the needs of the private sector instead of those of its citizens. In reaction to this, citizens organized immediately after 27F to fulfill their own needs in the absence of the government. Likewise, as the early stages of the reconstruction started, instead of focusing on the needs of its citizens, the government prioritized its own political interests, attempting to leave *mediaguas* as a permanent solution. Moreover, some regional sectors started to misuse the construction of *mediaguas* and the subsidy model to displace *Pobladores* from valuable land. The shortcomings of the early reconstruction caused discontent which was mainly displayed by citizens of Dichato and

Aurora de Chile. Citizens knew that *aldeas* of *mediaguas* were not enough. Likewise, the work of NGOs and volunteers was not enough. Just as in the immediate aftermath of 27F, the options which mattered most to the population were citizen-led initiatives, pushing the different levels of government take specific actions. As the organizations that arose from the immediate response and early reconstruction were not sufficient to pressure the government, it was imperative to grow the movement big enough to pressure policymakers into action.

7.2. The Toil of Convergence

In response to the shortcomings of the first reconstruction, smaller struggles started to band together in order to be heard and to pressure policymakers. As such, the larger movement was built by localized struggles. This section explores the myriad diverse organization that turned into a more cohesive overarching struggle. As these movements consolidated, the problem they addressed did too. This led some sectors of the movement to directly question structural failures in Chilean society. It is also essential to point out that leaders and participants in this wider struggle for housing and reconstruction were informed of, and even partook in, past social movements related to housing or systemic issues, most notably student movements. The 27F movement, thus, was a turning point for housing struggles, moreover, it was a point of intersectionality between contemporary and past social struggles, bringing together a multitude of actors and organizations across Chilean civil society.

Mobilizing at the *Aldea*

Just as *Poblaciones* were before 2010, the *aldea* became a space inhabited by the underprivileged. *Aldeas* often gathered those most affected by the earthquake and tsunami, representing the most neglected spaces and citizens. *Aldeas* were where the structural issues of the Chilean model for development and urban policy were acutely exposed. It was at these sites where the rupture and failure of response after 27F became most evident, where

opposing interest collided. However, unlike older *Poblaciones* that were mainly formed by impoverished factory workers, *aldeas* had middle-class citizens and Chileans from all walks of life living in them. Hence, the increased discontent caused by these failures was not localized only in working class and underprivileged communities. Consequently, *aldeas* were the main sites for mobilization towards reconstruction following the earthquake. These *aldeas* were not only at the crux of the conflict for reconstruction, but it was also in the *aldeas* that the lingering memories of past struggles re-emerged.

The euphemistic rebranding of emergency camps as *aldeas* reflected policymakers' attempts to gloss over past struggles, branding them as easily solvable by technocratic solutions, rather than as deep problems in Chile's socioeconomic structure. Felipe Berríos (2006) noted how the Concertación period was marked by the dissociation of Chilean society from informal urban settlements, as if *poblaciones* were a problem of the past. However, these settlements were always there, although under different names. Then, *aldeas*, were an iteration of *poblaciones callampas* – literally 'mushroom community,' refers to the *poblaciones* comprised mostly of shacks and tents – a reflection that the post-dictatorship policies did little to address the systematic problems that perpetuate marginalization and poverty. Moreover, in the case of the post-disaster period, the conditions of the *aldeas* revealed the government's inability to reach and to aid the popular sectors (Angelcos & Pérez, 2017; Navarrete-Hernandez & Toro, 2019).

As I explained previously, there *is* a subsidy model in place to provide low-income housing. During the Concertación period, however, this model was used primarily to provide a sufficient amount of housing and to facilitate ownership for the middle class, while perpetuating contributing to the forced displacement of *poblaciones* towards urban peripheries. The housing crisis of the 1990s as well as the organization of ANDHA in the early 2000s proved that the private sector, despite its nurturing by the subsidy model, was also not up to

the task of providing proper housing to low-income families under regular circumstances, much less in post-disaster situations. This caused those expecting a departure from Pinochet politics and sectors of the general population to be skeptical not only of the private real estate sector, but of the government institutions that furthered this financialized approach to post-disaster housing.

As the reconstruction-affected citizens “did not represent a priority [for the Chilean government], their condition of exclusion and abandonment was not a cause for the state to modify the conditions of extreme injustice” (Ampuero Cárdenas, 2016, p. 29). This was evident by the contrasting swiftness of the reconstruction of private industry and infrastructure in comparison to reconstruction efforts aimed at citizens in working class neighborhoods. For some, such as *Vecinos* of Pedro del Río, this failure to address the reconstruction meant a loss of history and patrimony. Víctor and Ernestina lamented the loss of historic industrial buildings after 27F, like the brick townhouses that were replaced by apartments, the Santa Rosa Flour Mill and the Paper Mill Paños Biobío, which remain abandoned. In places with less history, such as Villa Futuro, which was in the process of building and formalizing the *población*, the failure of the reconstruction meant, a return to zero. In Villa Futuro, the possibility of the neighborhood to return to a permanency as an informal camp was very likely. Later on, just as in the rest of Ribera Norte, Villa Futuro found itself a target for post-disaster gentrification.

As I pointed out in Section 7.1, the first *Pobladores* to organize around the reconstruction were those of Dichato, especially those of the Camp El Molino. Despite the efforts of volunteers and the army, the construction of *mediaguas* was slow. Once the Minister of Housing’s plan for reconstruction was unveiled and the *mediaguas* were built, however, it became evident that unless the citizenry organized, the loss of their homes would be permanent due to the insufficient and inordinately slow government response. At both national

and regional levels, once the reconstruction program was announced (Mackenna & Iacobelli del Río, 2010), it set itself a timeframe of 8 years (2010-2018) for a comprehensive reconstruction. The outline of the program is thorough and considers three levels of the reconstruction process. These levels are: housing units, neighborhoods, and the city. The program has several strong points that integrate pre-existing governmental programs and institutions into its *modus operandi*. It also has a strong focus on prevention and damage-reduction through improved infrastructure, even proposing new cadasters for each region tailored to rezone hazardous areas, especially those prone to tsunamis. The reality between the document and the execution, however, was stark. As well, the planning documents show that citizen participation was an afterthought.

According to the original plan for housing, a register of all affected citizens would be finished by May 2010 and permanent dwellings would start being delivered in June 2010. Emergency *aldeas* were set to be completed by August 2010, and starting in the same month, the government was to begin the transition towards permanent units through the application of subsidies to the MINVU. In reality, by mid-April, the town of Dichato only had 20 *mediaguas* built by the army. One year after the earthquake, the inhabitants were still in *aldeas*, unable to navigate the bureaucracy created by the multiple agents involved in the reconstruction. Some of those affected were still struggling to get a *mediagua*. Miriam, a citizen interviewed by Radio Bio-Bio, was one of these individuals. She said that she “expected to have a *mediagua* before Christmas, but her paperwork is laying in some office, lost amidst the thousands of applications for aid and a dignified life” (González, 2011; Ulloa, 2010). Before the crisis, Dichato had the privilege of being a national tourist hub. During the early stages of reconstruction, however, due to the extent of the devastation, Dichato was at the center of national attention and heavily covered in the media. Places like Talcahuano, Villa Futuro, or Coliumo, were an even a lower priority for both the government and the press as

they were less well known and less affected by the disaster (Revista NOS, 2010; C. G. Sandoval, 2010a).

By 2011, the problematics of the reconstruction were compounding. If, for the most vulnerable, access to *mediaguas* was a struggle, access to long-term reconstruction subsidies or housing was unreachable. As Bárbara and Ampuero pointed out, many disillusioned citizens were preparing to permanently inhabit an *aldea*. For those who managed to actually qualify for subsidies or new housing units, these solutions seldom reflected the aims and reality of what was aimed for from the initial project, resembling more of an improved *mediagua* than the permanent housing units depicted in the plans for the reconstruction (Mackenna & Iacobelli del Río, 2010). Moreover, as it happened initially with Dichato, political interests and personal interests some areas were prioritized over other with more urgent needs, as it happened in Chiguayante that was prioritized to advance the Ribera Norte Project. On the other side of the spectrum, rural communities of the Biobío Region, which were in a much tougher situation, remained neglected, as Ernestina gave account of in Chapter 6. Despite this governmental neglect, *Pobladores* from many towns like these were eventually represented by the organizations that arose due to these compounding problems (Danilo, 2014).

Although Chile had been going through a climate of social reawakening since the mid-2000s, there was still an absence of organization at the time of 27F. The lingering memories of past organization struggles remained latent in the minds of Chileans during this time, *aldeas* became a site for these organizations and practices to re-emerge and to give future organizations a better shape. After the first few months of the reconstruction, when citizens started to take care of their own immediate needs, organizing *ollas comunes* and building shacks and *mediaguas* with the support of NGOs. Although during this period *Pobladores* did manifest their discontent, they were not considered by policymakers. It was

only after the movement grew significantly that their demands were heard and actions were taken. Hence, the first year was one of responding to immediate needs and localized struggles, as well as a gradual unveiling of the deeper problematics of the reconstruction, the organizing that led to the national movement only started to materialize in early 2011 after many smaller organizations banded together.

Aggregation of Social Movements

By mid-2010 to early-2011, the movement really started to structure itself as something bigger than a group of dissatisfied *aldeas*. Whereas the role of new leadership is exemplary and was key to this organizing effort, returning actors for past struggles provided vital experience to the process, and connected the struggle for the reconstruction with the past or parallel struggles they had come from. Past social leaders from the Concertación and before were re-introduced mainly based on the shared context of struggles the *aldeas* faced, though their affiliation was not limited to these. *Aldeas* and neighborhoods with a solid past of organization, like Pedro del Río and Aurora de Chile in Concepción, organized around their *Juntas de Vecinos*. Younger *poblaciones* and *aldeas* like Villa Futuro in Chiguayante and El Molino in Dichato organized under new leadership. The coalition of these local organizations into a national movement was greatly supported by organizations of *Pobladores* such as FENAPO or ANDHA, and by students' organizations.

Although out of the scope of this thesis, the role of students' organizations is essential to the organization of civil society in Chile. This holds truth for apolitical organizations, as well as for those in the left and right. Most students' organization collaborate with *Pobladores* and disadvantaged communities through volunteering, and leftist student movements often collaborate beyond that. As such, universities provided clear critical perspectives on the post-disaster, as well as troubling forecasts for the reconstruction. In Santiago, The Reconstruction Observatory emerged, and took the task of linking students and

academics with *Pobladores* and activists in Santiago, while also contributing to the production of knowledge on this topic. The organization was established at University of Chile where the Faculty of Architecture and Urbanism prioritizes vulnerability studies.

In Concepción, the process has been more immediate and hands-on. *RED Construyamos* initially was formed by young professionals and students that intended to fulfill a similar role than that of the Observatory, however it ended up evolving into a larger, more politically involved NGO. Students from Concepción had a particularly important role as their environment facilitated the intersection between different social struggles and otherwise atomized sectors of society. Mauricio Sáez, who was a sociology student at UdeC back then, told me how the university promoted this environment of intersectionality:

From the student environment, especially that of the left, what we did was collaborate with those camps... [[We were] reading with them, working with the kids on topics of resilience to overcome the fear of the earthquake, to reconfigure how to rebuild thinking that in a future earthquake, they wouldn't lose their homes, security zones, all those things with risk maps. That was from the more political side.

In 2010, we held the National Congress of Sociology Students at Universidad de Concepción. ... When we proposed our university as the seat we had a different program, but we changed it because of the earthquake. We changed the working groups, and the presentations. In less than two months, [we changed] the program, which was very attractive around this logic of structural damage. We had the same tables [as we had originally planned on], territory, development, methodology, but all [of it was now] focused on the earthquake.

[As part of the congress] we led three fieldtrips: one to the historical neighborhoods along the river [Pedro del Río and Aurora de Chile] where the building [Alto Río] and the bridge fell, the second to Talcahuano where the tsunami left containers and ships within the city, and the last to Dichato which was destroyed by the tsunami. It literally disappeared. Those fieldtrips were linked to the local context and territory. In Dichato, the talk was given by *Pobladores* from the [Dichato Citizens' Assembly]. In Talcahuano, it was a professor and several union leaders because that's a place with industry. For one of the historical

neighborhoods, the activity was to walk from the university to the river. ... There the professor said 'the real estate firms, which are beasts, will come and buy historical homes and put buildings instead. They are doing it already, but it will get worse with the earthquake, using the pretext of damage'. ... And that happened— 10 years after the earthquake the urban landscape literally changed.

Moreover, the university did more than just connecting students with *Pobladores*; it also connected many students who were themselves severely affected by the earthquake. Then the University of Concepción was a nexus of organization for students from Constitución, another city heavily affected by the tsunami further north. As Mauricio explained:

Many students were from Constitución, the epicenter, and they formed an assembly of students who lived in Concepción. We called them *los consti*. They built this network of students from Constitución from several universities, and they channeled help to the VII Region, Maule Region, where Constitución is. I mention this because I made a lot of friends volunteering with them, and they didn't even know each other, they were neighbors in Constitución, but the earthquake and the university united them. It was a network [that was] so big and heterogenous. I feel that diversity allowed them to build a lot of critical spaces, in which, if the people were not politicized [before], their work make them become so. [They] had to understand that they were building houses and collaborating not because they were good or had a Christian spirit, but because the government was not doing anything. Then we had to help each other. After 2012, *los consti* were still organized. After I left Chile, I came back to the university for a couple of activities and *los consti* were organizing seminars and workshops about what happened 5 years after the earthquake. By that time, it was an organization that didn't necessarily follow a single political thread but [was] a more heterogeneous group united by the reconstruction.

(M. J. Sáez Cuevas, personal communication, 6 July 2021)

Early on the students put into words the notion of 'structural damage,' which addresses the social preconditions that amplified the impact of the earthquake in Chilean society. Although by this point in mid-2010 most *aldeas* and camps were concerned with urgent situation, these ideas were not only in universities, but discussed between volunteers, *Pobladores*, and affected citizens – many of whom were also students. For the sociology students like

Mauricio, the notion of structural damage was one not merely about physical structures or infrastructure, but about Chile's socioeconomic ordering. As the students explained:

Without doubt, the coining of these two words led us to elaborate a specific meaning; we cannot let ourselves be seduced by previous coined notions which focus their attention on material cracks that happen in certain territory. Instead, we need to develop ourselves with a new vision which analyses the phenomenon for its totality. As such, what currently is being lived in the city of Concepción should not be conceived just as a catastrophe – or structural damage – caused by the severity of nature, but as an economic process, social and political, that for years has slammed the reality of Penquistas [the people of Concepcion].

(UdeC Students, 2010)

While the students were tinkering with these ideas in the background and supporting all the *aldeas* and *poblaciones* in many ways, the preoccupations of the people living in *aldeas* became more concrete and focused. In Greater Concepción, the struggle was centered around the glacial pace of construction and low quality of the permanent housing units being built in Dichato. And then, as functionaries started to pressure *Pobladores* across the Biobío Region to agree to buyouts, the resistance to post-disaster gentrification also became a central part of the struggle for reconstruction, mainly in Ribera Norte. However, the complete process for obtaining a subsidy and the quality of the units were frustrating for many Chileans nationwide. Furthermore, the earthquake also magnified the struggles the FENAPO and ANDHA were rallying against. Although these were the main problematics of the struggle, the national movement took a more general approach to include the diversity of problematics that were affecting Chileans across the country. It was this broader approach that became the basis for the national struggle for a just reconstruction (González, 2011; Lecaros, 2010).

Many of the new actors got involved in the organization out of a need for it. Dichato was at the center of this due to the dire situation the town was in. The severity of its neglect

by the authorities made it one of the main places in which organization started to transition from the short-term goal of fulfilling everyday needs to a critical and demanding approach needed for the long-term reconstruction. The *aldea* El Molino in Dichato was one of the most organized in the Greater Concepción area, and it became instrumental to the unification of smaller organizations. With the support of the FENAPO and students, *Pobladores* from El Molino and other *aldeas* staged several manifestations that caught national attention and formed the Dichato Citizens' Assembly. The overwhelming destruction in Dichato and the evident neglect of the government towards the citizens sparked a many to mobilize. Eduardo Ampuero was one of those, he had been involved in social organizing for a long time. By then he was working with students' organizations. He named the situation in Dichato as one of the main reasons to form *RED Construyamos* in early 2010:

There were some of us that reunited and discussed that a dire situation would come, that we had to prepare, to help organize those who are more affected. I participated as a founder of that movement, which was an assembly. The movement was sporadic and responded to the urgent needs of the most affected sectors: those left without housing or those who were being displaced.

Immediately after the earthquake I happened to read an article written by a Mexican of an earthquake that happened [in Mexico City]. After this one, ... they produced a huge phenomenon of social collaboration in which, immediately, society acted in solidarity, searching to articulate peoples' needs and to respond to immediate problem. [During that time] I was supporting the Federation of Students from several universities to go to help at Dichato. Dichato was so shocking to us here because of the scale of the tsunami; we mobilized immediately. The rest of Chile didn't because the country was disconnected. They didn't know it was happening. We wanted to commit ourselves not only to help but to support the organization effort. At the start, our group was helping affected people with technical resources.

At that moment, with that impulse [of spontaneous solidarity], we wanted to have those professionals form a technical team and then to aid the rest of citizens and to organize a common working group. [This was to be] a kind of mutual-aid assembly to solve problems but also to target policies of the reconstruction. So

this process wouldn't come only from the state but also political and economic powers. That didn't work out because professionals, even those who were politically involved, didn't have this in mind. They were very punctually focused on their technical action to solve very specific and local problems. That failed, but it allowed us to reunite. [We were] a group of professional, student leaders, and other social leaders, which allowed an assembly of diverse movements to [collectively] negotiate with the state and to impede [the process of post-disaster gentrification that] we suspected the state was supporting.

(E. Ampuero Cardenas, personal communication, 4 October 2021)

At the start, Ampuero remained optimist because of the solidarity that emerged in response to the disaster. However, as he mentions, they started to suspect that they would need to go beyond technical help and volunteering to truly combat attempts of post-disaster gentrification. Their suspicions turned out to be not only accurate but an underestimate. And when they started to understand the very real danger that the reconstruction posed, at this point *RED Construyamos* started to reach out more and more *aldeas*:

We didn't have very clear what the process of reconstruction would entail. We suspected, and as we lived some of the experience, we started to realize that the relationship between capitalism [and politicians] was more evident than we thought. Those things we judged as unfair became even more unfair. It [the collusion] surpassed our beliefs, the level of articulation between economic groups linked to real estate and land speculation intervening directly with sectors within the state, with operators, lobbyists, politicians, even managers that retired from the private to the public sector through ministries.

It was not until then that we realized the gravity of the situation. It took us something like a year [to realize this] because at the start everything was so confusing. People were in camps, thousands of people in camps, that was urgent. Then the kinds [of people] who were left without minimal conditions of care, nourishment, [all difficulties compounding] the problem of housing for single mothers. We were busy with that sense of urgency. We conversed with leaders. The vast majority of whom were social leaders of neighborhoods, committees... When we finally realized that if people formed a group, they could put conditions [on those leading] the reconstruction, reasonable deadlines, dignified conditions, it was like a year [later]. Then we realized that everything that had to do with the

reconstruction was done through private enterprises, especially regarding real estate. Then, when we started to collaborate with other sectors like Dichato, Villa Futuro in Chiguayante, Coronel, we realized that very strange things were happening. Very solid housing units and *poblaciones* were being declared uninhabitable.

(E. Ampuero Cardenas, personal communication, 4 October 2021)

Although *RED Construyamos* was active and provided support to *aldeas* and communities since early 2010, the group's involvement political activism started in earnest after the buyouts and expropriations exposed the ongoing process of displacement that characterized the government's project of reconstruction. Barbara Orrego's account provides a glimpse of this process of social movement aggregation as well as a testament of the mutual support these diverse organizations gave each other. She was contacted by *RED Construyamos* approximately a year after the earthquake, after many of the *vecinos* of Villa Futuro had already agreed to the buyouts and moved out of their neighborhoods. She mentioned that she was approached by Ampuero and that:

With *RED Construyamos*, everything was very quick because they [the people] reached out to us. They saw the news, that we were – that [Jacqueline] van Rysselberghe was misusing [subsidies]. She was going to appropriate all of this because [her *territoriales* said that] the terrain was uninhabitable, and that we [homeowners] had to leave it right away. *RED Construyamos* came giving us support. It was so important [that they did that] because with them we could go to universities, organize seminars, we could spread the word and denounce all the abuses that the government made in that time with the van Rysselberghes, [and] all the deals they wanted to make in Aurora de Chile and here. ... [After that] people left. Owners left. They were content with 12 million pesos [ca. \$US 12,000]. I was left living alone in a tower of 48 apartments.

Later we went to Santiago to do several things. We were all together with the National Movement (MNRJ). When we got together [with them] they were already organized because they had this topic of ANDHA Chile about the houses that were purchased with the bank, another topic of the indebted. They had also had

a big struggle. We were in debt just with the SERVIU but nowadays we don't owe anything.

(B. Orrego Gallegos, personal communication, 8 January 2022)

The National Movement for a Just Reconstruction (MNRJ) was the movement which encompassed many others, including ANDHA and *RED Construyamos*. It was initially led by Dichato's Citizen Assembly, which got a central role in its formation a year after 27F, when a congress of organizations was held at Dichato which culminated in the redaction of a list of demands. *Pobladores* were involved in the process in many ways, some through the FENAPO, but also through many smaller movements of *Pobladores* and by them as participants and individuals in other organizations. It is paramount to understand that *Pobladores* are not a monolith. They are, perhaps, the most diverse social movement in Chile. Just by inhabiting a *población*, or in this case an *aldea*, one can take the title of *Poblador*. Angelcos and Pérez (2017) identify the contemporary *Poblador* as the last iteration of a struggle for land that re-emerges in cycles. In this case, they struggle for dignified housing, expanding on the past struggles for four walls and a roof. It is important to take this into consideration not only for the role *Pobladores* had on aiding self-organization efforts, but to understand that this was a key part of the perspective that wanted more than a bare solution, more than just a roof, there were many *Pobladores* who wanted a longer-term solution, not just to housing, or urban integration, but to the underlying structures that impoverished them.

7.3. Disaster Citizenship in *Praxis*

The congress of social organizations that was held at Dichato in January of 2011 signaled the start of the national process of organizing. Although *Pobladores* from El Molino, Aurora de Chile, among others, had captured the attention of the press before then, their communities had little to no involvement in decision making. Experienced activist like Ampuero and the leaders of historic *poblaciones* knew that the only way to obtain result from the

government was by pressuring policymakers through social action and organization. Once the movement reached the national scale, the task of confronting the policies that were hampering the reconstruction became much easier.

This resistance was supported by the practices of social organizing that had been used by *Pobladores* during the previous decades to resist *erradicaciones*, these were marches, manifestations, *funas*, and *tomas*, the last two being more political and radical (Oxhorn, 1995; Weinstein, 1989). In consequence, these mostly took place in response to especially dire situations and localized issues, just as the early-2010 *tomas* in Dichato when citizens were getting by without even *mediaguas*. In contrast, manifestations were massive and often included all sectors of the population, as such these had a wider scope and started to configure the MNRJ towards a more comprehensive agenda. One of the earliest examples was the protest organized by *RED Construyamos* on August 27th, 2010. Then, the group adopted a platform aimed to “accumulate social forces, with a common platform not limited to particular and localized demands, pointing towards the policies of the state” (Ampuero Cárdenas, 2016).

Moreover, there were some specific actions (See Figure 13 p. 169) which led to the most significant advances in community organizing, also furthering negotiation between citizens and the government. One of such actions was the direct result of the congress held at Dichato, organized by affected citizens, ANDHA and the FENAPO. During the congress, citizens wrote a draft for a petition directed to the Chilean Government. This moment also marked a key point of change towards a more structured approach for social organizing. The petition was written collectively, with the aid of academics, and consisted of 20 demands and proposals for the reconstruction process. Aimed at then minister of housing, Rodrigo

Pérez Mackenna, it was delivered on March 7th to the Palacio de la Moneda⁴⁹ (Angelcos & Pérez, 2017; *El MNRJ*, n.d.). Some of its points were:

1. A chronogram detailing concrete deadlines to finish with the *aldeas* all around the country ... to be able to oversee the fulfillment of the presidential promise of May 21st, which aims to end the camps before next winter [2011].
2. ... Definitive housing for all affected citizens, without discrimination, ensuring housing solutions for *allegados*,⁵⁰ homeless, not only the owners. Hence it is paramount to give subsidies to all citizens ...
3. We demand to end the expropriations of the waterfront, to create a citizen's commission to analyze, case by case, this problem of all affected municipalities. ...
5. We propose the installation of emergency clinics in all *aldeas* to guarantee the health of those who will live in *mediaguas* during the winter in places with harsh weather.
6. We demand the installation of emergency SERVIU offices to facilitate paperwork and access to information.
10. We demand MINVU to produce and publish a monthly report on the advancement of the reconstruction in every municipality. ...[Such reports] must stop confusing public opinion by presenting information that does not distinguish between public works and existing housing, given the very slow advancement in building housing...
11. To end all measures of harassment to affected citizens and their social leaders. ...
12. That SERVIU compromises to acquire land in the same neighborhoods where citizens lived before the earthquake, especially in historic downtowns of affected cities, so that new housing projects do not imply the immigration to the cities' peripheries where there is no urban infrastructure.
15. Guarantee from the state that reconstructed and repaired housing units comply, at least, with the technical norms of habitability from the General Urbanism

⁴⁹ Seat of the President of the Republic of Chile.

⁵⁰ An *allegado* or "close one," is co-inhabitant of a home, usually a family member or friend. *Allegados* have been part of the wider struggle of *Pobladores* as they find themselves in that position out of need, many would be homeless without their support network.

and Construction Regulation, without implying a reduction of the surface of the unit [56m²].

19. The assignation of insurance against catastrophic events for housing built in areas of high risk.
20. We propose the creation of a Consejo Asesor Ciudadano – Citizen's Advisory Council – for the evaluation of the reconstruction and the search for efficient solutions. ...

(Rivera, 2011)

These demands marked the start of the most active moment of the reconstruction, the period between 2011 and 2012. After this, the movement continued active, in fact, some of the major events and negotiations took place between 2012 and 2015, especially for the communities of Ribera Norte. The diversity and approach of the protests and means of organization can be seen in the timeline presented in Figure 13 p. 169.

Timeline	
February 27, 2010	The earthquake hits the coast of the Maule Region, causing a tsunami that kills more than 500 persons, most of them in the town of Dichato.
March 11, 2010	President Sebastián Piñera takes office. Jacqueline van Rysselberghe is named <i>intendenta</i> of the Biobío Region.
March-April, 2010	Victor Vivallo receives a call from a <i>territorial</i> employed by van Rysselberghe, offering a ‘pilot project’ to reconstruct the whole neighborhood of Pedro del Río Zañartu. <i>Vecinos</i> are suspicious of this offer and they reject it.
April 12, 2010	The army lags behinds constructing <i>mediaguas</i> in Dichato, citizens endure without emergency housing.
May 2, 2010	First meeting of <i>RED Construyamos</i> at the University of Concepción.
August 27, 2010	Protests against the festivities of the bicentennial as most the reconstruction process stalled.
November 27, 2010	Mass protest led by RED Construyamos in Concepción.
Early January, 2011	National meetings of affected citizens in Talca. The MNRJ is formed.
January 15 and 16, 2011	National meeting on housing struggles, organized by the FENAPO. With the participation of ANDHA Chile, MNRJ, and independent movements of <i>Pobladores</i> .
February 3, 2011	Citizens from Villa Futuro and Dichato stage a protest against the attempts to expropriate their properties.
February 27, 2011	March for the anniversary of 27F “A year without reconstruction.” Downtown Concepción.
March 7, 2011	March of affected citizens in Palacio de la Moneda, Santiago. Delivery of the petition of affected citizens to the minister of housing.
March 27, 2011	Public Act “Funeral for the reconstruction.” Civic Neighborhood, Concepción.
April 3, 2011	Jacqueline van Rysselberghe resigns as <i>intendenta</i> after her scheme to profit from the reconstruction is made public.
July 11, 2011	<i>RED Construyamos</i> and students stage a <i>toma</i> of the Balmaceda School in Concepción.
Late 2011	A series of manifestations and <i>tomas</i> of Biobío’s SERVIU, that continued constantly until February 2014, when Eduardo Ampuero and Bárbara Orrego were detained.
February 25 to 27, 2012	Second anniversary of 27F, mass protest against reconstruction profiteering.
August 5, 2012	National encounter of <i>Pobladores</i> in Aurora de Chile.
August 12, 2012	<i>Pobladores</i> of Aurora de Chile consider an offer of <i>erradicación</i> from the government, rejected by neighborhoods through a vote. After this, negotiations between <i>Pobladores</i> of Ribera Norte and Piñera’s Administration stalled.
February 14 and 22, 2013	Public resignation of SERVIU’s head, Sergio Jara. <i>RED Construyamos</i> and <i>Pobladores</i> from Aurora de Chile and Villa Futuro stage a <i>toma</i> of SERVIU’s offices in Concepción.
February 26 to 28, 2013	Third anniversary of 27F, protest and occupation of streets in downtown Concepción.
December, 2013	Public forums: “Territory as commodity, place of transit and citizen appropriation” by Antonio Mena; “For the right to live where we were born” by L. Darmendrail and Antonio Mena; “Waterfronts, our right to inhabit” by Bárbara Orrego and <i>Pobladoras</i> .
February 27, 2014	Protests in downtown Concepción “Land is ours, not of whomever has the most.”
March 11, 2014	President Michelle Bachelet takes office.
April, 2014	Villa Futuro and Aurora de Chile restart negotiations with Bachelet’s administration.
March 21, 2017	First phase of the reconstruction of Villa Futuro finished. The reconstruction process slows down and eventually stops during the pandemic.
December 4, 2017	Families from Aurora de Chile receive housing units at the Apartment Complex Angol.
July 28, 2018	Families from Aurora de Chile receive housing units at <i>Población Nueva Aurora</i> in Ribera Norte.

Figure 13. A timeline of relevant events for the 27F reconstruction. Completed using data from Ampuero (2016) and archival materials from the Historical Archive of Concepción.

In the book Eduardo Ampuero (2016) wrote as a collective effort of *RED Construyamos* as well as during our interview, Eduardo put emphasis on the importance of approaching a common platform, directed towards policymaking and against the use of the reconstruction for profiteering and for real estate speculation. He also advocated against the pitfalls in which the social housing model of the Concertación fell into, what Chilean academics and activists critically call “housing without city,” this concept is used to describe housing without services and urbanization. More voices with similar concerns arose from academia with the formation of the Observatory for the Reconstruction at Universidad de Chile, created after some academics from the faculty of architecture conducted fieldwork in the Biobío Region after the earthquake. Influence of these ideas can be seen in the MNRJ after the delivery of the aforementioned demands in Santiago, bringing the struggle for reconstruction towards a more critical approach (Ampuero Cárdenas, 2016; E. Ampuero Cardenas, personal communication, 4 October 2021; Pulgar, 2011).

While founders of RED Construyamos envisioned its role fomenting the participation and upholding the interests of the most vulnerable sectors of the population, which historically especially with *Pobladores* has been the most active sector, it was surprising for many the active involvement of the middle classes and the support they gave each other. This involvement came due to the overlap of interests of ANDHA and the MNRJ, and their relevance increased in 2012 when internal turmoil on the right-wing coalition set the reconstruction aside. Mauricio and Ampuero commented on this:

Felipe Kast is the character who links what the government wanted to do with what was not being done in the field. His discourse was that in less than a year there would be no emergency camps, which didn't happen. Then he said that it was due to the economy and that they couldn't expend all the money needed, that it would be a slower process. However, in the second year, he had so much attention that there was political jealousy from the UDI and RN. He [eventually] formed his political party EVOPOLI.

[Piñera's party, the] UDI [received] the most votes back then. It concentrated 36% of the votes, enormous. It was a machine formed since the dictatorship, and in Felipe Kast the right saw a character who was steering their people towards the center. They even called him the right-wing communist. Then, [in 2012], the party sees him, and Piñera takes him out [saying:] 'the presidential delegation for the reconstruction is over'. They hid him and [suddenly] he was not on TV, not in the administration.

From my point of view, even though he didn't do the work as I'd have liked it, being objective, he was the one who worked the most in his government. ... He was the face of the right that worked, that went into the field, that managed to construct a discourse [...], that if I don't agree with, at least we can see they want to contribute to the country. Because the UDI and RN didn't build anything, ... they were busy trying to get criminals of the dictatorship out of jail, hiding a bunch of stuff, and then there was this deluge of articles from journals when they talked about the illegal funding of the reconstruction, how they were changing laws that benefitted their enterprises. But Kast had a platform and a link with the people. Just as the popular sectors are organized with students and such, the right is too. That's where Kast platform was, with the churches and TECHO.

... Roxana Miranda was the candidate of the *Partido Igualdad*. [Like Felipe Kast], she was a candidate for the presidency [in 2013]. The interesting thing about her candidacy was that she's a woman who comes from social movements, from the popular sector. She doesn't have academic training or come from a traditional family of politicians. Her party was formed from the grassroots, which is very interesting. I'm not saying that it's the best party, but it brings interesting ideas that had never been considered in politics – like now this thing of Aunt Pikachu. All the press is discussing how she'll be a *constituyente*⁵¹ if she doesn't have a profession, questioning if she graduated from secondary school or not. But I reflect, if historically Chilean constitutions have been written by professionals, government directed by professional and successful people, what guarantee do we have in professionals to do it well? That's not a guarantee, and the interesting thing about the constitutional assembly: it has the largest quantity and diversity of represented population on it.

(M. J. Sáez Cuevas, personal communication, 6 July 2021)

⁵¹ Elected citizen task with the redaction of Chile's new constitution.

Then, the internal party politics of the then incumbent government started to displace the concerns for the reconstruction, especially for the work Felipe Kast was doing. In the meanwhile, social leaders realized that they needed to massify the movement to reach out to the wider Chilean population and policymakers, it was also at this point where glaring systematic failures as the absence or unaccountability of insurance firms affected the middle-class:

[At the beginning] we reunited with some of the most vulnerable citizens: those most damaged by the social order; those in places of high risk; the sea front, which meant that their housing was completely lost. If, well, they had experience organizing for subsistence, they did not have experience with political organization. It was very hard for them to solve non-immediate matters. Then it was very difficult to organize. In fact, there was very little perseverance of the movement in those camps. ANDHA Chile had a very special effort in that aspect. Before the 90's, they didn't build high-rises as the soil didn't allow it, according to specialists. But once the housing and neoliberal investment came, that was forgotten and they started to build high-rises massively. The real estate appetite was such that there were many buildings with failures and cut corners in their construction, despite being very expensive to the professional and middle class [to produce]. Those buildings were very damaged. One, the Alto Río, even fell in the most absurd way a building can fall [See Figure 15 p. 189].

Then, inhabitants of those buildings organized to reclaim [their fallen building], because [he laughs] in a seismic country, insurance providers didn't have coverage for such things. There were no legal or political solutions for problems of this kind. Most of the citizens were also indebted and many lost their jobs because of the earthquake, so they went to the streets, and we found each other then. They had a lot of press coverage and when they got no solutions from the government, they joined *RED Construyamos* or made agreements with La Red to be represented. We mobilized together. That allowed us to have a much bigger space of public participation, and then the mobilizations we organized at least once a month grew bigger and bigger each time. In Concepción, *RED Construyamos* reunited the largest mass participation since the dictatorship. To imagine the state of our society— after an earthquake with awful conditions [in its wake], that's what it takes for a mass social movement to emerge. That also indicates social disillusionment.

(E. Ampuero Cardenas, personal communication, 4 October 2021)

Although the involvement of ANDHA and other reconstruction struggles of middle-class Chileans was a novelty as it was collaboration ‘on the field’ that was most significant, as I discussed before volunteering has been a staple practice in which youth, students, and professionals collaborate with underprivileged and rural populations, forming links that often transcend class. As shown in Figure 14 (p. 174), this was one of the main ways that *RED Construyamos* supported *aldeas*. During the struggle for Villa Futuro, Bárbara Orrego mentioned how the access to the technical resources given by *RED Construyamos* and voluntary professionals was key to forming a case against van Rysselberghe:

Architects and students came from everywhere, we had all that help, all the information, and the mayor back then, Mr. Tomás Solís, with the director of municipal works gave us technical support. With them we got the documents. ... Here the earthquake was mobilized to displace this población. [There was a fake study] done by a private enterprise by van Rysselberghe. They put it on social networks and TV that Villa Futuro was about to collapse. ... They have everything to convince you and if as leaders we think: ‘they are the government, they are right, we have to comply,’ that was what the old *junta de vecinos* did. [The old leaders] were tricked and now they built another *población* [far away].

We made some massive act at the *intendencia*⁵² because with *RED Construyamos* we were an immense network. We called all other *poblaciones* in our situation and many people came. We manifested, denounced what was being done. We demanded explanations and they couldn’t give it. The documents didn’t coincide. Their documents said that it was uninhabitable but ours said it was. At the end, the official one was from Municipal Works and that’s the one, with the help of the mayor and the engineers, that we made to show that they [the houses] were 100% inhabitable. We used the transparency law directly at the municipality, on the department of Municipal Works. With all their experience, they told us not to move, that [the first plan] was [corrupt] business...That [we heard] from the municipality. Don Marco Muñoz, who is the director of Municipal Works, helped us a lot with his experience. He is independent. He has been here forever and is a fundamental pillar [of the municipal government]. With his experience,

⁵² The building of the regional government. The building is located near Ribera Norte and downtown Concepción, in the Civic Neighborhood that was constructed on the site of the old railyard (See Figure 8 p. 102).

he helped us in everything. Even the current mayor, Rivas, has tried to fire him, but he has won every hearing— and Rivas is a socialist!

(B. Orrego Gallegos, personal communication, 8 January 2022)

Mauricio remarked that the involvement of ANDHA implied more than a struggle for housing. Their leader Roxana Miranda made it to the presidential race later in 2014 with a vastly different profile than other candidates as she came from social activism rather than an academic, political, or corporate background. This sudden rise of the movement came with increasing skepticism of the technocratic approach that policymakers followed since the Chicago Boys took office during Pinochet's administration. This skepticism of technocrats, managerial actors, and government directed many of the choices made by citizens during the aftermath of the earthquake, from the looting of supermarkets to establishing independent communications links, or, as Bárbara pointed out, taking independent measurements from those of the government.



Figure 14. A third-party trial pit requested by *Pobladores* from the Renacer Santa Clara Camp in Talcahuano in 2011. Credit: Eduardo Ampuero (2016).

The access to information was key, whether this information was official or not. While Bárbara indicated how the transparency laws were instrumental, the release of informal agreements or leaked information of irregularities was also a key part to get public support and pressure towards policymakers. Jacqueline van Rysselberghe was subject to two of such leaks, one *by Vecinos de Aurora de Chile* in which they published an audio in which she offered them outlandish concessions without any paperwork. The audio depicted her trying to convince them to leave their homes, conditioning the distribution of relief to affected citizens by asking them to support her or to leave their lots in several places of interest around Greater Concepción. It was after this recording leaked that many *vecinos* reached out to *RED Construyamos* or MNRJ. *Vecinos* of Aurora staged a *funa* which captured public attention and contributed to her quitting her newly appointed post of *intendenta*. The second one was on national television in Santiago, after she resigned, in which a political rival of her coalition leaked a video where some citizens described how she offered to misuse the funds of the reconstruction to rebuild poor but undamaged buildings. With her EGIS⁵³ – this a common practice among politicians, granting themselves government contracts. Bárbara attributes this also to the current feud *vecinos* of Villa Futuro have with Chiguayante’s mayor.

Another of such instances happened in 2011 when the government assigned a contract to build the bridge that would cross Aurora de Chile to reach a U.S. firm. When a British firm released documents proving that they had outbid it, the Minister of defense muttered to a fellow politician “the bridge is worth *callampa*⁵⁴” which was caught by the microphone in a press conference. The Chacabuco Bridge has since then been the main point of tension between *vecinos* of Aurora de Chile and the regional government as it was planned to go

⁵³ Housing Management Entity, a certified housing development enterprise that can be funded with subsidies.

⁵⁴ In this case, *callampa* – mushroom – is used colloquially as synonym of worthless.

over Andrés Bello, one of the main streets of such *población* and thus would be displacing hundreds of citizens. The project was streamlined and only slowed down by the organization of citizens from Aurora. The project aimed to replace an old bridge that was decommissioned in the early 2000's. Original plans of the Ribera Norte Project, however, did not contemplate to re-adequate the bridge. On top of that, there were already two motor bridges and the railway one connecting the southern shore to the city. The motives behind the decision were put into question at that point as the shores did not necessarily need a new connection. The bridge, however, was an essential part of the strategy for the displacement of residents of Aurora de Chile and was being used as a pretext to revitalize the process of *erradicación* that was halted by *vecinos* of Pedro del Río and Aurora a decade before (Baeriswyl et al., 2017).

While *RED Construyamos'* perspective was meant to achieving major goals and propose structural solutions to the government in a democratic manner, not all citizens agreed on this approach or had the means to ponder into the background processes of the reconstruction. Many, especially those most vulnerable, wanted immediate local solutions in a short-term frame, which led some smaller groups to negotiate such solutions without the support of other groups. For some communities, this led to the negotiation minimal solutions or leaders being coopted into continuing the process of reconstruction with displacement. In contrast, the MNRJ and *RED Construyamos* managed to help communities like Aurora de Chile and Villa Futuro propose their own solutions and to have a say in the project. Through these organizations of citizens also managed to keep the struggle relevant during most of the years of the reconstruction, with a peak in 2014 with Roxana Miranda's candidacy, maintaining the movement in the public eye during those years was crucial to the continuous process that the reconstruction is.

The support of other movements like students from the 2011 student movement was key to retain this momentum, although the coalition of movements for this cause was, itself, propulsive. Some of the collaborative acts had especial role for their symbolic weight, such as the funeral for the reconstruction that was held in March 2011. Theatre performers supported the manifestations on many occasions. In 2012, the play “3x6” directed by Hugo Peña Lagos (Peña Lagos, 2012) was presented at the University of Concepción featuring dancers representing the conditions and consequences of overcrowding by inhabiting a *mediagua* that complied with the minimal specifications for emergency units set by the MINVU. Despite this, many groups came and left to *RED Construyamos* and MNRJ, which also meant a change in the kind of actions taken and a change to the government’s handling, which became more tense and more violent when the movements lost momentum. Ampuero recounts:

At the start, it was a movement from a logic of citizenry, going out constantly to occupy the streets, avoiding conflicts. We were interested in bringing in more people each time [that we marched in the streets]. The protests were family oriented, there were kids. That was at the start, mobilizing to be visible to put our struggles into the public discussion and create solidarity. When we started to disappear from the press, it became uncomfortable. Some leaders from [the middle-class buildings] reunited with the Minister of the Interior ... and he offered them solutions beyond the formal capability of the state. Then they [who] started to create units from them. By late 2010, early 2011, the situation became clearer. The resistance from the state became more violent. We distributed propaganda during the night, putting up posters, and violent things started to happen— threats, stalking, police surveillance, beatings. [From that point on], the character of the struggle changed.

As the relationship with the state became more tense, we realized there was no will [from the government] to solve our issues. We also realized that agents of the state, functionaries, went directly to citizens or committees to threaten them, that if they aligned themselves with a bigger group, they wouldn’t have solutions unless they negotiated directly as individuals, or, as a last resort, as committees. These [changes] forced us to take a more confrontational approach, blocking streets, protests like the one that happened in Aurora de Chile which lasted a

bunch of days. Then it went from denouncing actions to applying pressure, with most of the middle-class group gone, although some stayed. Besides, many other committees were afraid to participate as they were threatened that if they did, they would not have a right to the reconstruction. That's where we started to stage *tomas* of public buildings, which, while we didn't have the mass [of people that we'd had] of before, [the *tomas*] conveyed another radical meaning [to the government and society].

(E. Ampuero Cardenas, personal communication, 4 October 2021)

As the tensions rose, the means of resistance had to change, this was the factor that prompted the need of reintroducing *tomas*. This change of tactics is reflected on the kind of activities cited in Figure 13 (p. 169), particularly after late 2011 when Eduardo and Bárbara were arrested. Mauricio recalled a tense event in which the students got involved:

In fact, in Tomé some councilors just [recently] were elected. They were part of the *Frente Libertario*, a leftist movement that participated in the resistance. There was a very known clash in Dichato – a student went to defend Pobladores because they had taken the national road. [The government] sent ... the military. Then there was the military trying to clean up the road and the *Frente Liberario* came in mass to support these *Pobladores*. They stayed weeks, sharing *olla común*, doing programs, activities, clashing with the police, and transmitting it live via the internet. Then people from Tomé lived this because they were blocked and they were upset, not because they couldn't get to work or whatever, but because 2 or 3 years had passed and the government was unable to [provide them with their permanent housing units].

(M. J. Sáez Cuevas, personal communication, 6 July 2021)

However, Piñera's government was so uncooperative that even with more radical actions, negotiation was difficult. Instead of attempting to negotiate, *Pobladores* of Villa Futuro opted to wait for Bachelet's government to take office in 2014:

After we denounced [their administration] they wanted to negotiate with 15 of us, but not even that, [they wanted to negotiate only] with the leaders, with the directive. And they tried to bribe us, to give us all that we wanted but [only] for us. 'No, [we said], because we need 390 housing solutions, not 4 or 5.' Then Piñera closed the negotiations and we decided to wait. They threw them [the

representatives of the government] out. People even organized to lynch [the representatives] if he came; they even beat up some *territoriales* with sticks. Then they were obligated to leave.

We were so popular that the government sent for us to [speak to] the congress. We went to the senate's commission, which was forced to emit a report. They decided they couldn't reach an agreement because we were asking for too much as we wanted apartments for the new [*Pobladores* that settled in abandoned units after the earthquake] and [they claimed that newcomers] had to be expelled. We waited for the following government, the one that offered a solution. We did a survey with SERVIU and those who qualified for a unit got one and the rest left [the community].

(B. Orrego Gallegos, personal communication, 8 January 2022)

Villa Futuro and Aurora de Chile were two of the communities that decided to wait out Piñera's administration, prolonging the struggle and negotiating with the platform of the larger movements supporting them. This was a decision not shared by all the communities that were part of MNRJ or *RED Construyamos*. Some negotiated directly with the regional administrations with the condition of abandoning any organization, as mentioned before. Others were cheated by actors such as van Rysselberghe from reconstruction benefits, and other negotiated still with the support of the movement in different moments. This shows that even with this united front there were different objectives and interests. Since the beginning there was a sort of dichotomy, that of settling the struggle with immediate needs, versus that of transforming it into a wider struggle for long-term solutions. While some neighborhoods and communities settled at the start, the ones that continued formed these larger movements. However, as the movement advanced, these challenges also did. With new actors getting involved, new diverging perspectives and interests emerged between all groups involved as well.

In *Disaster Citizenship* (2016), Remes expanded on how these conflicting perspectives and interests within them occurred between civil society and experts. As the role of the

expert is put more into question for technocrats in the development of transnational neoliberalism and towards their disconnect with local community, it is imperative to analyze and situate the role of the experts themselves. As experts, NGOs and other external orchestrators have different experiences, stakes, and corporate and political influences that can have an impact on the outcome of such struggles. Ampuero remarked on the different objectives of some of the regular NGOs and their often out of touch methods, especially for their lukewarm approach to negotiating. While the *mediaguas* built by TECHO and other NGOs provided some advancements in the short term, its bureaucratic requirements impeded going beyond emergency shelters. Among his remarks were that:

- NGOs helped to develop analysis of the topic and also to provide social organization, however under an institutionalist approach rather than of resistance, reducing their demands and finally attempting to control the functioning of social organization.
- They often, especially in Talca and Santiago, guided affected citizens and leaders under *assistencialist*⁵⁵ criteria [as] very partial solutions.
- NGOs focus on [creating] studies for policymakers, often adopting positions that only guarantee formalisms or partial considerations. This [has] helped to debilitate and divide the movement. Major demands and central struggles were relegated to some symposium or some papers on 'right to the city' to be registered in the offices of international organizations.

(Ampuero Cárdenas, 2016)

The realizations that came with this process of organization demonstrated the points of conflict between the different groups involved but were not limited to the reconstruction process. Sometimes, as the case of organized citizens and NGOs differed, despite trying to find an adequate solution to the struggle of housing one could not be found. These points of conflict reached deeper layers of processes besides the reconstruction to the discordant conceptions of the city between corporate actors, politicians, and citizens. In this case, the

⁵⁵ An institutional approach to provide aid to those in vulnerable conditions, by the government, charities, and NGOs. However, it does not addresses systemic issues or changes, and may overlap with clientelism.

colliding interests were structured around the subsidy model: politicians aimed for quantity (of housing units) and votes, corporations prioritized profits, and citizens wanted appropriate long-term solutions. These interests are often at odds with each other. For example, sustainable housing situations were compromised by corporations cutting on costs or the attempts of local politicians to deliver unfinished units in urban peripheries (Mackenna & Iacobelli del Río, 2010; Ramírez, 2011). In other cases, these interests can overlap and compound, as what happened with van Rysselberghe's attempt to use the reconstruction for clientelism and profiteering.

Through the practices exposed in this section, civil society showed that the memory of past social struggles lived on in the fight for a just reconstruction. These practices helped citizens to reunite amidst the adversity, despite the period of social atomization that the country lived. They also helped them to find a collective voice and, on some occasions, to negotiate and have a say in the construction of their built environment. The process of realizing social organization and attempting to put ideas into practice also gave valuable experience to social leaders and society as a whole, obtaining the know-how to navigate the complex environment of community organizing. According to Ampuero (personal communication, 4 October 2021), this newfound experience was a major advancement for Chilean civil society.

7.4. Summary

In Chapter 6, I established that beyond spontaneous acts of solidarity, an organized citizen-led response was needed due to the serious shortcomings of the government response. This chapter offers a similar interpretation at a larger temporal and spatial scale. The first section details how, despite commendable efforts of providing shelter by volunteers and organizations, the disaster was too large to be tackled without government response. The government-led reconstruction was, however, compromised as President Piñera's

administration prioritized rushing the process due to political reasons, leading to the reconstruction of poor-quality housing units that were barely an improvement over *mediaguas*. Pinera's administration also structured the reconstruction through the private sector, benefiting only a few corporations by the allocation of subsidies. In the Biobío Region and its vicinity, the main conflict was caused by a conflict of interest in the regional government, as the *intendenta* Jacqueline van Rysselberghe coordinated several landgrabs using the disaster and subsidy model as a cover. These glaring failures led those communities that organized in the immediate aftermath to gather together and to demand more comprehensive solutions.

The second section of the chapter exposes the convergence of many separated movements into *RED Construyamos* and MNRJ. Initially, these movements were composed by independent *aldeas*, neighborhoods, and *poblaciones*, which were represented individually by neighborhood councils, or associations of several councils. Then, when many councils and associations banded together, they formed intermediate citizen's organizations like the Citizen's Assembly of Dichato. These worked in parallel with student's organizations, NGOs like *Observatorio de La Reconstrucción*, and religious charities such as TECHO. On a higher level, there were more complex organizations such as the FENAPO and ANDHA Chile. These organizations have a national reach and can be composed of a mix of smaller organizations. Finally, there's the level of a national movement. The core of the national movement was comprised organizations from all levels, the main ones being *RED Construyamos* and the MNRJ.

The final section of this chapter explores how these organizations manifested their disapproval of how the government was handling the reconstruction, as well as the ways they helped threatened communities to resist displacement. In doing so, these organizations

continued the struggles of past social movements, especially that of *Pobladores*, who organized to obtain permanency and inclusion in Chile's urban centers.

In Concepción, the neighborhoods that were most threatened by the reconstruction were those in Ribera Norte, which had an incredible history of resilience and organization. Pedro del Río and Aurora de Chile, the neighborhoods with the greatest organizational capacity, managed to resist *erradicación* or to evade it outright. However, *Pobladores* of Villa Futuro did not have the same experience and most families were displaced. Still, those who remained resisted, with new leadership and the support of the national movement. Although 27F led to the first nation-wide movement for reconstruction, housing movements in Chile have a long history of post-disaster organization as I have discussed in earlier chapters. The protagonists of such movements included affected citizens from previous earthquakes, fires, and most recently, floods. As such, the reconstruction movement continued not only the struggle for access to homeownership and urban inclusion, but the continued struggle for resilience.

As noted by students and scholars, the difficulties that citizens encountered during the reconstruction were largely due to structural damage to the socioeconomic ordering of Chilean society, not just the damage of the earthquake itself. Considering the ample experience Chileans had previously in dealing with this kind of hazardous events, many citizens expected better mechanisms of prevention, response, and reconstruction to be activated in the wake of the earthquake. These expectations led many to be dissatisfied with the outcome of the reconstruction, as well as with the government's approach to it. As Ampuero (personal communication, 4 October 2021) said to me, there was "a debt, bitterness, [because people had] an illusion of what could've been [done]." While he mentions this in the context of what could have been achieved by the movement, his statement was also meant to address to

what could have been done by the government under other circumstances or from within a different system.

The nature of Chile's uneven socioeconomic structures also translated into an uneven process of reconstruction, despite all of the efforts of citizens involved. I mention this as the fight for a just reconstruction was, at its core, a struggle for housing and landownership. Many of those affected citizens were *Pobladores*. As such, there were clear limits on the reconstruction, the same limits that Chile's property-owning structure has. The forefront of the movement, especially intelligentsia and students, wanted to push past these systemic limits, but big portions of the population just wanted a stable recovery or transition towards ownership. As Bengoa (2016, p. 13) pointed out, *Pobladores* are mostly concerned with the question of transition to ownership rather than a specific political or ideological approach.

Contesting failures in socioeconomic structures is a herculean task under neoliberalism. A growing economic disparity puts the points of contention further apart, further polarizing politics and interests. Aside from consolidating power among corporate groups, neoliberalism makes social aggregation and intersectionality the only approach in which any kind of negotiation becomes possible, binding ideological struggles together with more practical ones. The MNRJ and *RED Construyamos* united many sectors of the population, all of them affected by the struggle of the reconstruction, leading to significant actions and a transition to a more inclusive urban integration in Ribera Norte.

8. Conclusions: Reconstructing Civil Society

More than a decade has gone by and for some the reconstruction from 27F still has not ended. The reconstruction was a fractured process. As a whole, it was composed of a mosaic of multiple reconstructions in different spaces and social contexts, some of which remain open-ended. As such, the reconstruction has had different outcomes in different communities. It had major social victories and major losses. It is an understatement to say that 27F ended up changing the Chilean landscape, both physical and social.

Generally, those who resisted and prolonged the struggle, managed to negotiate better solutions, and have had a say in the rebuilding of their communities. This includes all three neighborhoods of Ribera Norte. Pedro del Río Zañartu was the least affected neighborhood, it did not suffer a lot of damage during the earthquake and *vecinos* avoided van Rysselberghe's offers altogether. However, they still lost industrial heritage sites. Now the neighborhood councils are active and in collaboration with each other and the government. *Vecinos* partake in a more participative planning of the development of Ribera Norte in their vicinity, what they call the *urban recovery megaproject*, which includes citizen-led initiatives.

By late 2010 and early 2011, van Rysselberghe had failed her main goal of displacing *Pobladores* from Aurora de Chile. Even when she was forced to resign, the Aurora remained a key part of the Ribera Norte Project, hence its inhabitants had a constant threat of displacement. As they kept resisting and prolongating the struggle, most *Pobladores* managed to stay in the neighborhood, in a new mixed density complex a couple blocks away. Some are still resisting in *Andrés Bello*, whereas others were pushed towards the periphery, to an apartment complex called Angol (See Figure 8 p. 102). Even for those who obtained apartments, the struggle did not finish there as the units presented many problems, particularly related to the quality of materials and insulation (Diario de Concepción, 2017; SoyChile, 2018; X. Valenzuela, 2017).

Shortly after the earthquake, *Pobladores* of Villa Futuro lacked the experience of more established *poblaciones*. As such, the *población* had a rough start, more than 1300 families were displaced most during the first year. These were displaced to the peripheries of Greater Concepción, to Hualqui, La Leonera, or even farther away. By 2014, only 20 of the original families remained, which, after negotiating with President Bachelet's administration (2014-2018) obtained high-quality single-family units. Moreover, the newfound leadership welcomed immigrants and newcomers to the *población*, including them in the struggle for collective housing. There are still some remnants of the earthquake, empty lots and buildings that need to be demolished, however their most urgent need is urban inclusion, as an ongoing feud with the municipal government resulted in their exclusion from public services.

As mentioned in the first chapters, Aurora de Chile and Pedro del Río have almost a century of experience with community organizing, whether in context of housing, unionizing, or resisting displacement. Their slow reclamation of the Biobío River makes their history an endearing one, it fully represents the social and physical creation of a community, as well as the difficulty of living in perpetual reconstruction that this process represented. This made even more gut-wrenching the thought of abandoning the work of generations that displacement represented, something which as always translated in a fierce response. Today, all this work, unity, and organization have brought these *poblaciones* to a new state of participatory city building, an exceptional feat given the difficulty of the environment. However, in my thesis I have argued that despite having been the *población* that lost the most of their original population, Villa Futuro is the community that has learned and advanced the most since the earthquake.

Although in Ribera Norte and other municipalities many managed to resist displacement and obtain better reconstruction conditions, these were only some of the most remarkable cases. Places like Talcahuano, Lota-Coronel, Coliumo, and other rural communities did

not have the adequate experience or leadership to address their problematics, resist profiteering schemes, or to reach out and maintain collaboration with movements like *RED Construyamos*. Most of these were disillusioned, victims of resignation and clientelism. Eduardo Ampuero dreaded the thought of quantifying the damages of the reconstruction that remained unknown, undocumented, and unquantified:

If we see what surrounds us, it was a damage of gigantic proportions. [*Vecinos*] from Aurora de Chile got one of the better conditions, basically because they were a historic *población* and were organized as a neighborhood. They had a conscience of defending their interests, thus, they got solutions. However, those who were accustomed to accepting whatever the state offered them ended up segregated, or, well... managed to stay but with worse conditions.

At least, I feel there's a debt, bitterness, to have an illusion of what could've been. How strong we were, but how easy to disarm too ... – and there were different places, Talca, Santiago, Constitución, [and] many others in which they applied [with] the same criteria [for reconstruction and for this]. We do not really know what the true dimensions of damage, in terms of segregation and loss of housing, really was.

Nevertheless, he later reflected on how such a disruptive event managed to also strip away the illusion of conformity that Chile's technocratic government provided, showing its limits and the extent to which corporate and government actors are intertwined:

The earthquake shook us in such a way that it led us to realize what is [really] happening in Chile. It allowed us to see that there was a social apathy ... an expectation of social mobility that even the most precarious had. ... In a moment, those expectations transcended reality, but then, [at the moment of the earthquake] that conformity vanished. That boastful [confidence disappeared].

It took only a shake. [Since then], I had been expecting what happened in 2019.⁵⁶ ... As a product previous incident, we could expect it and it allowed us to acquire experience of organization. ... It allowed us to take class consciousness – of Chile's real situation – and to recognize the state of social fracture. And that

⁵⁶ The protests that led to the rewriting of the Chilean constitution.

took us in a natural path to start resolving many questions that back then we took for granted.

(E. Ampuero Cardenas, personal communication, 4 October 2021)

Mauricio Sáez framed one of the most iconic images of the aftermath, that of the Alto Río building (Figure 15 p. 189)), as a synecdoche for the structural issues that were unearthed by the earthquake, rather than just a poorly built tower:

[Those destroyed buildings] were not adequate. The quality of the soil did not correspond [with the norm]. [Developers] were negligent with the materials. If those buildings would've followed the norm they wouldn't have fallen. They fell because they didn't follow the norm. There were corrupt processes to give them permits. ... What this means that in Chile norms are not respected. Despite that, Chile was considered to be one of the least corrupt countries in Latin America. We realized that corruption existed, but it was configured in a way that looked like it didn't exist.

(M. J. Sáez Cuevas, personal communication, 6 July 2021)



Figure 15. Top: The empty lot where the Santa Rosa Mill used to be. Taken by author in 2022. Bottom: The Alto Río Building days after the earthquake. Credit: Alejandra Jara (2020) for La Tercera.

To Mauricio, this was a symptom of a deeper structural damage of the Chilean society. Corruption, as well as a swath of technical and social aspects of Chilean society, were arranged in this manner. This contemporary *status quo* was a direct result of the reconfiguration of power structures and elites under Pinochet's government. These critical perspectives had been developing since the Pinguin Revolution and the Chilean student protests of 2011 and got embedded in the movement for the reconstruction with the collaboration of students from UdeC, *RED Construyamos* and other student-led movements. However, even for those like Eduardo Ampuero, who assumed that these reconfigurations had consolidated power in smaller groups, it was surprising the level within which corporate, political, and financial

elites were tangled. Although this presented a challenge, for him it was paramount to have that realization, as it was the first step of many to address other systemic issues:

We also realized that we have to be less naïve, that these things do not come together as an accident. I'm not saying that they had planned the earthquake, but it is more a question of opportunism, of that constant search to profit, to obtain [something]. There was a plan in motion to evict for two of the planned developments in Aurora de Chile. It was planned in stages. With the earthquake, it accelerated. It was implemented immediately, [and] that allowed us to realize, in that moment, that something had been articulating more silently [all along]. We have to take a real conscience of the interests installed within the state and their economical nexus. With that experience of those of us who participated in the movement, now shows social leaders have adopted a very deep compromise. That is a good outcome, in a qualitative [sense] rather than a quantitative [one].

(E. Ampuero Cardenas, personal communication, 4 October 2021)

About a month after my arrival to Concepción, I came out for a walk with my wife. We went for a coffee near Plaza Perú. At a small place near Ongolmo Street, walking towards downtown in Chacabuco Avenue, from an old blue building I could hear the voice of Víctor Jara. It was, in many ways a historic day, and hopefully, also one to celebrate. It was December 19th, Gabriel Boric had just been elected as president, running for the coalition *Apruebo Dignidad*. The election was a particular one. José Antonio Kast, the opponent running for the coalition Chile Vamos, won the first run of the election on November 21st. Until then, no candidates had recovered in the second run, many feared that this meant another right-wing government, although, unlike President Piñera, José Antonio Kast was openly a Pinochetist. In a twist of fate, Pinochet's widow, Lucía Hiriart, died three days before the second run. Gabriel Boric became not only the first president-elect to have lost the first run and recovered, but also was the youngest and the first one born in Magallanes, Chile's southernmost Region. That evening, the optimism and illusion of change was palpable in Concepción's *Plaza de Armas*, as captured by my wife in Figure 16 (p. 191).



Figure 16. Celebration of Gabriel Boric's victory in Concepción's Main Square. Credit: Sandy A. Sosa Rivero (December 19, 2021).

I mention Hiriart's death as it marks the end of an era. While Pinochet's rule effectively ended in March 1990, that was not the end of his era, not even with his death in 2006. While Hiriart's death was not by itself a major development, there was a symbolic aspect to take note of under the myriad of changes Chile is currently going through. At the campaign closure, Kast avoided the topic entirely, while Boric condemned the fact that Hiriart died on impunity saying that "... We are a generation that learns from those who were before and we unified to defeat the dictatorship, to democratize Chile, to have a new Constitution, and now we will unite to defeat the heir of this government and *Pinochetism* to install hope in Chile" (Piérola & Agurto, 2021). The Concertación governments, and later both of Piñera's administrations, were a continuation of Pinochet's legacy, perpetuating and refining its systems and policies, which left many Chileans in extreme vulnerability, a sociopolitical structural failure.

The reconstruction process was a catalyst for many organizations and struggles, but also a key moment which showed the many structural failures of the state and its policies, demonstrating neoliberal policies are unable to provide an adequate response or relief to citizens under natural pressure, despite having a historic readiness with this kind of natural hazards. When this became evident, critical perspectives re-emerged and past movement and actors re-inserted themselves into the struggle for reconstruction. While this struggle went under a process of amalgamation, it itself became part of a larger process which led to the protests of 2018-2019 and the re-writing of a new constitution, which will replace the one written under Pinochet's rule. I think of this *longue durée* process as the slow process of reconstructing civil society from the legacy of the dictatorship. Hence, 2010's struggle for reconstruction is one of the many fights that formed part of the struggle to abandon the neoliberal path set by the dictatorship and continued by the Concertación administrations. It is an homage of the memory of the social advances achieved before 1973. The overlapping of these phenomena is made evident by the mutual participation between *Pobladores* and students, as well as the convergence of all these movements into the effort for a new constitution. Roxana Miranda broke ground as a candidate with an activist background in 2013, which would lay the ground for Gabriel Boric who emerged from the 2011 student movement.

In a global scale and in the context of the severity of Chile's tectonic activity, it is evident that Chile copes with these hazards with more knowledge and experience than other countries. The same can be said about the reconstruction. Chileans have the means and experience to navigate such hostile situations. The disappointment of many Chileans, however, rests on what could have been better, in both the broader sense of the project Chile was developing before 1973, and in the specific sense of the reconstruction after 2010.

The charged social environment of 2010 was due to the undergoing process of reckoning of the shortcomings of the Concertación, the earthquake shook off the *façade* of well-

being and social mobility under the current ordering back then. Boric's presidency and the new constitutional project bring hope to many, still, it is being met with much more skepticism and a critical gaze as Chileans have been disappointed by the previous post-dictatorship administrations. Before departing from Villa Futuro I chatted about this with Orrego, as the elections had just taken place a few days before. She told me that she personally thinks that this will allow for new changes and is hopeful, in her view many of the changes that Bachelet attempted to introduce were blocked by the constraints of the constitution. However, her expectations and those of the *población* are also low, they expect the struggle for their urban integration to continue, with the most important factor being their own work, not Boric or a new constitution. This is a sentiment informed by experience of both the reconstruction struggle and the change the Concertación never brought, which resulted in an approach to political action that leans towards mutual aid and self-reliance as a *población*.

The practices of resistance and organization fulfilled many roles:

1) As a continuation and evolution of past struggles: There is a continuity in the struggle for land ownership and use, especially the access to it for marginalized groups. For rural *Pobladores* this has taken the form of agrarian reform, for their urban counterparts the land struggle took the form of permanency in the city and resistance to *erradicaciones*. This struggle has evolved. In the reconstruction, it merged the problems of indebtedness for the middle class, while also adding to the cause of the poblaciones not only of subsistence and permanence in the city, but of their inclusion in the urban fabric and toward more dignified conditions for its members. This continuity can be seen in the re-involvement of activists like Ampuero and Gatica, both previously involved in leftist politics and neighborhood organizations. RED Construyamos benefited from their collaboration with Flooded Citizens, likewise, the MNRJ relied on the support of both the FENAPO and ANDHA Chile. These

collaborations were direct links with previous movements, and a continuity of the struggle for housing.

The reconstruction was also informed by worker's politics. Orrego had experience as a union leader before stepping up for her población. Additionally, the earliest sessions of *RED Construyamos* were conducted at the offices for Carpenters and Cabinetmakers, while many juntas de vecinos also had their origins as worker's unions, such as the ones in Pedro del Río and Villa Futuro. The continuation of past struggles is a proof that the reconstruction was part of a larger social phenomenon, and that in Chile, the role of memory is not limited to the writing of history, but it informs the recovery of past and new struggles for social progresses.

2) As a means to reproduce solidarity: Under these processes of resilience and resistance, citizens organized organically to respond to the crisis. In Concepción, even when the criticism was being directed towards the lootings, those actions played a role in fulfilling the immediate needs of *Pobladores*. The spontaneous self-organization is more evident in this case and has more shades, such as the plundering of malls. Due to the lack of confidence of an appropriate state response, in order to fill those gaps left by all levels of government, in these cases citizens have taken necessary actions to fulfill their basic needs which can, in some cases, transgress the limits of legality and be disobedient about assertions of 'private property.' While these examples are more evident in the short term, it is much the same for longer struggles of resistance or for permanence. *Tomas* are one such example, as well as blockades of transport links. *Ollas comunes*, as shown in Figure 17 (p. 195), are another example, always present in moments of hardship, including the COVID-19 pandemic. In all of these cases, the support of other groups and citizens are key to the success of these measures.



Figure 17. *Pandemia en Comunidad*. A depiction of community support and the organization of an *olla común* during the pandemic. Embroidered on canvas by Sylvia Yáñez Vásquez (2022), exposed on Casa Prochelle I, Valdivia.

3) As a means of entanglement: The necessity of unity for the struggle for reconstruction, as well as cultural practices like voluntarism in Chile, means there are constant interchanges between members of different social strata. The reconstruction was a transversal struggle, one that crossed both class and different social movements. As such, it can be seen as a key moment for intersectionality, entangling different struggles for property like ANDHA and FENAPO with the arising self-organized juntas de vecinos and NGOs and the MNRJ. The arrival of 27F in a moment of disillusionment with the way the transition towards democracy

was being handled also opened this intersectionality to wider reaching movements, especially the student movement.

In 2004 and 2006, ANDHA and the student movement respectively, started struggles to resisting the financialization of housing and education. Although these movement highlighted systemic failures of Chile's socioeconomic structures, they only managed to get partial support from Chilean society as a whole. However, the 2010 earthquake made these systemic failures evident to the widespread population. The re-involvement of the student movements and ANDHA with the struggle for reconstruction brought unprecedented attention to their critiques of structural vulnerabilities within Chile's socioeconomic systems. These critical perspective permeated the conversations about the reconstruction and the right to the city in some sectors of the movement like NGOs and *RED Construyamos*.

Mauricio's experience is a testament of this interaction between the student movement and the reconstruction struggle. The sociology congress presented the struggle *Pobladores* to students, and the UdeC was also a place for organization students from Con-stitution affected by the earthquake. In Villa Futuro, Orrego and neighbors attempts to steer their *población* towards collective ownership are a proof of the permeation of critical perspectives into the wider population, I also witnessed these discussions around the use of land and the nature of property unfolding when I attended a reunion with a *constituyente* and this was openly discussed between his team and *vecinos* of Pedro del Río.

4) As a means of inclusion: These practices of resistance serve as a way for citizens to insert themselves in the process of policymaking as well as in the production of the city in two ways. First they did this as a way to be included in the decision-making process. Rather than as before just being consulted, the citizen consultation phases of government and social programs has been a staple of the Concertación administrations however limited. There they

seldom implemented proposals or created a genuine dialog. This has continuously been achieved through resistance. While this is not the norm for the Chilean context, the new phase of the Ribera Norte Project seems to be more thorough in this process. However, as Orrego explained, it is still a process led by citizens and a struggle, due to the many competing interests.

The second way is through formalization of demands into policymaking, which is the iterative process in which Chilean housing and reconstruction policies have been refined. This is mostly done under the complex subsidy model, although it is not limited to it. In many cases it is also a way in which the government gives new avenues to formalize informal practices such as *tomas* and adapting to citizen demands. However, as Dr. Voltaire Alvarado explained to me, despite the fact that the current system works and allows social provisions to be incorporated into it, it does little to solve the conundrum of financialization, as corporate interests differ so widely from those of the public:

Voltaire Alvarado: Reconstruction scenarios have led [the subsidy model] towards sophistication. [This] the mechanisms in which a segment of the population can have access to property. Practices then install themselves, like the reconstruction subsidy that is executed since the earthquake of Tocopilla in 2007. This subsidy [program] triggers almost automatically each time there is a disaster.

Omar A.: This improvement, which technically comes from above, is not precisely due to the initiative of policymakers, but from the environment of dialog with the citizenry, right? [The subsidy model] can evolve to include the demands of these [social] organizations, creating official channels for the government to direct and materialize those demands in some way.

Voltaire Alvarado: Absolutely, it is important to get the idea of ascension, how a social base is formulated, and finally, this stage [is the one] in which interest groups build a framework. ... [Then], these groups that construct a theoretical framework are proposing how we think of the requests for housing, propriety, and city. At the reconstruction level, it is an opportunity and we have to

understand for whom. Is it to reproduce financialized logics? Or is it to correct what has been done wrong? This is where the politics of common sense emerge ‘we can make a deal with both,’ [some people say]. The truth is that there is no deal. [It] is one or the other because where there is financialization, the other cannot get in. Then we have to transcend common sense and take decisions that construct the cities, construct a material idea of a just social space, and that, to me, is something very complex to see for the first time.

(V. Alvarado Peterson, personal communication, 7 July 2021)

Although this process of sophistication has allowed the MINVU and ONEMI to adopt measures and modalities to incorporate the needs of *Pobladores*, the middle-class, unions, and many more, it is still limited by Chile’s mechanisms for transition to land ownership. In this case, these mechanisms are fully framed within financialized logics, written by and for corporate actors and protected by the constitution. Moreover, this sort of incorporation, just as the policies that led to the creation of the MINVU and ONEMI themselves, are reactive, not only emerging as a response to disastrous events, but as a response to immense pressure of civil society. Hence, it is necessary to shift to a preemptive approach, especially as hazards become more commonplace and volatile as a result of climate change. For Chileans, and the rest of us, this means significant structural change. As for most of us struggling under neoliberalism, this means an almost complete focus on short-term, immediate, material concerns, which are more relevant than a hypothetical future disaster. That is, if and until that hypothetical future arrives.

Shortcomings

This thesis has many limits, some due to its limitations in scope as a master’s paper, and others from it being written in a moment of turmoil, both personal and global from the COVID-19 pandemic. The intersections of struggles and phenomena around the reconstruction also leaves room to analyze individual topics presented here in a more detailed fashion, such as the student movement or the subsidy model itself.

The most important case study which I did not properly expose in this piece of writing is that of Talcahuano's *aldeas*, some of which were a consequence of 27F and still find themselves trapped in the permanent reconstruction. Their situation now has worsened as their struggles have also worsened with the catastrophe that COVID-19 has brought, from social to financial. The reconstruction in rural locations is another of the major shortcomings of the thesis and one which I was unable to delve into given the limited scope of this research focus. An in-depth look into the politics of contracting and concessions would greatly complement my work and enrich a discussion on these topics as this system of governmental outsourcing provides a great number of services and goods for the Chilean people. While there are other individual aspects of the reconstruction than can deepen the discussion, I consider Talcahuano's case study and the inner working of contracting under the subsidy model as the key parts to understand these processes of reconstruction and the mechanisms and relations for negotiation between citizens and government.

Final thoughts

During my time studying at Concordia University, I occasionally worked with Dr. Warren Linds on a project of research ethics in arts-based research with war-affected youth. This same project is what introduced me to Canadian academia, an extremely enriching and interesting experience. It was working on this project when I came across strength-based approaches for participatory research, and where I understood the transformative potential of strength-based approaches. This informed my own research from the early stages and due to the closures of the Chilean border because of the pandemic I had a lot of time to ponder on strength-based approaches. In the context of post-disaster studies, this perspective is often referenced as 'resilience', or, better, as Jacob Remes exposes as 'disaster citizenship,' contrasting with the more systemic approach to disaster studies of Naomi Klein. I was introduced to the term 'disaster citizenship' by my supervisor, Dr. Kevin Gould. I decided to adopt

this term over the trending term of ‘resilience’ in the disaster studies discipline because of its emphasis on both organization and citizen’s actions as active actors rather than ‘resistant victims.’ This perspective also makes it imperative to not lose a critical lens and the nuance of the reconstruction process as it is key to understand the challenges that come with this process, either for competing interests with other parties or by the parties involved in the reconstruction process.

The capacity of Chilean citizens and *Pobladores* to embrace a critical perspective of the structural systems that led to the struggle for reconstruction themselves has been key for the continuation of an active civil society despite the many challenges the country has faced. Although Chile’s main social struggle today is not centered on reconstruction today, the organization and experience acquired by civil society after 2010 has enriched the unified struggles that led to the referendum for the new constitution. At the local scale, the experience of the reconstruction has led to processes of politization of *vecinos* of Ribera Norte and more participatory approaches to urban planning. The movement 27F was a moment of rupture in the neoliberal system, despite attempts to use the crisis to further corporate interests and accelerate financialization processes on housing for historic *poblaciones*. In the remains of the earthquake, there was also revealed glaring failures and configurations of government to the wider population. In the context of post-disaster, then and now with the COVID-19 pandemic, 27F has also generated an environment of scrutiny and critique on the misuse of emergency powers while feeding the symbiotic relation between grassroots movements and academics, which learn from one another.

All in all, 27F and the subsequent process of reconstruction, managed to unite people of many walks of life, from the most vulnerable *Pobladores* in the emerging *aldeas* to middle-class citizens from ANDHA; Catholic Church volunteers; young students like Mauricio; specialists like Voltaire; veterans of past social movements like Flooded Citizens; members of

juntas de vecinos as Ernestina Gatica, the Peñaloza sisters, Víctor; professors and artists like Ampuero; working-class mothers like Orrego and Mirtha; as well as the many, many leaders of *aldeas* and *poblaciones* across Chile. In sum, the event shook the country, not only on a physical level, but also a societal one also forming a part of a wider event, which is still developing, in the reconstruction of Chilean socioeconomic ordering, hit by man-made disasters and weakened by natural hazards.

After reading so many Chilean voices and talking with many Chileans, I can say that my contributions are limited to connect some links in the larger scheme of things, my perspective as a historian and geographer is but a modest contribution. I do, however, think that my contribution can lead citizens in the Global North, to learn about how under extremely difficult situations, those in the Global South, can push back against the negative consequences of neoliberal impositions and policymaking. The struggle for the reconstruction after 2010, and the movements that arose subsequently, including the multiplicity of movements that led to the struggle for a new constitution in 2019, are a testament that significant change and social progress can be achieved at the heart of neoliberalism, even after a catastrophic event. For those I interviewed with the pretext of meeting a curious foreigner, it has been a moment to reminisce and reconnect, on their achievements, their losses, the damaged and the improved, I am deeply thankful to those who shared their stories with me. Chileans know what they are doing, their constant work and struggle reflects their legacy of social organization and resiliency, they set an example the compromise and steadiness needed to withstand the difficult challenges ahead of us.

References

Articles

- Angelcos, N., & Pérez, M. (2017). De la “desaparición” a la reemergencia: Continuidades y rupturas del movimiento de Pobladores en Chile. *Latin American Research Review*, 52(1), 94–109. <https://doi.org/10.25222/larr.39>
- Araneda C., M., Araneda A., Á., & Avendaño R., M. S. (2015). Sismicidad histórica y estudios complementarios asociados a la estructura denominada Falla de San Ramón, Chile Central. *Revista Geofísica*, 65, 27–51. a9h.
- Ayres, R., & Clark, D. (1998). Capitalism, Industrialisation and Development in Latin America: The Dependency Paradigm Revisited. *Capital & Class*, 20(64), 89–12. Business Source Complete.
- Baeriswyl, S., Salinas, E., & Flores, S. (2017). Logros y deficiencias a veinte años del Programa de Recuperación Urbana Ribera Norte del río Biobío, Concepción, Chile. *EURE (Santiago)*, 43(130), 297–307. <https://doi.org/10.4067/s0250-71612017000300297>
- Bellei, C., Cabalin, C., & Orellana, V. (2014). The 2011 Chilean student movement against neoliberal educational policies. *Studies in Higher Education*, 39(3), 426–440. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03075079.2014.896179>
- Blaikie, P., Cannon, T., David, I., & Wisner, B. (1996). *Vulnerabilidad: El entorno social, político y económico de los desastres*. LA RED de Estudios Sociales en Prevención de Desastres en América Latina.
- Bonilla, Y., & LeBrón, M. (2019). *Aftershocks of disaster: Puerto Rico before and after the storm*. <http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&scope=site&db=nlebk&db=nlabk&AN=2108126>
- Bornstein, L., Lizarralde, G., Gould, K. A., & Davidson, C. (2013). Framing responses to post-earthquake Haiti: How representations of disasters, reconstruction and human settlements shape resilience. *International Journal of Disaster Resilience in the Built Environment*, 4(1), 43–57. <https://doi.org/10.1108/17595901311298991>
- Burke, P. (2019). *What is cultural history?* (Third edition). Polity.
- Canales Tapia, P. (2020). La división de las tierras Mapuche en la reducción Gallardo Tranamil, 1979-1985. *Diálogo andino*, 61, 93–103. <https://doi.org/10.4067/S0719-26812020000100093>
- Cárdenas, A., & Fuster Farfán, X. (2018). Desplazamientos en procesos de reconstrucción post catástrofe: El caso de Talca post-terremoto 27F. *AUS*, 23, 34–41. <https://doi.org/10.4206/aus.2018.n23-06>
- Casgrain, A. (2010). La Apuesta del Endeudamiento en la Política Habitacional Chilena. *Revista INVI*, 25(68). <https://doi.org/10.4067/S0718-83582010000100006>
- Concha Ramírez, V. A., & Henríquez Aste, G. (2011). Memoria histórica vivida y transmitida en torno a los terremotos de 1939-1960 en los habitantes del Gran Concepción – Chile. *Historia Actual Online*, 24, 187. edsdoj.
- Costa, L. L. (2019). Operación Cóndor, la configuración de poder en el Cono Sur y las Violaciones de los Derechos Humanos. *Operation Condor, the Power Configuration in Southern Cone and the Violations of Human Rights*, 18(36), 279–297. Political Science Complete.
- Crispiani, A., & Errázuriz, T. (2013). La reaparición de lo público: Experiencias de habitación durante el posterior terremoto. *Revista 180*, 31, 16–21.
- Dattwyler, R. H., Martínez, M. C., Peterson, V. A., & Arreourtua, L. S. (2021). La organización del mercado del suelo y los subsidios a la localización de vivienda como soluciones desde la política neoliberal en Chile y México. *urbe. Revista Brasileira de Gestão Urbana*, 13, e20190170. <https://doi.org/10.1590/2175-3369.013.e20190170>
- Dauer, Q. P. (2020). State and societal responses to natural disasters in Latin American and Caribbean history. *History Compass*, 18(2). <https://doi.org/10.1111/hic3.12605>

- Donini, A. (2008). Through a Glass, Darkly: Humanitarianism and Empire. In N. Gunewardena & M. Schuller (Eds.), *Capitalizing on catastrophe: Neoliberal strategies in disaster reconstruction*. AltaMira Press.
- Drury, J., Brown, R., González, R., & Miranda, D. (2016). Emergent social identity and observing social support predict social support provided by survivors in a disaster: Solidarity in the 2010 Chile earthquake. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 46(2), 209–223. a9h.
- Durning, A. B. (1989). Mobilizing at the Grassroot. In L. R. Brown, *State of the World Worldwatch Institute report on progress toward a sustainable society*. (pp. 154–173). Norton & Co.
- Dussaillant, F., & Guzmán, E. (2014). Trust via disasters: The case of Chile's 2010 earthquake. *Disasters*, 38(4), 808–832. <https://doi.org/10.1111/disa.12077>
- Dussaillant, F., & Guzman, E. (2015). Disasters as an Opportunity to Build Social Capital. *International Journal of Emergency Mental Health and Human Resilience*, 17(3). <https://doi.org/10.4172/1522-4821.1000270>
- Farías, I. (2014). Misrecognizing Tsunamis: Ontological Politics and Cosmopolitical Challenges in Early Warning Systems. *The Sociological Review*, 62(1_suppl), 61–87. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-954X.12124>
- Fernández, A. G., Waldmüller, J., & Vega, C. (2019). Comunidad, vulnerabilidad y reproducción en condiciones de desastre. Abordajes desde América Latina y el Caribe. *Íconos - Revista de Ciencias Sociales*, 66, 7–29. <https://doi.org/10.17141/iconos.66.2020.4156>
- Foucault, M., Burchell, G., Gordon, C., & Miller, P. (Eds.). (1991). *The Foucault effect: Studies in governmentality: with two lectures by and an interview with Michel Foucault*. University of Chicago Press.
- Fuster Farfán, X. (2019). Las políticas de vivienda social en Chile en un contexto de neoliberalismo híbrido. *EURE (Santiago)*, 45(135), 5–26. <https://doi.org/10.4067/S0250-71612019000200005>
- García López, G. A. (2020). Reflections on disaster colonialism: Response to Yarimar Bonilla's 'The wait of disaster'. *Political Geography*, 78, 102170. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.polgeo.2020.102170>
- Goicovic Donoso, I. (2013). Campos historiográficos y debates teóricos en la Revista de Historia Social y de las Mentalidades. Chile, 1999–2012. *Anuario Colombiano de Historia Social y de La Cultura*, 1Esp, 243. edsdoj.
- Goicovic Donoso, I. (2016). El desarrollo del movimiento popular y el surgimiento de la Izquierda Revolucionaria en Chile (1953–1978). *Tempo e Argumento*, 16, 31. edsdoj.
- Goicovic Donoso, I. (2017). Bolshevik revolution and the Chilean Movimiento de Izquierda Revolucionaria (MIR) of Chile (1965–1973). Accessions and distances. *Avances Del Cesor*, 17, 79. edsdoj.
- González-Muzzio, C. (2013). El rol del lugar y el capital social en la resiliencia comunitaria posdesastre: Aproximaciones mediante un estudio de caso después del terremoto del 27/F. *EURE (Santiago)*, 39(117), 25–48. <https://doi.org/10.4067/S0250-71612013000200002>
- González-Muzzio, C., & Sandoval, V. (2018). Capitalismo de desaste en procesos de reconstrucción en Chile. In I. Díaz, C. Boano, A. Maragaño, & J. Inzulza (Eds.), *Reconstrucción de ciudades intermedias en el siglo XXI: procesos de gentrificación post desastres naturales* (p. 4151). Editorial Universidad de Talca.
- Gould, K. A., Garcia, M. M., & Remes, J. A. C. (2016). Beyond 'natural-disasters-are-not-natural': The work of state and nature after the 2010 earthquake in Chile. *Journal of Political Ecology*, 23(1), 93. <https://doi.org/10.2458/v23i1.20181>
- Gunder Frank, A. (1966). The Development of Underdevelopment. *Monthly Review*, 18(4), 17. https://doi.org/10.14452/MR-018-04-1966-08_3
- Gustavussen, M. L. (2018). Contending with school reform: Neoliberal restructuring, racial politics, and resistance in post-Katrina New Orleans. *Focaal*, 82, 94–108. a9h.
- Harris, O. (2004). Braudel: Historical Time and the Horror of Discontinuity. *History Workshop Journal*, 57(1), 161–174. <https://doi.org/10.1093/hwj/57.1.161>

- Imilan, W., & González, L. E. (2017). Attempts at Neoliberal Urban Planning in Postearthquake Chile: Master Plans for Reconstruction. *Latin American Perspectives*, 44(4), 10–23. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0094582X16658265>
- Jia, X., Chowdhury, M., Prayag, G., & Hossan Chowdhury, M. M. (2020). The role of social capital on proactive and reactive resilience of organizations post-disaster. *International Journal of Disaster Risk Reduction*, 48. ScienceDirect. <https://lib-ezproxy.concordia.ca/login?url=http://search.ebsco-host.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=edselp&AN=S2212420920300686&site=eds-live>
- Kage, R. (2013). Social Capital and the Future of Disaster Recovery Research. *Risk, Hazards & Crisis in Public Policy*, 4(1), 6–10. Political Science Complete.
- Letelier, O. (1976). Economic ‘Freedom’s’ Awful Toll. *Nation*, 223(5), 137–142. Political Science Complete.
- Lloyd, D., & Wolfe, P. (2016). Settler colonial logics and the neoliberal regime. *Settler Colonial Studies*, 6(2), 109–118. <https://doi.org/10.1080/2201473X.2015.1035361>
- Look, C., Friedman, E., & Godbout, G. (2019). The Resilience of Land Tenure Regimes During Hurricane Irma: How Colonial Legacies Impact Disaster Response and Recovery in Antigua and Barbuda. *Journal of Extreme Events*, 06(01), 1940004. <https://doi.org/10.1142/S2345737619400049>
- Matus Madrid, C. P., Barraza Huaiquimilla, C. E., Vergara Andrade, C. M., & Ganter Solís, R. P. (2016). Renovación urbana y gentrificación post-catástrofe en Concepción: El caso Aurora de Chile. *Revista de Urbanismo*, 0(34). <https://doi.org/10.5354/0717-5051.2016.39576>
- McSherry, J. P. (2009). Counterterror Wars and Human Rights: From Operation Condor to the Present. *NACLA Report on the Americas*, 42(6), 10–14. Political Science Complete.
- McSherry, J. P. (2019). Operation Condor and Transnational State Violence against Exiles. *Journal of Global South Studies*, 36(2), 368–398. <https://doi.org/10.1353/gss.2019.0042>
- Miternique, H. C. (2014). El retorno a la plaza: Un caso de estudio en Concepción (Chile). *The Return to the Public Square: A Case Study in Concepción (Chile)*, 23(1), 39–45. a9h.
- Moulton, A. A., & Machado, M. R. (2019). Bouncing Forward After Irma and Maria: Acknowledging Colonialism, Problematizing Resilience and Thinking Climate Justice. *Journal of Extreme Events*, 06(01), 1940003. <https://doi.org/10.1142/S2345737619400037>
- Muñoz, R. M., & Llacolén, P. (2010). Terremoto y tsunami del 27 de febrero de 2010: Efectos urbanos en localidades de la provincia de Arauco. *Asuntos Urbanos Nacionales*, 21.
- Navarrete-Hernandez, P., & Toro, F. (2019). Urban Systems of Accumulation: Half a Century of Chilean Neoliberal Urban Policies. *Antipode*, 51(3), 899–926. <https://doi.org/10.1111/anti.12504>
- Oliver-Smith, A. (1996). Anthropological Research on Hazards and Disaster. *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 25(1), 303–328. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.anthro.25.1.303>
- Oxhorn, P. (1991). The Popular Sector Response to an Authoritarian Regime: Shantytown Organizations Since the Military Coup. *Latin American Perspectives*, 18(1), 66–91.
- Özler, Ş. İ. (2012). The Concertación and Homelessness in Chile: Market-based Housing Policies and Limited Popular Participation. *Latin American Perspectives*, 39(4), 53–70. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0094582X10397917>
- Palacios Roa, A. (2012). Dominio y catástrofe. Los terremotos en Concepción, Chile: 1550-1751. *Anuario de Estudios Americanos*, 2, 569. edsdoj.
- Paulsen-Espinoza, A., & Mosquera-Vallejo, Y. (2020). Violencia(s) y desplazamiento(s) en dos contextos latino-americanos. El caso de Santiago de Chile (1973-1990) y el valle del Patía, Colombia (1930-2014). *Historia y sociedad*, 39, 51–81. <https://doi.org/10.15446/hys.n39.82566>
- Ramos, A. (2011). Perspectivas antropológicas sobre la memoria en contextos de diversidad y desigualdad. *Alteridades*, 21(42), 115–130.

- Romero Aravena, H. (2015). Vulnerabilidad, resiliencia y ordenamiento territorial de los desastres siconaturales en Chile. *Polígonos. Revista de Geografía*, 26, 87. <https://doi.org/10.18002/pol.v0i26.1700>
- Saavedra, J. (2021). Gobierno del Desastre en el Neoliberalismo: Una Mirada Genealógica desde los Terremotos en Chile Durante el Siglo XX. *REDER*, 5(2), 48–62.
- Saavedra, J., & Marchezini, V. (2019). Procesos de recuperación posdesastre en contextos biopolíticos neoliberales: Los casos de Chile 2010 y Brasil 2011. *Íconos - Revista de Ciencias Sociales*, 66, 131–148. <https://doi.org/10.17141/iconos.66.2020.3987>
- Sandoval, V., Gonzalez-Muzzio, C., Villalobos, C., Sarmiento, J. P., & Hoberman, G. (2020). Assessing disaster capitalism in post-disaster processes in Chile: Neoliberal reforms and the role of the corporate class. *Disaster Prevention and Management: An International Journal*, ahead-of-print(ahead-of-print). <https://doi.org/10.1108/DPM-01-2020-0005>
- Schneider, C. (1991). Mobilization at the Grassroots: Shantytowns and Resistance in Authoritarian Chile. *Latin American Perspectives*, 18(1, Military Rule and the Struggle for Democracy in Chile), 92–112.
- Sepúlveda Eriz, M. (2011). La Derrota de los Pobladores: Cuevas, Zurita, Formoso. *Alpha (Osorno)*, 33, 55–69. <https://doi.org/10.4067/S0718-22012011000200005>
- Simon, J. W., & Valenzuela-Fuentes, K. (2017). Civil Society Reconstruction: Popular Organizations in Postearthquake Concepción. *Latin American Perspectives*, 44(4), 41–61. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0094582X16637874>
- Soulé, B. (2014). Post-crisis analysis of an ineffective tsunami alert: The 2010 earthquake in Maule, Chile. *Disasters*, 38(2), 375–397. <https://doi.org/10.1111/disa.12045>
- Tapia Zarricueta, R. (2011). Vivienda social en Santiago de Chile: Análisis de su comportamiento locacional, período 1980–2002. *Revista INVI*, 26(73), 105–131. <https://doi.org/10.4067/S0718-83582011000300004>
- Vergara Saavedra, P., Araya Orellana, J. P., Donoso Zamorano, S., & Fuster Farfán, X. (2016). Reflexiones críticas sobre las Alianzas Público-Privadas (APP) como instrumentos de respuesta frente a catástrofes siconaturales. *Universitas Humanística*, 82(82). <https://doi.org/10.11144/Javeriana.uh82.rcap>
- Winn, P. (1979). Oral History and the Factory Study: New Approaches to Labor History. *Latin American Research Review*, 14(2), 130–140.
- Winn, P. (2016). Living the Chilean Revolution: Industrial Workers in Allende's Chile. *Radical History Review*, 2016(124), 55–66. <https://doi.org/10.1215/01636545-3159960>
- Winn, P. (2018). Dictatorships and the Worlds of Work in the Southern Cone: Argentina, Brazil and Chile. *International Labor and Working-Class History*, 93, 5–7. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S014754791700028X>
- Woods, C. (2009). Les Misérables of New Orleans: Trap Economics and the Asset Stripping Blues, Part 1. *American Quarterly*, 61(3), 769–796. JSTOR.

Books

- Adams, V., van Hattum, T., & English, D. (2009). Chronic disaster syndrome: Displacement, disaster capitalism, and the eviction of the poor from New Orleans. *American Ethnologist*, 36(4), 615–636. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1548-1425.2009.01199.x>
- Alexander, D. (2000). *Confronting catastrophe: New perspectives on natural disasters*. Oxford University Press.
- Alexander, S. E. (2008). The Resilience of Vulnerable Households: Adjusting to Neoliberal Capitalism in the Aftermath of Hurricane Iris. In N. Gunewardena & M. Schuller (Eds.), *Capitalizing on catastrophe: Neoliberal strategies in disaster reconstruction*. AltaMira Press.
- Barrios, R. E. (2017). *Governing affect: Neoliberalism and disaster reconstruction*. University of Nebraska Press.
- Beck, U. (1992). *Risk society: Towards a new modernity*. Sage Publications.
- Beck, U. (1995). *Ecological politics in an age of risk*. Polity Press.

- Benedetti Reiman, L. (2019). *La cuestión social en Concepción y los centros mineros de Coronel y Lota*. Ediciones del Archivo Histórico de Concepción.
- Bengoa, J. (2016). *Reforma Agraria y revuelta campesina: Seguido de un homenaje a los campesinos desaparecidos*. LOM Ediciones.
- Berrios del Solar, F. H. (2006). *Todo Comenzó en Curanilahue*. El Mercurio Aguilar.
- Bourdieu, P. (2010). *Las estructuras sociales de la economía*. Manantial.
- Bryant, E. (1991). *Natural hazards*. Cambridge University Press.
- Burke, P. (Ed.). (2001). *New perspectives on historical writing* (2nd ed). Pennsylvania State University Press.
- Button, G., & Oliver-Smith, A. (2008). Disaster, Displacement, and Employment: Distortion of Labor Market during Post-Katrina Reconstruction. In N. Gunewardena & M. Schuller (Eds.), *Capitalizing on catastrophe: Neoliberal strategies in disaster reconstruction*. AltaMira Press.
- Chonchol Chait, J. (2018). *Por una nueva Reforma Agraria para Chile*. LOM Ediciones.
- Corbridge, S. (1989). Marxism, post-Marxism, and the geography of development. In R. Peet & N. Thrift, *New models in geography* (pp. 224–256). Taylor & Francis. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203400531_chapter_9
- Dinges, J. (2004). *The Condor years: How Pinochet and his allies brought terrorism to three continents*. New Press.
- Dynes, R. R. (Ed.). (1987). *Sociology of disasters: Contributions of sociology to disaster research*. Angeli.
- Eade, D., & Williams, S. (1995). *The Oxfam handbook of development and relief*. Oxfam.
- Erikson, K. (1994). *A new species of trouble: Explorations in disaster, trauma, and community* (1st ed). W.W. Norton & Co.
- Emel, J., & Peet, R. (1989). Resource management and natural hazards. In R. Peet & N. Thrift, *New models in geography* (pp. 49–76). Taylor & Francis. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203400531_chapter_3
- Ffrench-Davis, R. (2010). *Economic reforms in Chile: From dictatorship to democracy* (2nd ed). Palgrave Macmillan.
- Frank, A. G. (1976). *Economic genocide in Chile: Monetarist theory versus humanity: two open letters to Arnold Harberger and Milton Friedman*. Spokesman Books.
- Franklin, J., & Institute for Public Policy Research (London, England) (Eds.). (1998). *The politics of risk society*. Polity Press.
- García Acosta, V. (Ed.). (1996). *Historia y Desastres en América Latina: Vol. I*. LA RED / CIESAS.
- García Acosta, V. (Ed.). (1997). *Historia y Desastres en América Latina: Vol. II*. LA RED de Estudios Sociales en Prevención de Desastres en América Latina.
- García Acosta, V. (Ed.). (2008). *Historia y Desastres en América Latina: Vol. III*. CIESAS / LA RED.
- Goldblatt, D. (1999). Risk society and the environment. In M. J. Smith (Ed.), *Thinking through the environment: A reader* (pp. 392–402). Routledge; Open University. <http://www.dawsonera.com/depp/reader/protected/external/AbstractView/S9780203984451>
- Haas, J. E., Kates, R. W., & Bowden, M. J. (Eds.). (1977). *Reconstruction following disaster*. MIT Press.
- Harrell-Bond, B. E., & Bond, B. E. (1986). *Imposing aid: Emergency assistance to refugees*. Univ. Pr.
- Harvey, D. (2013). *Rebel cities: From the right to the city to the urban revolution* (Paperback ed). Verso.
- Hewitt, K. (Ed.). (1983). *Interpretations of calamity from the viewpoint of human ecology*. Allen & Unwin.
- Hewitt, K. (1997). *Regions of risk: A geographical introduction to disasters*. Longman. <http://books.google.com/books?id=6B-AAAAAMAAJ>
- Hidalgo Dattwyler, R., Alvarado Peterson, V., & Santana, D. (2019). Geografías Financiarizadas del Extractivismo Inmobiliario: Lógicas Financiero-Inmobiliarias y Estatales de la Producción de lo Urbano y la Naturalidad en Chile. In F. Godinho de Oliveira, L. Dias de Oliveira, R. Helena Tunes, & R. Moraes Pessanha (Eds.), *Espaço e economia: Geografia econômica e a economia política* (pp. 385–404). Consequência.

- Hidalgo Dattwyler, R., Paulsen, A., & Alvarado Peterson, V. (2019). Ensayos de Liberalismo e igualdad espacial en Chile del siglo XX: trayectorias políticas en vivienda, espacio, y ciudad. In A. Ferreira, J. Rua, & R. Célia de Mattos (Eds.), *Produção do espaço: Emancipação social, o comum e a 'verdadeira democracia'* (pp. 447-474). Consequência.
- Hidalgo, R., Alvarado Peterson, V., Paulsen-Espinoza, A., & Santana Rivas, L. D. (2020). De 'El Ladrillo' al boom de los ladrillos. Estrategias espaciales de producción-reproducción neoliberal de la vivienda social por parte del Estado, la ciudadanía y el mercado en el Gran Santiago. In *Vivienda y Ciudad para todos: La utopía neoliberal en tensión. Experiencias de México, Colombia, Ecuador, Chile, Argentina y Brasil*. Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile.
- Klein, N. (2008). *The shock doctrine: The rise of disaster capitalism*. Vintage Canada.
- Lavell, A., & Metzger, P. (1996). *Ciudades en Riesgo: Degradación Ambiental, Riesgos Urbanos y Desastres* (M.-A. F. L. Rodríguez, Ed.). LA RED de Estudios Sociales en Prevención de Desastres en América Latina.
- Lazzara, M. J. (2006). *Chile in transition: The poetics and politics of memory*. University Press of Florida.
- Lefebvre, H. (2003). *The urban revolution*. University of Minnesota Press.
- Lindell, M. K. (2013). Recovery and Reconstruction After Disaster. In P. T. Bobrowsky (Ed.), *Encyclopedia of Natural Hazards* (p. 14). Springer Netherlands.
- Lindell, M. K., & Perry, R. W. (1992). *Behavioral foundations of community emergency planning*. Hemisphere Pub.
- Loewenstein, A. (2017). *Disaster capitalism: Making a killing out of a catastrophe*.
- Lungo, M., & Baires, S. (Eds.). (1996). *De terremotos, derrumbes e inundados*. LA RED de Estudios Sociales en Prevención de Desastres en América Latina.
- Mallon, F. E. (2005). *Courage tastes of blood: The Mapuche community of Nicolás Ailío and the Chilean state, 1906-2001*. Duke University Press.
- Mazzei de Grazia, L. (2015). *Historia Económica y Regional de Concepción*. Ediciones del Archivo Histórico de Concepción.
- McMichael, P. (2014). Rethinking Land Grab Ontology. *Rural Sociology*, 79(1), 34-55. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ruso.12021>
- Mellafe, R., & Loyola Goich, L. (1994). *La memoria de América colonial: Inconsciente colectivo y vida cotidiana*. Editorial Universitaria.
- Mihovilovich Gratz, A., & Fuentealba Domínguez, M. (2020). *Las Calles de Concepción*. Ediciones del Archivo Histórico de Concepción.
- Oliver Schneider, C., & Zapatta Silva, F. (1950). *Libro de Oro de la Historia de Concepción*. Biblioteca Nacional de Chile.
- Oliver-Smith, A. (1986). *The martyred city: Death and rebirth in the Andes* (1st ed). University of New Mexico Press.
- Oxhorn, P. (1995). *Organizing civil society: The popular sectors and the struggle for democracy in Chile*. Pennsylvania State University Press.
- Pacheco, A. (1997). *Historia de Concepción Siglo XX*. Ediciones Universidad de Concepción.
- Parreñas, J. S. (2018). *Decolonizing extinction: The work of care in orangutan rehabilitation*. Duke University Press.
- Peck, J. (2006). Liberating the City: Between New York and New Orleans. *Urban Geography*, 27(8), 34. <https://doi.org/10.2747/0272-3638.27.8.681>
- Peck, J. (2010). *Constructions of neoliberal reason*. Oxford University Press.
- Peet, R., & Thrift, N. J. (Eds.). (1989). *New models in geography: The political economy perspective*. (Vol. 2). Unwin Hyman.
- Platt, R. H. (1999). *Disasters and democracy: The politics of extreme natural events*. Island Press.

- Remes, J. A. C. (2016). *Disaster citizenship: Survivors, solidarity, and power in the Progressive Era*. University of Illinois Press.
- Rosaldo, R. (2014). *The day of Shelly's death: The poetry and ethnography of Grief*. Duke University Press.
- Sandoval, V., Wisner, B., & Voss, M. (2021). Natural Hazards Governance in Chile. In V. Sandoval, B. Wisner, & M. Voss, *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Natural Hazard Science*. Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780199389407.013.364>
- Soederberg, S. (2010). *Corporate power and ownership in contemporary capitalism: The politics of resistance and domination*. Routledge.
- Stern, S. J. (2006). *Battling for hearts and minds: Memory struggles in Pinochet's Chile, 1973-1988*. Duke University Press.
- Valdés, A., & Foster, W. (2015). *La reforma agraria en Chile. Historia, efectos y lecciones*. Ediciones Universidad Católica de Chile.
- Valdés, J. G. (1995). *Pinochet's economists: The Chicago school in Chile*. Cambridge University Press.
- Valdés, T., & Weinstein, M. (1993). *Mujeres que sueñan: Las organizaciones de Pobladoras 1973-1989*. FLACSO. <http://www.memoriachilena.gob.cl/602/w3-article-9581.html>
- Weinstein, J. (1989). *Los Jovenes Pobladores en las Protestas Nacionales (1983—1984): Una visión socio-política*. Centro de Investigación y Desarrollo de la Educación (CIDE).
- Wisner, B. (Ed.). (2004). *At risk: Natural hazards, people's vulnerability, and disasters* (2nd ed). Routledge.
- Woods, C. A. (1998). *Development arrested: The blues and plantation power in the Mississippi Delta*. Verso.
- Woods, C. A. (2017). *Development drowned and reborn: The blues and bourbon restorations in post-katrina new orleans*. University of Georgia Press.

Newspapers

- CIPER. (2011, May 12). Documentos de la reconstrucción: Ministerio del Interior. *CIPER Chile*. <https://www.ciperchile.cl/2011/05/12/ministerio-del-interior/>
- CIPER. (2013, February 28). Especulación inmobiliaria tras el 27/F: La erradicación forzada de los vecinos de la Villa Futuro. *CIPER Chile*. <https://www.ciperchile.cl/2013/02/28/especulacion-inmobiliaria-tras-el-27f-la-erradicacion-forzada-de-los-vecinos-de-la-villa-futuro/>
- CIPER Team. (2015, June 13). Los negocios extra parlamentarios de diputados y senadores. *CIPER Chile*. <https://www.ciperchile.cl/2015/06/12/los-negocios-extra-parlamentarios-de-diputados-y-senadores/>
- Diario de Concepción. (2017, September). Familias de Aurora de Chile visitan conjunto habitacional Angol ad portas de ser entregado. *Diario Concepción*. <https://www.diarioconcepcion.cl/ciudad/2017/09/03/familias-de-aurora-de-chile-visitacion-conjunto-habitacional-angol-ad-portas-de-ser-entregado.html>
- Echenique, J. P., & Ramírez, P. (2011, May 12). El primer año de la reconstrucción no se financió. *CIPER Chile*. <https://www.ciperchile.cl/2011/05/12/el-primer-ano-de-la-reconstruccion-no-se-financio/>
- Escobar Arrigada, P. (2010, April 16). Intendencia inició trabajo con 11 gremios empresariales / Arauco retoma este mes la producción de celulosa. *El Diario de Concepción*, 12. Archivo histórico de Concepción.
- González, A. (2011, February 28). Dichato: Cuando la reconstrucción se transforma en un papeleo infinito. *Bio-Bio Chile*. <http://www.biobiochile.cl/noticias/2011/02/28/dichato-cuando-la-reconstruccion-se-transforma-en-un-papeleo-infinito.shtml>
- Medel, M., & Rodríguez, A. (2009). *Y los pobres, cada vez más lejos*. 3.
- Mostrador, E. (2011, January 3). Contraloría investiga millonario sobrepago de casas de emergencia para damnificados del terremoto. *El Mostrador*. <https://www.elmostrador.cl/noticias/pais/2011/01/03/contraloria-investiga-millonario-sobrepago-de-casas-de-emergencia-para-damnificados-del-terremoto/>

- Piérola, G., & Agurto, C. (2021). *Cómo impactó la muerte de Lucía Hiriart en los cierres de campaña de Boric y Kast*. Pauta. <https://www.pauta.cl/politica/como-el-factor-hiriart-modifico-los-cierres-de-la-campana-presidencial>
- Ramírez, P. (2011, March 22). Reconstrucción: Gobierno promociona como “viviendas terminadas” casas que aún tienen daños por el terremoto. *CIPER Chile*. <https://www.ciperchile.cl/2011/03/22/reconstruccion-gobierno-promociona-como-“viviendas-terminadas”-casas-que-aun-tienen-danos-por-el-terremoto/>
- Ramírez, P., & Aliaga Sandoval, J. (2012, January 18). Tsunami paso a paso: Los escandalosos errores y omisiones del SHOA y la ONEMI. *CIPER Chile*. <https://www.ciperchile.cl/2012/01/18/tsunami-paso-a-paso-los-escandalosos-errores-y-omisiones-del-shoa-y-la-onemi/>
- Resumen. (2009, December 7). Los juegos de mano de los van Rysselberghe. *Resumen*. <https://resumen.cl/articulos/los-juegos-de-mano-de-los-van-rysselberghe>
- Resumen. (2012, 10). La batalla de Aurora de Chile: Los clanes, la gente y la tierra en disputa. *Resumen*. <https://resumen.cl/articulos/la-batalla-de-aurora-de-chile-los-clanes-la-gente-y-la-tierra-en-disputa>
- Revista NOS. (2010, November). Talcahuano pide reconstrucción ¡Ahora! *Revista NOS*, 30. Archivo histórico de Concepción.
- Revista NOS. (2015, June 19). La histórica población Aurora de Chile y los intentos por erradicarla: Los colonizadores del río Bío Bío. *Revista Nos*. <https://www.revistanos.cl/la-historica-poblacion-aurora-de-chile-y-los-intentos-por-erradicarla-los-colonizadores-del-rio-bio-bio/>
- Riffo, N., & Véjar, R. (2010, April 7). US \$500 millones para adquirir, reconstruir o reparar viviendas. *El Sur*. Archivo histórico de Concepción.
- Rivera, P. (2011, June 13). Petitorio Movimiento Nacional para la Reconstrucción Justa. *Medio a Medio - Agencia de Noticias*. <https://www.agenciadenoticias.org/petitorio-movimiento-nacional-para-la-reconstruccion-justa/>
- Salas, A. (2018, November 28). Memorias, relatos e historia de la recuperación territorial campesina “Mundo Nuevo” en Curanilahue. *Resumen*. <https://resumen.cl/articulos/memorias-relatos-e-historia-de-la-recuperacion-territorial-campesina-mundo-nuevo-en-curanilahue>
- Salazar, N. (2010, April). Megafondo de 120 millones de dólares va para los empresarios. *La Estrella*. Archivo histórico de Concepción.
- Sandoval, C. G. (2010a, March 7). Coliumo en la devastación y el desamparo. *El Sur*, 18.
- Sandoval, C. G. (2010b, May 24). En encuentro regional de la empresa privados propondrán plan de desarrollo. *El Sur*, 10. Archivo histórico de Concepción.
- SoyChile. (2018). Familias de la histórica población Aurora de Chile de Concepción recibieron sus nuevas viviendas. *soychile.cl*. <https://www.soychile.cl/Concepcion/Sociedad/2018/07/28/547394/Familias-de-la-historica-poblacion-Aurora-de-Chile-de-Concepcion-recibieron-sus-nuevas-viviendas.aspx>
- The Clinic. (2011, July 21). Habitantes de Dichato se alzan contra el gobierno por lenta reconstrucción. *The Clinic*. <https://www.theclinic.cl/2011/07/21/habitantes-de-dichato-continuan-con-protestas-por-reconstruccion/>
- Ulloa, G. (2010, April 12). Aseguran que Ejército de Chile sólo ha construido 20 de las 519 mediaguas necesarias en Dichato. *BioBio Chile*. <http://www.biobiochile.cl/noticias/2010/04/12/aseguran-que-ejercito-de-chile-solo-ha-construido-el-5-de-las-mediaguas-en-dichato.shtml>
- Valenzuela, E. (2013, September 9). Las reformas e innovaciones de la UP que perviven. *El Mostrador*. <https://www.elmostrador.cl/noticias/opinion/2013/09/09/las-reformas-e-innovaciones-de-la-up-que-perviven/>
- Valenzuela, X. (2017, 10). En tres años Aurora de Chile tendrá un nuevo rostro. *Diario Concepción*. <https://www.diarioconcepcion.cl/ciudad/2017/10/29/en-tres-anos-aurora-de-chile-tendra-un-nuevo-rostro.html>

Van Rysselberghe, E. (n.d.). *Los van Rysselberghe*. Enrique van Rysselberghe's professional website. Retrieved 19 January 2022, from <https://www.evr.cl/los-van-rysselberghe/>

Grey Literature

- Ampuero Cárdenas, E. (2016). *8.8° Corrupción y Especulación Inmobiliaria*. RED Construyamos.
- Andrade, E. D., & Pérez, T. G. (2017). Ley de Sindicalización Campesina de 1967. *Tayer de Coyuntura - DT*, 5. <https://dt.gob.cl/portal/1629/w3-propertyvalue-167714.html>
- CChC. (1994). *Financiamiento Habitacional y Desarrollo de la Vivienda en Chile* (p. 50). Departamento de Estudios Económicos: Cámara Chilena de la Construcción.
- Contardo, J. I. (2014). Gentrification in the context of post-earthquake reconstruction urban policies: A review of the Chilean experience. *Global Urban Research Centre Working Paper*, 9, 33.
- El MNRJ*. (n.d.). Retrieved 29 June 2022, from <https://dichatohoy.blogspot.com/2011/04/el-movimiento-nacional-por-la.html>
- Estudiantes. (2010, September 27). CONGRESO DE SOCIOLOGÍA: Resumen Tema Central Congreso Sociología 2010. *CONGRESO DE SOCIOLOGÍA*. <https://congressociologiaudec.blogspot.com/2010/09/resumen-tema-central-congreso.html>
- Francisco Cordova (Director). (2012). *POBLADORES DE AURORA DE CHILE ESCUCHAN 'SOLUCIÓN' DE GOBIERNO -CONCEPCIÓN-*. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jBVraWHQeCI>
- Imilan, W. A. (2016.). *Políticas y Luchas por la Vivienda en Chile: El Camino Neoliberal. Contested_cities working paper*.
- International Social Science Council & United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. (2013). *World Social Science Report 2013: Changing Global Environments*. OECD. <https://doi.org/10.1787/9789264203419-en>
- Lara Meza, A. M. (2010). La Construcción de la Memoria Como Fuente Histórica. In A. M. de la O. Castellano Pinzón, A. Sandoval Pierres, C. Cervera Delgado, F. Macías Gloria, M. Camarena Ocampo, & P. Campos Rodríguez, *Los Oficios del Historiador: Taller y prácticas de la Historia Oral*. Universidad de Guanajuato.
- Mellafe, R. (1981). El acontecer infausto en el carácter chileno: Una proposición de la historia de las mentalidades. *Atenea*, 442, 121-128.
- Observatorio de la Reconstrucción. (2013). *Análisis Comparativo de Planes Maestros de Reconstrucción Territorial: Estado de Avance al Mes de Julio 2013*.
- Oficina Internacional del Trabajo. (2010). *Proyecto impacto del terremoto sobre el empleo* (OIT Santiago). Oficina Internacional del Trabajo: Oficina Subregional para el Cono Sur de América Latina; International Labour Organization. https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---americas/---ro-lima/---sro-santiago/documents/genericdocument/wcms_185424.pdf
- Piñera, J. (2009, May 1). *Hacia una sociedad de propietarios*. elcato.org. <https://www.elcato.org/hacia-una-sociedad-de-propietarios>
- Portelli, A. (1984). Las Peculiaridades de la Historia Oral. *TAREA: Revista de Cultura de La Asociación de Publicaciones Educativas*, 11.
- Pulgar, C. (2011, April 6). Reconstrucción(es) sociedad civil y participación. *Facultad de Arquitectura y Urbanismo - Universidad de Chile*. <http://www.fau.uchile.cl/noticias/70315/reconstrucciones-sociedad-civil-y-participacion>
- Rodríguez, P. B. (2019). *La crisis habitacional del invierno de 1997. Complicidad entre empresariado, CChC y autoridades en las políticas de vivienda en el Chile neoliberal*. [Licenciatura]. Universidad de Chile.
- Sub. Economía y EMT. (2016). *Consultoría sobre dimensionamiento del mercado de desastres naturales: Impacto y tamaño en Chile y el Mundo* [Final Report]. Gobierno de Chile.

Torres Díaz, N. A. (2020). *La construcción de la ciudad neoliberal en Chile: El proceso de erradicación y la resistencia de Pobladores en Villa la Reina* [Licenciatura]. Universidad de Chile.

Archival Documents

Decreto Ley Nº 1289 (MININTERIOR). (1975). Gobierno de Chile.

Decreto Ley Nº 2552 (V. Y U.). (1979). Gobierno de Chile.

División de Desarrollo Urbano. (1979). *Política Nacional de Desarrollo Urbano*. División Técnica de Estudio y Fomento Habitacional; MINVU.

Grove, M. (1939). *Reforma Agraria* (La Reforma Agraria (1962-1973)). Departamento de Publicaciones - Secretaría Nacional de Cultura; Biblioteca Nacional de Chile. <http://www.memoriachilena.gob.cl/602/w3-article-9094.html>

Kast Rist, M. (1975). *Mapa de la Extrema Pobreza*.

Lecaros, M. M. (2010). *Programa de Reconstrucción de Vivienda*. MINVU.

Ley Nº 15.020 (La Reforma Agraria (1962-1973)). (1962). Diario Oficial; Biblioteca Nacional de Chile.

Ley Nº 16.640 (Sindicatos Campesinos (1967-1963)). (1967). Corporación de la Reforma Agraria; Biblioteca Nacional de Chile. <http://www.memoriachilena.gob.cl/602/w3-article-59505.html>

Ley Nº 19.281 (V. Y U.). (1993).

Mackenna, R. P., & Iacobelli del Río, A. (2010). *Plan de Reconstrucción MINVU: Chile Unido Reconstruye Mejor* (4th ed.). MINVU.

Ministerio de Planificación. (2010). *Especificaciones Técnicas Mediagua*. Gobierno de Chile: Ministerio de Planificación.

MINVU. (1996). *Programa de Recuperación Ribera Norte Río Bío-Bío* (P. Rodríguez M., Ed.).

MINVU. (1999). *Folleto promocional Ribera Norte*.

MINVU. (2001). *Ribera Norte Concepción de Cara al Bío-Bío*. Ministerio de Vivienda y Urbanismo, Gobierno de Chile.

Nacional, B. del C. (1973). *Decreto Ley Nº 198 (MINTRAB)*. Gobierno de Chile. <https://www.bcn.cl/leychile>

Pinochet Ugarte, A. (1985). *Mensaje Presidencial: 11 Septiembre 1984—11 Septiembre 1985*.

SHOA. (2000). *Cómo Sobrevivir a un Maremoto: 11 Lecciones del Tsunami ocurrido en el sur de Chile el 22 de mayo de 1960*. Servicio Hidrográfico y Oceanográfico de la Armada de Chile.

Tacla Chamy, O. (1970). *XIV Censo de Población y III de Vivienda. Características básicas de la población. (Censo 1970). Concepción*. (I42c 2224). Instituto Nacional de Estadísticas (República de Chile). <https://bibliotecadigital.ciren.cl/handle/20.500.13082/33078>

Works of Art

Jara, V. (1972). *La Población*. Discoteca del Cantar Popular. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KLyLUE4Fv44>

Peña Lagos, H. (2012). *3x6:Informe sobre una vivienda de emergencia* [Theatre]. <https://calmargen.wixsite.com/colectivo/3x6>