

When someone Talk Politics to Me, I am Reminded of the Romans: Chilean high school students' frameworks for making political use of history

Rodrigo Mayorga¹

¹Columbia University, New York/NY – United States of America

ABSTRACT – *When someone Talk Politics to Me, I am Reminded of the Romans: Chilean high school students' frameworks for making political use of history.* This article examines how Chilean high school students who are involved in student protests demonstrate and make use of their understandings of politics and history, in order to inform and orient their own political actions. Based on fieldwork conducted in 2014 in a Chilean public high school, I use discourse analysis to examine students' interviews as a particular kind of social work. In these interviews, I argue that students were displaying and participating in the constant production of coherent frameworks in which history and politics are connected. Students' understandings of history and politics inform and affect each other, as well as become significant in their citizenship education.

Keywords: Citizenship Education. Chile. Historical Thinking. Social Studies Education. Student Protests.

RESUMO – *Quando alguém conversa sobre política comigo, lembro dos romanos: Marcos de estudantes chilenos de ensino médio para fazer uso político da história.* Este artigo examina como estudantes chilenos de ensino médio envolvidos em protestos estudantis demonstram e fazem uso de sua compreensão sobre política e história para informar e orientar suas próprias ações políticas. Com base em trabalho de campo realizado em 2014 em uma escola chilena de ensino médio, utilizo a análise de discurso para examinar entrevistas de estudantes como um tipo específico de trabalho social. Nestas entrevistas, defendo que os estudantes apresentavam e participavam da produção constante de marcos coerentes em que história e política estão conectadas. A compreensão de história e política dos estudantes informa e afeta uma à outra, bem como se torna significativa em sua educação em cidadania.

Palavras-chave: Educação em Cidadania. Chile. Pensamento Histórico. Formação em Estudos Sociais. Protestos Estudantis.

Introduction¹

In 2019, Chilean media reported that a high school curricular reform approved by the Ministry of Education and the National Council for Education would transform the mandatory History, Geography and Social Studies class into an elective course for 11th and 12th graders. Outraged historians, teachers, and other civil society actors immediately opposed the reform. The Ministry argued that the topics covered in the old 11th and 12th grades' History, Geography and Social Studies class were being redistributed, and that some of them would be included in a new Citizenship Education class, to be implemented in 2020. Critics of the curricular reform claimed this was a fallacious argument, since citizenship education required historical thinking and knowledge to be effective. "Citizenship Education and History, Geography and Social Studies classes can accompany each other" an open letter of almost 750 historians declared, "[...] but one cannot replace the other if our aim is to educate citizens ready for the 21st century challenges" (Cordero-Fernández; Estefane, 2019).

Indeed, it is a widely shared perception that history education directly affects the citizenship education of students (Carretero; Castorina, 2010; Siede, 2012; Muñoz Delaunoy; Ossandón Millavil, 2013). This belief is so ingrained in the Chilean educational system that, until the creation of the Citizenship Education class previously mentioned, the History, Geography and Social Studies class was tasked with providing citizenship education to high school students (Chile, 2015). However, the links between history and citizenship education have not been explored empirically as much as they should have, particularly in terms of the everyday practices of educators and students. An anthropology of citizenship education – with its focus on how students learn and enact particular kinds of citizenship, while engaging in everyday social and educational practices – can shed light on these links, not only proving if they exist or not, but illuminating the ways in which they are produced, undermined, reinforced and transformed.

In order to do so, this article examines the connections Chilean students establish between their understandings of history and politics. Based on fieldwork conducted in 2014 in a Chilean public high school experiencing a series of student protests, and analyzing in depth interviews with two students, I draw on Wortham and Reyes (2015) approach to discourse analysis for examining how high schoolers demonstrated these understandings and used them to position themselves. I argue that students did this by participating in the constant production of coherent frameworks in which history and politics are intimately connected, which then informed their political action. Thus, making sense of their own past is, for these students, an essential component of any present political action, as well as of any citizenship education process.

Anthropology of Citizenship Education and Historical Consciousness

In the last decades, anthropologists of citizenship education have provided new theoretical frameworks and methodological approaches to study how students are socialized as citizens of particular nation-states. Focusing on the processes of contestation, negotiation and cultural production that occur inside schools (Sobe, 2014), they have examined the contexts where these processes occur and the different pedagogical practices involved in them (Luykx, 1999; Levinson, 2001; Hall, 2002; Rubin, 2007; Brenei, 2008; Lazar, 2010; Bellino, 2016). As Levinson (2005, p. 336) argues, by using ethnographic methods and elucidating cultural frameworks of meaning and local identities, an anthropology of citizenship can assist us in understanding how students “[...] imagine their social belonging and exercise their participation as democratic citizens”.

An anthropology of citizenship education is particularly important when asking about the relations students establish with their own past and that of others. Seixas (2006) has defined this particular field of study as that of *historical consciousness*: the different “[...] individual and collective understandings of the past, the cognitive and cultural factors that shape those understandings, as well as the relations of historical understandings to those of the present and the future” (Seixas, 2006, p. 10). However, one risk of following Seixas’ definition strictly is that one could think of these different *understandings of the past* only as abstract ideas that exist in the minds of people. Approaching this problem from an anthropological perspective allows us to focus on historical consciousness not as a series of disembodied thoughts, but as actions by which human beings display their understandings of the past and use them in order to achieve their objectives in the present. Nordgren (2016) has named this particular human phenomenon the *use of history*. “[U]se of history”, he argues, “is a performative historical consciousness. In communication, emotive and cognitive conceptions are expressed of how the past, present, and future are interrelated” (Nordgren, 2016, p. 484). Scholars have studied how the production of historical knowledge is mediated by power relations (Trouillot, 1995; Schwartz; Cook, 2002; Stoler, 2002), how displaying historical knowledge can allow people to perform *good citizenship* (Stack, 2012), and how particular ways of learning about history can be significant in how youth enact their everyday citizenship (Bellino, 2017). This paper contributes to this body of literature by exploring the different ways in which Chilean high school students build, through speech-action, frameworks to display their understandings of politics and history and, through these, are able to orient and defend their own political actions in the present.

Context and Site

In 2011, massive numbers of Chilean high school and college students took to the streets as part of a social movement that confronted the right-wing government of Sebastian Piñera. The Chilean Student Movement demanded *Quality Education for All* and challenged a market-oriented educational system established under the dictatorship of Augusto Pinochet (Stromquist; Sanyal, 2013). Further, students demanded not only changes in educational policies at a national level but also solutions to funding and infrastructure issues in their own schools. In 2013, Michelle Bachelet was elected for the second time as president of Chile, with a platform that included an educational reform addressing several of the students' concerns. However, protests continued until the end of the Bachelet government in 2018, as students demanded their voices be included in the design and implementation of this educational reform.

Between June and August of 2014, I conducted ethnographic fieldwork at the *Liceo Domingo Faustino Sarmiento* (or just *Liceo Sarmiento*), a public high school in Santiago, Chile. The *Liceo Sarmiento* serves only male students, usually coming from middle- and working-class families. The school is also part of what is known as *liceos emblemáticos*: a group of Chilean public high schools that are not only among the oldest in the country, but also have a well-known political history. Both because of this history and their location nearby the main *locus* of student protests – the downtown historic neighborhood of Santiago – the students of these schools have been some of the most active participants in the Chilean Student Movement. In this context, the *Liceo Sarmiento* has experienced many student-led occupations during the last decade. Occupations are a particular form of protests in which the students of a school take a vote to occupy the school's premises. If the vote is approved, classes are suspended, teachers leave the school and its control passes from the administrators to the students. Although being present in the occupied school is not mandatory for students, many do choose to stay, with some of them even sleeping there; others just visit the school from time to time or simply stay at home.

By August 2014, the *Liceo Sarmiento* had been already occupied twice during the year. In both cases, the school remained occupied for periods no shorter than three weeks. According to the *Liceo Sarmiento's* Student Government, the occupation was a way for the students to pressure the Bachelet government and, in doing so, to participate in the debate of the national educational reform. However, several others opposed the occupation, arguing that it was threatening their educational rights, by preventing them from having classes regularly. Indeed, the occupation of the school was a contentious topic when I arrived at the *Liceo Sarmiento*, permeating most interactions among the school actors, including the ones between the students and myself as a researcher.

Methods, Participants and Data Analysis

During my fieldwork at the *Liceo Sarmiento*, I worked mainly with one 10th grade cohort-group². The cohort-group was composed of thirty-eight students, their ages ranging between fifteen and sixteen years. I conducted participant observations with this cohort during their Social Studies and Language classes, their weekly Class Council and their recesses and lunch hours³. I also joined them during other school activities such as school celebrations and parent-teacher conferences. I observed extracurricular activities, such as work and private classes, if and when invited by the students themselves.

At the beginning of my fieldwork, I applied a questionnaire to all cohort-group members. The questionnaire was composed of seven items, and its intention was to elicit the students' political preferences, their perceptions of Chile's recent past, its current political situation, and their own self-reported civic efficacy (Mitra; Serriere, 2012). I also conducted nine in-depth semi-structured interviews with some of these students, using the questionnaire results for sampling them in a way that would consider all political profiles present in the cohort-group. The interviews inquired about the students' perceptions of past and present Chilean politics, and their present and projected political participation as citizens, allowing the interviewees to expand on their answers to the questionnaire.

For this article, I analyzed the transcripts of two of these interviews: those conducted with the students called Florencio and Víctor⁴. They represent two different *political profiles* – according to their questionnaires' results, Víctor was a leftist, while Florencio's sympathies aligned more with the liberal right. Although both were politically active, and both opposed how the government was implementing the educational reform, Florencio and Víctor starkly disagreed regarding the *Liceo Sarmiento's* occupation. Florencio – the democratically elected president of this cohort-group – rejected adamantly this political strategy. He firmly believed that the occupation was not only ineffective but harmful for them as students, and his position provoked some issues between him and presidents of other cohort-groups. Víctor, on the other hand, defended the occupation, even when most of his cohort-group's classmates opposed it. Finally, Florencio and Víctor also differed in their evaluation of Chile's recent past: although he was not celebratory of Pinochet's regime, Florencio was less critical of it than he was of Salvador Allende's government⁵; on the other hand, Víctor was very critical of Pinochet's military dictatorship, and he explicitly declared his admiration for Salvador Allende and what he represented. In short, these two students represented divergent ends of the political and historical spectrum.

My analysis does not assume causal relations, as sometimes Chilean public commentators do when linking students' historical understandings and their political actions. I do not claim that Víctor defended the occupation because he supported Allende's legacy, or that Florencio

did not because he was more right-leaning than most of his classmates. Claiming this would imply that the thoughts existing in people's minds determine their actions and, even worse, that students are nothing but passive receptors of ideas, always in risk of indoctrination. Neither do I claim that, when answering a questionnaire or an interview, students are revealing to the researcher the veiled contents of their minds. What I do claim is that, while engaging with questionnaires and interviews, these students are presenting to their interlocutors certain understandings of history and politics as valid ones, as well as positioning themselves in relation to these understandings. Hence, my analysis focuses on some of the mechanisms used by these students in order to achieve this social work, exploring not any causal relation, but how these understandings, when displayed, function as resources to each other and allow these youths to build complex frameworks that are relevant for their present political actions.

I analyze this data using discourse analytical techniques from linguistic anthropology (Wortham; Reyes, 2015). For this, I focus on the relations between narrated and narrating events in the context of these interviews, examining their salient indexical signs and how they are used by the speakers to define what politics and history are supposed to be, what are the relations between them, and what are their own positions regarding the two. As previously stated, I do not intend to describe a particular model of thought about the links between politics and history, but to explore the different ways in which these students construe these relations and build frameworks to do so. I also aim to better understand how these youths use cultural resources to achieve this social work, in order to reinstate their own position as historical actors. A discourse analysis approach to this problem can shed light on these interviews as long as it "[...] emphasizes that language is not merely a self-contained system of symbols but more importantly a mode of doing, being, and becoming" (He, 2000, p. 429).

Frameworks for Politics and History

Construing Politics

Florencio's and Victor's interviews were conducted in a similar fashion: both happened in the school premises (Victor's during a recess, and Florencio's after the school day has ended), followed the same guidelines, included the same questions and were audio recorded. Each one started with the student stating his name, age, and the year when he enrolled in the *Liceo Sarmiento*, and continued with him answering three questions about his teachers and their pedagogy. After these, students were asked a definition of what politics were. In their answers, it is possible to observe how fascinating similarities started to emerge.

Florencio's interview (What Politics Is)

1. R: In that sense, how, how would you define what politics are?=-
2. F: =Look, for me when, when someone talk politics to me or when I talk

3. about politics I, I:: I am reminded of the, the Romans. Because I imagine
4. a senator, this guy dressed in a robe, with laurels here, sayi, talking,
5. talking and chatting a::nd the rest voting or or criticizing what he says.
6. Bu:t, politics like something abstract, to me is like a leader person (0.3)
7. who has, has the skills for leading (0.3) a::nd take care of the rest of the
8. group. Bu:t how I see politics today, em:: I could tell you it is a, a fiasco,
9. at least here in, in Chile=
10. R: =Okay: why?
11. F: Becau::se I don't know, I don't like this treacherous environment
12. that exists because (0.5) you see, there are many turnaroun, turncoats
13. sorry, they say one thing here, with someone else they say another
14. thing. I don't like that double standard =
15. R: =Okay.
16. F: Because I don't know, it doesn't, it doesn't go with me. Bu::t, for me, I
17. don't feel very close to politics, even in spite of:, of the whole situation
18. I'm living and all that, I don't feel very close to politics.
19. R: To politics: (.) nowadays or to politics like an action?
20. F: To politics like nowadays I think =
21. R: =Okay, perfect.
22. F: Yes, because like an action, I as a cohort-group president I am doing
23. politics =

Víctor's interview (What Politics Is)

1. R: What, what, wha:t is political for you. What has to have something
2. to be a political activity?
3. V: The, m::=
4. R: Or how would you define it? =
5. V: =I mean, I mean I::, it is complicated, it is a huge concept. E:, how
6. do I define it? It is about people relating to others, a::nd they make
7. decisions for themselves, I don't know, it's like, they talk, a, about it,
8. they relate abo:ut, how the things they are doing affect them (2,5) And
9. I have also heard other opinions. I have also heard tha::t, all that we do
10. is, a political thing, which means that if we move is a political thing,
11. <the truth is I've never fully understood this>. Politics, is a little
12. complicated for me to define it as a concept.
13. R: But for you is related to this thing of interpersonal relations and
14. decisions.
15. V: Yeah, somewhere in that relationship.

The first thing we can notice in the excerpts is that both Florencio and Víctor acknowledge that politics is a polysemous concept. They do this by presenting two different versions of what politics can be, although each student establishes this distinction in a different way. For Florencio, politics can either be represented by a virtuous and capable leader – represented in the figure of the Roman senator (lines 3-5) – or be characterized by treacherous acts and lack of trust (lines 11-14). Víctor, on the other hand, distinguishes between a version of politics based on collective relationships and decisions (lines 5-8) from another that designates just any action, regardless if it is collective or individual (lines 8-11).

More important than the students' definitions, though, is how through their speech they side with one of these versions. Personal deictics are particularly significant in achieving this. In line 6, Víctor uses the deictic *I* when presenting a version of what politics mean, and then,

after using reported speech to present a second definition as voiced by someone else (lines 8-10), uses again the deictic *I* to avoid showing agreement with this version (*the truth is I've never fully understood this*, line 11). In a similar way, Florencio uses personal deictics such as *I* and *me* to side with his first definition of politics (lines 2-3 and 6) and, although he does it again when presenting a second definition (lines 11 and 14), this time he adds evaluative indexicals to evaluate this definition as a negative one, such as *treacherous* (line 11) and *double standard* (line 14). Florencio goes even further and does not just side with one of these versions: in lines 16 to 18 he declares his distance from the other, while in lines 22 to 23 he states that *as a cohort-group president I am doing politics*. In this way, Florencio positions himself as enacting politics – understood in the particular way he has instructed his interlocutor to do –, while reinforcing the binary model he has already presented.

Construing History

After four more questions about political education at their school, the interviews shifted towards a discussion of history, both as a concept and in relation to Chile's recent past. Here, one of the items of the questionnaire was used, allowing the students to expand their previous answers (Chart 1 and 2). In what follows, two different narrated events are presented. Its examination allows us to analyze how the concept of history was being produced by these students, illuminating some of the possible relations between it and that of politics.

Chart 1 – Questionnaire Items used During Interviews: State your level of agreement regarding the following sentences

	I Completely Disagree	Disagree	I do not agree or disagree	I Agree	I Completely Agree
I believe learning history is important for learning about the mistakes made in the past.					
I believe learning history is important for knowing the great deeds of others in the past.					
I believe learning history is important for knowing the common past of my country.					
I believe learning history is important for having general knowledge.					
I believe learning history is important for knowing about the injustices committed in the past.					
I believe learning history is important to learn to see the world with critical thinking.					

Source: Author's Elaboration.

Chart 2 – Questionnaire Items used During Interviews: State your level of agreement regarding the following sentences

	I Completely Disagree	Disagree	I do not agree or disagree	I Agree	I Completely Agree
I believe my actions can help to improve my school.					
I believe my actions can help to improve my country.					
I believe voting to be a way of improving my country.					
I believe protesting to be a way of improving my country.					
I believe solidarity actions to be a way of improving my country.					

Source: Author's Elaboration.

Florencio's interview (What History Is)

1. R: Florencio, how would you: define the concept of history? What is
2. history for [you?]
3. F: [History,] to me::, history is like a: chronology of fa:cts (0.8) from
4. which I can get information, learn from some mistakes a::nd (1) repeat
5. some actions. (0.5) And a::: don't repeat the mistakes that have been
6. made (4,5)
7. R: Then why:? <Along the same lines>. Why do you think it is
8. important to study history? (2,2)
9. F: I thi:nk, studying history =
10. R: =Why, why studying history at the schoo:l, why, for example you
11. here (points to the questionnaire), I asked you, I gave you guys
12. several options and you said that you completely agreed with all of
13. them. We were talking about learning from the mistakes of the pa:st,
14. knowing the great deeds of, of me, of others in the pa:st, knowing the
15. common past of the country, for obtaining general knowledge;
16. knowing the injustices that had been committed in the past a:nd
17. learning to see the world with critical thinking. You marked a::, e::m.
18. Then, why? What (.)why do you think, for you, why is important to
19. study hi, his (.)Wait a second.=
20. F: =Okay. (3.5).
21. R: If you want you can think the [the::,] the answer, since my wife is
22. texting me. (27,5) ((replies a text message))
23. F: [hhh]
24. R: Okay. Why do you think is imp?, why, in your opinion, why is it
25. important to study history?
26. F: E::m, well I think that all should, or every person, or most of them,
27. should know, because of general knowledge <because> oneself, one
28. gets the impression that, like asking something and the other person
29. doesn't know is like hey this guy is ignorant. Bu::t studying history I
30. think it is important for::m, as I said to you, repeat some things and
31. apply: them in everyday life.

Víctor's interview (What History Is)

1. R: Víctor, how would you define; the concept of history? <We are now in
2. a new set of questions but:::, what is history for you?

3. V: M.: Bu::t, what happens is that:, history::, like the history since the
4. animals and (.) I mean of, of how the first form of life ,was born?=
5. R: Or?
6. V: O:r, since like men.
7. R: Let's go with <the tha tho> since men.
8. V: Okay.
9. R: Good that you had, is good that you make that distinction =
10. V: =Yes.=
11. R: = Tell it to me from men. What is history in the sense of something
12. human?
13. V: History (1). Is (.) about ho::w, how the man has developed, in all his
14. processes (2). Including politically, and biologically too, academically,
15. I don't know where (0.8). I mean at work, etcétera=
16. R: Perfect.
17. V: How the man has developed, with all (3,5).
18. R: The other day I asked you, in the questionnaire, e::m::, like about the
19. reasons that might exist for learning history. The:n you choose, <in
20. general you like>, agreed with all the options but you said you just
21. agree:d, with learning lessons from the mistakes of the past, knowing
22. the important deeds of others in the past, knowing the common past
23. of my country. And you really agreed: that it was important for
24. obtaining general knowledge, for knowing the injustices of the past (.)
25. that had been committed in the past:, and for looking at the world with
26. critical thinking. =
27. V: =Well, maybe I,:: didn't, didn't answer very we (.) is like, if I think
28. about it right now =
29. R: =Yeah?=
30. V: =It is=
31. R: =Tell me if (.) we can [change anything here] [(points to the
32. questionnaire)]
33. V: [the, tha, that thing about the injust]ces is related with learning
34. from the mistakes of the past =
35. R: =Okay:. [Ah, so this one you] (.) this one you would move it here?=
36. V: [I think that around there I was] =Yeah, I mean, completely agree.=
37. R: =Perfect.=
38. V: =Because we are not going to make the same mistakes, yes, because
39. of mistake::s (1) eh, society's problems because of that the people
40. sometimes is unhappy (1).

In this first narrated event, the denotational meaning of students' speech shows both similarities and differences: while Florencio states that history is a *chronology of facts* (line 3), Víctor emphasizes the centrality of human development in it. However, both students refer to history's importance for not committing the *mistakes* of the past (Victor's transcript, line 38 to 40, and Florencio's transcript, lines 4 to 6). To this, Florencio adds a second reason for why history is important, highlighting a link between history and *general knowledge* (line 27). He uses this link to distinguish two different groups of people: those who have *general knowledge* and those who are *ignorant* (line 29). Moreover, using evaluative indexicals in lines 26 to 29, he builds a hierarchical relationship between these two. Voicing a member of the first group, and using person deictics like *oneself* (line 27) and *this guy* (line 29), Florencio positions himself as part of the first group, in a similar way as he had done

earlier when answering what politics are about. Some of these mechanisms appear once again in the following narrated event.

Florencio's interview (About Chile's recent past)

1. R: Perfect (9.5) Imagine tha::t, you're with a foreigner, who doesn't
2. kno:w Chile <speaks Spanish but doesn't know anything about
3. Chile>.
4. And he asks you, he asks you to tell him a little:, the history of Chile
5. (0.8) during the past forty-five years, <I mean since> the: (0.5)
6. sixty-nine seventy (1) until two thousand and fourteen, until today.
7. How would you tell the history of Chile to a foreigner? That of the last
8. forty-five years. In a:::, depending, <starting from what you know>,
9. what you think, what your perspective about it is. A::nd imagine this
10. [incomprehensible] like colloquial, like that. You're like in a::
11. birthday, and this dude tellsya oy, I a::m (1.2) I don't know, Germa:n but
12. I speak Spani:sh a::nd, what's up with Chile? What's the history?
13. What's
14. ha, what's happened here? I've heard so many things but a, you who
15. are Chilean, tell me about it.
16. F: E: let's see, I think I would answer::, look, since the sixty-nine and so
17. on: there was a coup in the seventy-three, becau::se there was a
18. president who wa::s the Salvador Allente, <Allende>, who had:m us,
19. <in kind of a shitty situation>. A::nd then this guy:: came and led the
20. coup, Augusto Pinochet (0.8). A:: Dictatorship was installed. And
21. it kind of benefitted u::s in some things: (0.5) but:: it benefitted us (.) it
22. harmed us more than it be, benefited us. It divided us a lot: a::nd we
23. were like that until like the nine::ty (1) and then they came I don't know
24. what other presidents came because I don't have a lot of kno:wledge
25. but:: (2.5) I knew tha::t there had been some economic treaties, some
26. frontiers were opened:. And since then we ar::e, like in (.) some
27. ascent of (.) in terms of the econom, economy although not so much,
28. there are some things yet to be fixed. We have::, not a, we are not a
29. developed: country, we are not a rich country but:, we have kind of like
30. a comfort, in like, general terms.
31. R: Very good (3) Very good (2,5). E::m. Along the same lines i:fm, if you
32. had to choose, <imagine I ask you> who is for you the most important
33. character in Chilean history during these past forty-five years.
34. Whatever kind of character because, eh, it doesn't have to be a
35. politician necessarily, I tell everyone it can be Gary Medel⁶, e:: since
36. today it might totally fit the [(incomprehensible)]=
37. F: [hhh]=
38. R: =<But I mean ((incomprehensible))> who is for you the most
39. important character of Chilean history, of Chile, during these past
40. forty-five years?=-
41. F: =The most important character I =
42. R: =If you had to choose one.
43. F: I think Ricardo Lagos⁷=
44. R: =Why?
45. F: Because he is a guy who has::, has stature, has:: the personality to
46. say stuff, in a way that don't, I couldn't explain this to you but ha (.) it's
47. like there's something I like of that wa (.)of that way of talking. He
48. has like he presents: himself (.) an: imposes his way of presenting
49. things without steamrolling anyone (4).
50. R: And why do you think he has been important for Chile, or for
51. Chilean history, why do you think he has been::? (2)

52. F: Because:: I think he:, knew how to lead the government after the::,
53. after all that has happened, all the: decadence that it had (1.2). I don't
54. don't know much about the details of what he might have done but I
55. think he is a, a guy who has good leadership and he did his job well.

Victor's interview (About Chile's recent past)

1. R: Victor imagine that (.) I: was o:r or you were with a foreigner. And
2. that he doesn't know anything about Chile, he speaks Spanish but
3. doesn't know anything about this country. And this foreigner asks
4. you:, mam:, a birthday, a party whatever he says to you let's see. Tell
5. me a little, what's up with this country? What has happened? What's
6. the history of this country between the, during the last forty-five
7. years? From seventy-nine, seventy until today? How would you tell, to
8. a foreigner who doesn't know anything about Chile, the history of
9. Chile from nineteen sixty-nine, seventy, until the year two thousand
10. and fourteen?
11. V: What happens is that, before all that there was like an historical
12. weight: (1) and, because of that: (.) it fell over the::: In that it e:: began
13. in the seventy. Right? That the *Unidad Popular* arrives⁸. (1.5) And is like
14. Allende representing the People::⁹; that, maybe he didn't do everything
15. all right (1.2). Well (1.8). Then (0.5) because of this *historical weight* (1), I
16. feel that::: it played::d against him there.=
17. R: =Perfect.
18. V: Then. (1.2) Okay, how would I say it? Well, in sixty::-nine? o seventy?
19. (0.5)
20. R: [The year you wanna start from]
21. V: [Well, he arrives] yes, Allende arrives (0.5) and he makes so:::me
22. (0.3) reforms that, could be considered (.) revolutionaries. Answer by
23. the People, or that was what it was supposedly doing, eh (.) Ih, I think
24. it was doing it. (1) Then:::m, e::: what he did (.) eck. It affected the
25. interests of people who had a lo:t of capital and a lo::t of, many
26. resources. (1) With all the:::se e, processes and these reforms that
27. Allende does.(1.5) The:::n, well. In this system that we live in,
28. capitalist. E:: it is very individualistic and competitive. A::nd they
29. always tend to care about oneself instead of (.) the people. So the
30. businessmen found themselves (.)they saw their interests affected.
31. I don't know if just the businessmen but also m::, **powerful people**.=
32. R: =Perfect.
33. V: A::nd I feel that because of that:, , e:: the coup happened. (2) Well
34. and then (1.2) e:::, all eh (.) what came after the dictatorship process, it
35. was twenty years. (2) And that.
36. R: [Perfect]
37. V: [Well and in] the Dictatorship process like:, also in any dictatorship
38. in whi:ch, human rights are violated. The total loss of the me (.)
39. democracy and (.) all the pe:rsons, all who die:d etcétera.=
40. R: =Perfect. (4)
41. V: And. I feel, that the:: (1) e:, the coup, was to protect the interests:: of
42. the powerful people.=
43. R: =Perfect. (5) Perfect (0.5) Anything else?
44. V: (4) E::: [Well]
45. R: If not [so we, we can continue], if not=
46. V: =Afte:::r that (0.5) the democracy came. In the process in which the
47. people started to get bored of the Dictatorship, they started °to protest
48. then° (0.5) And I don't feel that, there were not a lot of changes I mean
49. okay (0.3) there was a decrease of rights (.) I mean of human rights

50. violations (0.5) But the political a::nd, and economic interests of the
 51. powerful people don't, they were not (.) affected. (1) Because the::
 52. government benefitted them I mean. Frei¹⁰ and also:: (0.5) e Lagos like,
 53. etcetera. And like it is happening now too. That's what I feel. (6).
 54. R: [Vis:] [You finish]
 55. V: [Then it arrives] this pseudo:, [this pseudo] democracy.
 56. R: Perfect. (2)
 57. V: ((incomprehensible))
 58. R: Hh. Víctor. I::f along the same lines, if you had to choose, the most
 59. important character of Chilean history during these past forty-five
 60. years. Who doesn't have to be necessarily a political character. E::, I tell
 61. this to everybody <since the last question, since we've been talking
 62. about politics for a while=>
 63. V: =Yes=
 64. R: =Sometimes one thinks. (.) <The most importa:nt character for you,
 65. but you> tell me, Gary Medel, <you can tell me Gary Medel>. E::m.
 66. That today could happen after all =
 67. V: =Not like, [today]
 68. R: [Hhh]. But in the end wha::tm, who do you believe was the most
 69. important character of Chilean history during the last forty-five years.
 70. (0.5) If you had to pick one man. [Or one woman].
 71. V: [It's hard]. It's hard becau:se there are many that ha::ve (0.5) have
 72. done m things for the country, both good and bad, and that have
 73. affected it a lot. (2) Let's see. E::, but like pick one is hard. I could make
 74. a list of them and then::=
 75. R: =Make a list and then you pick one for me.
 76. V: Okay. Well first the political personalities that I can't leave aside
 77. because, they are directly related with the People =
 78. R: =Right=
 79. V: =And with what we are as a Chilean society, that is the people=.
 80. R: =[Perfect]
 81. V: [I mean the] People. Right, and those tha:t well they have had more
 82. presence are Allende and Pinochet. They are like the antagonists. (3.5)

During this second narrated event, these two students deploy different cultural tools to build a historical narrative (Barton, 2001). Florencio and Víctor clearly differ in their ways of doing this. Florencio uses a linear model that, coherently with his own definition of history, sequentially and chronologically organizes three historical moments (Socialist Democracy / Dictatorship / Neoliberal Democracy). Each one is also expressed metonymically through a political leader (Socialist Democracy/Salvador Allende – Dictatorship/Augusto Pinochet – Neoliberal Democracy/Ricardo Lagos), a decision that is coherent with the definition of politics he has sided with earlier. Using evaluative indexicals, Florencio also establishes a linear progression from the first historical moment (*who had us in kind of a shitty situation* in lines 18-19), to the second one (*it harmed us more than it benefited us* in lines 21-22), and finally to the third one (*And since then we are, like in some ascent* in lines 26-27). This progression is later reinforced with positive evaluative indexicals to describe Ricardo Lagos as a historical character (lines 45-46). Further, Florencio uses the person deictics *us* and *we* to include himself as part of the Chilean society (lines 18, 21-22, 28-29). In his account, Chilean society appears to follow its leaders in order to go through this linear historical process.

Víctor identifies the same three historical moments Florencio does, although he uses a binary model to organize them in a different way. He collapses together Dictatorship and Neoliberal Democracy and opposes them to Socialist Democracy. He also uses metonymical relations but, in his case, these relations link historical moments with particular social groups: Socialist Democracy with *the People* (lines 13-14, 22-23), and both Dictatorship and Neoliberal Democracy with *powerful people* (lines 31, 41-42 and 50-51). Moreover, Víctor uses this binary structure when selecting the main historical character of Chile's recent history (lines 76-82). Unlike Florencio, who clearly distinguishes the political from the social sphere, Víctor merges these two, distinguishing two different social groups and the governments who defended (and still defend) their interests. Further, in lines 79 to 81, Víctor equates the terms *the People* and *Chilean society*, positioning this social group (and the government associated with it) as the one that truly represents Chilean history. In order to conclude this social work, Víctor uses the person deictic *we* (line 79) to position himself as a member of this group, achieving what Florencio had already done earlier in his own interview.

It is important to notice the coherence of the mechanisms used by Florencio and Víctor up to this point to present their understandings of politics and history, and how they hold across the narrated events: for Florencio, both history and politics are about virtuous individual leadership, while for Víctor they are about the collective dimension of human life. Moreover, both students are able to position themselves as enacting politics in a positive and not a negative way. What is significant is that Florencio does this when talking about politics, while Víctor does it when talking about history. That this social work can be achieved in these two different moments further illuminates the relations between politics and history presented by these students, and the framework they are establishing to include and make sense of both of them.

Evaluating one's own political actions

After discussing Chile's recent past and its present situation, the interview went into a series of questions about the students' sense of civic efficacy. Among these, students were asked if they felt capable of improving their school and their country. Along the same lines, students were asked about how effective for this improvement was to vote, to protest, and solidarity actions. For all of these questions, the students' answers to the questionnaire were used as a catalyst and to probe them (Chart 1 and 2). Further, because of the particular context the *Liceo Sarmiento* was experiencing, talking about schools' occupations as a protest mechanism was also part of the interview. Again, two different narrated events are presented and analyzed in what follows.

Florencio's interview (How to improve my school and my country)

1. R: I asked you if you believed that your e: **actions** could achieve any
2. change (0.4) in your environment. Then, you answered that your
3. actions could help to improve your school, you completely agreed,

4. and that your actions could help to improve your country, a little less,
5. you agreed but not so: much =
6. F: =Right=
7. R: =Why? Why that difference? =
8. F: Because
9. R: Why do you think they can (.) but making those distinctions.
10. F: I think it is more feasible at the school, the power to make changes,
11. because it is a smaller society, way simpler than what the country is.
12. Because: (.) if I make, if I wanna make a change in what is my school,
13. like what I'm trying to do with the, the occupations, at a country level
14. maybe I'm gonna be fighting to find a cure for cancer and I'm not
15. gonna find it, you get me? Or, I don't know, fight against the
16. educational reform, but at the end that does not depend only on me
17. but on the Congress, the Parliament that approves it. And if my vote
18. is not enough, or if it's a minority in front of something as grand as the
19. Congress, then it is worthless.
20. R: ((talking to a dog)) A::, c'mon! Get out! Hh This dog liked me
21. [[[incomprehensible]]] like three times [[[incomprehensible]]]
22. the country's depends less on you, you feel?
23. F: Right, [I mean]
24. R: [I mean] depends on more people.
25. F: Yeah=
26. R: =Okay (2.5) okay, but you still believe, you agree that in, in both
27. cases, you can make a change.
28. F: Right. But the difference is that, in a country I can contribute with
29. a grain of sand. And at the school I can contribute with a rock.

Victor's Interview (How to improve my school and my country)

1. R: I asked you the other day, in the questionnaire (0.4) if you believed
2. your actions could help to improve your school, and you sa, <and the
3. country>, I mean I asked you about two levels, one closer and one
4. broader. And you responded in both cases that you agreed. And why?
5. Why do you think your actions can impro, improve your environment?
6. And why you did not completely agree? (1) Or why didn't you respond
7. that you did not agree or disagree?
8. V: Well, I, I agree=
9. R: =Okay.
10. V: E:: (0.4) because of, because of the opinions, they are always
11. necessary, and my actions, when I do something, I'm showing an
12. opinion about something you know? About an issue.
13. R: Perfect.
14. V: Then the people can be more conscious. E:: maybe if I can get more
15. people together:lle (.) then we all have a clear opinion and act
16. together and little by little we are, like getting stronger=
17. R: =Excellent. And you think you can achieve that both at a school and
18. at a country level =
19. V: =Right, right, yes. But I did not responded that I completely,
20. completely agree because:se, well, also there's a lot of people who
21. generally disagree with this, it is always like fifty fifty so (1) Or I don't
22. know if fifty fifty but no, in fact I don't, know, there's a lot of opinions.
23. R: [Perfect]
24. V: [Then] first, before making any substantial change, you need to
25. have a lot, a lot of support, that's why I can't, I can't completely agree.
26. R: Right, I mean there, there are obstacles to achieve it.
27. V: Right, there are obstacles.

28. R: Perfect. But you completely agree in that you feel responsible of
29. helping to improve both your school and your country =
30. V: =Yes.
31. R: Why? Why that difference? Why do you completely agree with that?
32. V: I agree. I completely agree =
33. R: =Right
34. V: E:: because:, I feel that, is is the duty of each one. It was taught to me
35. like that, because one cannot just care about oneself. Because the
36. human being, as I said before, is a social being so one has to think
37. with others, as a group, not alone.

In this first narrated event, the students' evaluations of their own civic efficacy are coherent with the frameworks they have previously presented to their interlocutor. Florencio, for example, explains how his political actions could be more or less effective, depending on his own perceived ability to occupy positions of leadership within different communities (the school and the country). The difference between contributing with a *grain of sand* or a *rock* (a comparison of two evaluative indexicals he uses in lines 28-29) is directly related with these distinctions: as a cohort-group president at his school he reports being able to produce changes, but at a country level he expresses these changes can only be made by institutions like the Congress (lines 17-19). For Víctor, on the other hand, what makes an action effective is its collective nature. He even pushes this further: through both reported speech and the use of the personal deictic *me*, he presents this version of what politics should be as the only one possible and continues the social work of positioning regarding it (*It was taught to me like that, because one cannot just care about oneself*, lines 35).

Florencio's interview (Ways for improving the country)

1. R: Perfect (8) At the end I asked you here if you believed that voting was
2. a way of improving the country, if you believed that <protesting is a
3. way of improving the country>, and if you believed that solidarity
4. actions were a way of improving the country. You completely
5. disagreed with voting and protesting and you did not agree nor
6. disagree regarding solidarity actions. Why? Voting first, why:, voting,
7. you completely disagree with it being a way of improving [the
8. country?]
9. F: [Because] voting, well, <because of what I was telling you>, because
10. if I: vote yes or no, it's not gonna get noticed in an ocean full of ballots.
11. Then, mine is not gonna get noticed either clearly my opinion about
12. the issue because (.) it might be that I wanna make changes, but if I
13. vote, that change might be, might be done in a way that I don't want
14. it to.
15. R: So the vote doesn't have to reflect the change that [you want?]
16. F: [Right]
17. R: And with protesting, because you also disagree that protesting is a
18. way of improving the country =
19. F: =Because I think that before protesting you should talk, because it is
20. much more reasonable and we would have less ravage and less people
21. with a headache.
22. R: And particularly what do you think about the occupations as a :
23. protest mechanism?

24. F: E::I, I think it is a very stupid mechanism and without (0.4) without
25. arguments, meaningless because occupying a school and destroying
26. it, while you are demanding a better education is paradoxical, because
27. I'm not, I'm not being coherent.
28. R: Because of the destruction?
29. F: Right. And also that, I'm claiming a right to education, like is
30. happening today, I then I am the one as a student who is depriving
31. myself of that right, so how do I want to improve the education's
32. quality if I'm depriving myself of the one thing I'm claiming?
33. R: And particularly what do you think about the occupation, I mean
34. today this school is not occupied, but about the occupation this school
35. experienced this year?
36. F: I think that, with the occupations, the *Liceo Sarmiento* is being killed.
37. R: And why?
38. F: Because that the students themselves are who, are: contributing to
39. this murder, for saying something. So I do::n't I don't see what's the
40. logic of continuing with it =
41. R: =Perfect (2) A::nd when I asked you if, you believe that solidarity
42. actions can improve your country you answered that you did not agree
43. or disagree, I mean, you don't disagree as much as in the others, it's
44. like your opinion is more neutral. Why?
45. F: Because I can help people, but: I don't know if that, that help will
46. be beneficial =
47. R: Why?=
48. F: =Because e::, for example, I might be a doctor and help a person that:
49. has some kind of deficit or some special need, I help that person. But
50. how that, that action is gonna improve my country?

Victor's interview (Ways for improving the country)

1. R: °Perfect°. (3) In this last part I asked you if you believed that voting,
2. protesting, and solidarity actions were a way of improving the
3. country, and you responded that you did not agree or disagree
4. regarding voting, you agreed regarding protesting and you completely
5. agreed regarding solidarity actions. Let's talk a little about that. Why,
6. why:, why voting? Why voting you don't agree or disagree?
7. V: What happens is that (.) a but, it was voting in the country, or in the
8. school, inside the school?
9. R: You tell me.
10. V: Okay, I say voting in the country [and neither]
11. R: [Yeah] it is voting in the country.
12. V: Yes=
13. R: =But that. Okay. Great.
14. V: Okay. I don't agree or disagree because the options that are given,
15. they always are, are like:: answering to the interests of those in, in power =
16. R: =Perfect.
17. V: They are who present the candidates, you know?. Then do::n't,
18. if people with, if people don't arrive, I mean if people who are real
19. representatives of the People don't arrive there, I don't feel it is a huge
20. change =
21. R: =Perfect. And why protesting you think it is, you agree in that it is a
22. way of improving the country?
23. V: Maybe no (0.8) What I sa, no, well yes, because it is related with, our
24. consciousness, from the People to the People. Because that's how we
25. tell people (0.5) that: things are not okay, there's a reason why, there's
26. a reason why they are protesting. So, we touch the people's

27. consciousness =
28. R: =Perfect=
29. V: =In many cases, not always. (1) And t, and touching the
30. consciousness is always, before making any extreme change you need
31. an internal change. That's why I feel it is important =
32. R: =Perfect. And why do you completely agree in that solidarity actions
33. are something that help to improve the country?
34. V: Because there one relates directly with people. (2) And there people
35. realizes that the human being is a social being and that one needs to
36. take care, too, of the people who are right next to you. (0.5) Because of
37. that hh,
38. R: [Perfect]
39. V: [I don't know if] I answered the que[stion]
40. R: [Yes], very well. What do you imagine when I say solidarity actions?
41. (0.3) Like specifically?
42. V: E::=
43. R: =Like when I say voting you think about voting in national elections,
44. what do you think when I say solidarity actions?
45. V: Solidarity actions. E::m=
46. R: =Like something concrete, one example=
47. V: =E, help, like helping people if they have any kind of problem. But
48. solidarity actions, like helping them, you going and helping them,
49. other [people], not like [charity] or the=
50. R: [Okay] [bu:t] =okay, that, that, you going and helping them like what,
51. that is really interesting for me, for. What do you think like:
52. V: Like, for example, let's say that a person house is destroyed =
53. R: =Perfect.
54. V: So, one goes and helps him. So, then one is closer to the people=
55. R: =Okay=
56. V: =One can relate to those people.
57. R: Those things, okay, for example if, e., Valparaíso, going to Valparaíso
58. and contributing there=
59. V: =Yes=
60. R: =Or things like, building houses (0.4) Techo, things like that? Along
61. those lines?=
62. V: =Along those lines.
63. R: Perfect. Hey, I skipped this one. What do you think about the
64. schools' occupations, that is also a hot topic today but h=
65. V: =Yes.
66. R: But what do you think about the schools' occupations as a protest
67. mechanism.
68. V: As a protest mechanism? I feel that, what happens is that (1) I have
69. an opinion that is somehow complicated [e::]
70. R: [But please, let's go with it]
71. V: The: occupation (2) requires a lot of participation <for it to be like
72. useful>. E: an occupation of like ten people staying at the schools I
73. don't, don't think it's useful =
74. R: =Perfect.
75. V: E:: okay (.) and protesting, of course is necessary, I said that
76. protesting was, because it has, one has to touch the consciousness of
77. the people so then a [change can] be produced.
78. R: [Exactly]
79. V: Okay I think that occupations (0.4) like a way of mobilizing people,
80. they can be useful, when there's a lot of participation, because then
81. you can organi::ze like cultural or social spaces or, things that you

82. don't do in the regular schedule =
 83. R: =Perfect=
 84. V: =Like I said, then you can organize movie screenings, or small
 85. concerts or even the conferences that here have not happened. Se. (1)
 86. And then, with a lot of consciousness, e::, realizing that also the:, e:,
 87. the cultural and social spaces etcetera are important. I feel the
 88. occupation e: is useful to realize that those are::, e well, important
 89. topics.
 90. R: Perfect. And specifically wha::t, do you think about the occupation
 91. of thi, the occupation of your school, let's say, today <today> we are
 92. not occupied anymore but the one you experienced until last week =
 93. V: =Okay. Yeah, what I think about that one? That it was not useful. It
 94. was not useful becau::se, because of the::m, because of the:, the
 95. student body, because (I) many said yes to the occupation because of,
 96. just laziness, to stay at home, have vacations, because this school is
 97. demanding. I'm not justifying it=
 98. R: =Right=
 99. V: =But I'm giving reasons they might have had=
 100. R: =Perfect.
 101. V: I don't think it was useful. That without (.) witho::ut, groups of
 102. people you can make good use of it¹¹.

In this final narrated event, the students deploy once more the frameworks they have been using during the rest of the interview; now, they make use of these to evaluate the effectiveness of concrete political actions. Florencio rejects the idea that voting, protesting or even solidarity actions can be successful in improving his country. What is interesting is that his arguments shift when referring to each one of these actions, these shifts being directly related to the community with which he associates each action. When talking about voting and solidarity action – both associated with the national community –, he relates their ineffectiveness to not occupying a position of leadership and, therefore, only being able to help particular individuals (lines 9-14, and 48-50). However, when talking about protesting – an action he associates with the school community – he orients his speech not towards any structural condition that renders protesting ineffective, but to his peers and the particular way in which they are doing this. The use of negative evaluative indexicals such as *stupid* (line 24), *paradoxical* (line 26), and *not being coherent* (lines 27), reinforces this shift. It seems that the possibility of being a leader at the school allows Florencio to position himself here in opposition to a political adversary, in a way that cannot be perceived when he is talking about the national level.

While for Florencio what makes a political action effective or not is directly related with his own possibility of occupying a leadership position, for Víctor this effectiveness is linked with the collective nature of the actions. He expresses this in direct relation of how the evaluated actions relate to *people* and *the People*: voting is not effective because the candidates are not *real representatives of the People* (lines 18-19), protesting is effective because *it is related with, our consciousness, from the People to the People* (lines 23-24), and solidarity actions are very effective because *one relates directly with people* (lines 34) and

is *closer to the people* (line 54). As with Florencio, this is coherent with both the understandings he presented about politics and history and how he has previously positioned himself towards these. Finally, Victor's evaluation of the *Liceo Sarmiento* occupation completes the social work of him deploying a framework for linking history and politics as a means to orient, display and defend his own political actions, illustrating the complicated ways in which this social work functions. Victor's positioning during the interview might lead us to think that he would be an enthusiastic supporter of the occupation of his school – a protest mechanism traditionally associated with the Chilean Left. However, his speech reveals the complex influences shaping his decision to support or not the occupation. In fact, Victor conditions support for the occupation on a previous assessment of the occupation's collective dimensions: the evaluative indexical *useful* that he uses in lines 71 to 73, 80, and 88, is always presented as depending directly on words that refer to collective action such as *participation* (lines 71 and 80), and *social and cultural spaces* (lines 87). The same framework that he has used to define what politics and history are about, and to position himself towards these understandings, is therefore deployed once more, this time for orienting his own political actions in his present.

Conclusions

Researchers interested in citizenship education have not paid enough attention to the connections between how people understand and make use of history and how they learn and enact their own citizenship. In this article, I illuminated this phenomenon, using a discourse analysis approach to examine the speech of two Chilean high school students in a contentious political context. I argued that these students make use of particular frameworks, not only to understand how politics and history are related, but as cultural tools to engage in social work. This social work allows these students to orient their own political actions, but also to present themselves as legitimate competitors in a democratic political game (Mayorga, 2018) and to engage in a process of political subjectification (Biesta, 2016). Analyzing these processes through an anthropological lens highlights the nuances of this social work, illustrating how educational interactions are always mediated by students making sense of the world around them and the new meanings they produce while doing so.

It is neither possible nor necessary to claim any causal relation between students' understandings of politics and history. This article shows that it does not matter which understanding *influences* the other, but how the two of them are connected in coherent frameworks. More important to observe is that these frameworks, when deployed, have concrete implications for the lives and actions of the actors using them. That is not to say these frameworks are not affected by broader political or disciplinary traditions – like those of the Chileans Left and Right, the structural Marxist historiography or the progressive liberal one. In fact, my participant observation in classes and other school activi-

ties showed that students are constantly encountering many resources related to these traditions. Further research should explore how high school students interact with, reject or appropriate these different resources, in order to better comprehend their citizenship education not as a passive process of receiving disembodied knowledge, but as an active one, in which students learn to be citizens by constantly looking at their imagined futures as well as their perceived pasts. Past, present and future are not separated dimensions of life but part of a continuum; similarly, history and politics are inherently intertwined.

Received on November 21, 2019

Approved on January 27, 2020

Notes

- 1 The name of the school and all students mentioned in this article, are pseudonyms.
- 2 In the Chilean educational system, cohorts are divided by groups. Each one of these is identified by a letter. Its members stay together and share the same classroom and almost the same classes until they graduate. Each cohort-group has a Head Teacher, who works directly with the students and their parents, usually for a year or two.
- 3 The Class Council is a class in which every cohort-group meets with their Head Teacher for forty-five minutes and discusses different issues, from the organization of recreational activities to the participation of the cohort-group in public and political manifestations.
- 4 Interviews were conducted and transcribed in Spanish, by the author. The analysis was made using the Spanish transcripts, which were then later translated to reflect the terms, structures, and even intonations in the original language. All translations were also made by the author.
- 5 Salvador Allende was a socialist democratically elected president of Chile in 1970. In 1973, he was overthrown by a military coup led by General Augusto Pinochet, who governed the country as a dictator until 1990, writing a new Constitution and implementing a series of neoliberal reforms in all aspects of social life.
- 6 Gary Medel is a famous Chilean soccer player. Chile was playing the World Cup of 2014 during my fieldwork, so Medel was well known among the *Liceo Sarmiento* students.
- 7 Ricardo Lagos was a political adversary of Pinochet and President of Chile between 2000 and 2006.
- 8 *Unidad Popular* was the name of the coalition of leftist parties that supported the government of Salvador Allende from 1970 to 1973.
- 9 The distinction between *people* and *People* intends to clarify the Spanish distinction between *las personas* and *el Pueblo*.
- 10 Eduardo Frei was president of Chile from 1994 to 2000.
- 11 Valparaíso is a Chilean coastal city, two hours from Santiago. A couple of months before my fieldwork, Valparaíso suffered a massive fire that destroyed

almost 3000 homes and led several NGOs and volunteer organizations to help the government in rebuilding the city. Techo, an organization created in 1997 to build emergency houses, was one of these NGOs.

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Rodrigo Mayorga is a doctoral student at Teachers College, Columbia University in New York City.

ORCID: <http://orcid.org/0000-0003-2995-5524>

E-mail: lrn2166@tc.columbia.edu

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