Introduction:
Ethnographic scenario, emplaced imaginations and a political aesthetic

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In October 2019, Santiago was shaken by protests. After the first weeks of what has been called a ‘social uprising’ (*estallido social*), one image became iconic: in the middle of the main square in the city centre and against a background of a yellow-orange sky lit by fires and the sunset, someone standing on top of the statue of General Baquedano raises the *Wenufoye*, the Mapuche flag that had become highly symbolic during the protests. A few days later, in different cities across the south of the country (the historical indigenous territory before it was occupied by the Chilean army at the end of the 1800s), protestors began targeting colonial monuments. Symbols of Spanish rule and the Chilean republic were destroyed or replaced and some of them were significantly rearranged, such as the head of the statue of the military aviator Dagoberto Godoy hung in the hands of the Mapuche cacique Caupolicán. In this challenge to the established narratives and icons in the context of a broader struggle against inequality,¹ the colonial past returns to haunt the present. In the ‘durability’ of what Ann Stoler calls the ‘colonial presence’ (2016: 3), it is a history that ‘still matters today’ – pointing to both the continuum between coloniality and the neoliberal present, and to the endless reproduction of social and economic violence, as well as their consequential forms of suffering.

Almost one year after these events, similar actions of protest began targeting monuments and urban landmarks in many other cities across the world, especially in the USA and the UK. The socio-political landscapes of (post) colonial cities have been questioned and disrupted through interventions in the materiality of urban space, putting forward alternative inconographies and imaginations. Colonised bodies and subjects have entered the public debate in the contexts of the COVID-19 crisis and the protests following the murder of the African American George Floyd by the police in Minneapolis. During the months of these mobilisations, Mapuche activists joined the outcry against racialisation processes, not only in solidarity but also in claiming the struggle as their own. The parallel is certainly complex, and the specificity of these different contexts needs to be taken into account – especially considering the Chilean ‘neoliberal experiment’ pursued through the terror of the civil-military dictatorship, and how this shaped the country’s disparities (see Harvey 2005; Klein 2007; Han 2012). Nonetheless, this opens up a reflection on how socio-racial inequalities, as well as the links between the city’s materialities and the lived experiences of its inhabitants, are particularly meaningful today. As such, they need to be addressed both locally and in their broader links and relevance. Beyond their specificities in terms of geographical contexts and histories, contemporary political claims are made over bodies and lives that are considered and treated as

¹ Pedro Cayuqueo interviewed in the *Guardian*: Conquistadors tumble as indigenous Chileans tear down statues, 5 November 2019.
'peripheral', something sadly occurring in urban realities both at the ‘centre’ and at the ‘periphery’ of the contemporary capitalist global world.\(^2\)

The disruptions and re-imaginations of the material and social spaces of (post)colonial cities are the concerns of this book. Stemming from collaborative and practice-based research with young indigenous artists, intellectuals and activists, this volume addresses the Mapuche diaspora and its engagement with urban space in Santiago: it is a look into the city, its times and spaces, and the multiple ways of walking through it. In the words of AbdouMaliq Simone, it is a collective meditation on the particular ways in which ‘bodies, things and spaces – and the relations among them – mutually compose themselves’ (2016: 5, my emphasis). As complex entanglements of uncertainties and imaginations, urban settings provide opportunities as well as taking away abilities and desires; generating loss and opening up different possibilities for life at the same time (Simone 2016: 12–13). Only apparently contradictory, there is a sense of dis- and re-connection in this dynamic: a ‘holding together’ through the simultaneous undoing and remaking of life (Simone 2016: 6).

Resulting from a multimodal ethnography within the project ‘MapsUrbe – The Invisible City: Mapuche mapping of Santiago’, this edited collection is a construction of texts, images, sounds and performance built around the main outcomes of the research process: an artistic exhibition and a site-specific theatre play, Santiago Waria: Pueblo Grande de Wigka (The city of Santiago: The big town of the whites).\(^3\) Conceived as a collaborative project, MapsUrbe was first meant to address the Mapuche diaspora in Santiago through collective mapping methodologies, walking interviews, and digital storytelling. It aimed to focus on indigenous urban spatialities, exploring issues of displacement and the absent presence of the homeland in southern Chile. However, the ongoing dialogue with Claudio Alvarado Lincopi and Roberto Cayuqueo Martínez, co-coordinators of the project and co-editors of this book, and with the project participants, brought about a change in the direction of site-specific methods, art, and performance.\(^4\) The collaborative – and hence

\(^2\) See article by Ida Danewid on how the ‘making’ of global cities has typically gone hand in hand with racialised forms of displacement, dispossession, and police violence (2020).

\(^3\) The Mapuche word Wigka means non-Mapuche or white. It usually has a pejorative connotation and is used to refer to land usurpation and robbery. The play title is a quote from the 1987 documentary Santiago: pueblo grande de Huincas by the anthropologist Rony Goldschmied with the support of Sonia Montecino (available at: https://vimeo.com/25837134), some of whose materials are used in the performance. Both the art exhibition and the play took place in Santiago between December 2018 and January 2019.

\(^4\) Claudio and Roberto were appointed as ‘research assistants’ at the beginning of the project, and we collaborated closely on bringing it about, designing every step together up to the final outputs. While I was the project director and undoubtedly had the responsibility of overall management, we adopted a sort of ‘flexible leadership’ in relation to different phases of the project; Roberto directed the final performance and appointed me as director’s assistant, and Claudio was in charge of many of the workshops we organised.
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open – nature of the research and the ability and wholehearted commitment of the participants to creatively intervene in it, as well as my own willingness to rethink methodologies and forms of representation, allowed the project to be transformed into a much more complex and richer collective space, as we will see in what follows. The sort of ‘open laboratory’ that MapsUrbe represented during the two years I spent in Chile (of which roughly eighteen months were more intensively dedicated to the project) became a shared space for exchanging thoughts, analysis, and experimental creation. Issues of migration, displacement, race, and colonial continuities were addressed through collaborative practices encompassing ethnography, art, and performance. On-site workshops and artistic production – but also walking and improvising – were the main ways in which the city’s materialities were engaged in order to defy the invisibility of the collective history and individual stories of indigenous migrants in the (post)colonial city.

Elaborating on this creative process, both the final art exhibition and play (as well as this volume) engage with the subversive imaginations of collective art practices disrupting dominant narratives embedded in the urban landscape. They thus challenge the silence around colonial continuities that shape the social and material spatialities of the Chilean capital. Instead, what this book is suggesting is a political aesthetic defined by the Mapuche concept of champurria (‘mixed up’); this concept, which originally referred to racial mixture in a pejorative way, has recently been appropriated by Mapuche living in urban contexts and constantly negotiating between different identities and senses of belonging, and, often coming from mixed families, claiming their own mestizaje or miscegenation as something creative, heterogeneous, yet still entirely indigenous, as will be discussed further in this introduction. What we refer to as a ‘champurria political aesthetic’ is understood as the gestures through which people construct themselves and their everyday landscapes, shaped by specific social and personal identities (related to issues of gender, age, and skin colour). They are, however, simultaneously capable of reaching beyond the social and material contexts in which they are grounded. At the same time, Champurria aesthetic and politics affected and configured our shared practices of knowledge production in their being collective, frictional and varied.

As such, this book engages with ‘corporeal epistemologies’ as forms of experiential and imaginative knowledge arising from putting the body in place and on stage, encompassing both performance and ethnography (Kondo 2018). Moving from emplaced and embodied creative practices, it interrogates the relationship between race, aesthetics, and politics, encompassing issues of indigeneity, urban migration, and the materiality of the (post)colonial city. Central to the book are the forms and meanings developed in the art exhibition and especially in the play Santiago Waria. These constitute shared ethnographic representations that aim to give space to the ‘plural ethnography’
experienced during fieldwork as shaped by the multiplicity and intersection of gazes and voices. Taking collaborative methods a step further and engaging in (without claiming to resolve) the decolonisation of methodology (Smith 2012), this plurality meant working towards openness within the project leading to it being re-appropriated by the research participants. For me, as an anthropologist, it also meant putting into question my own disciplinary assumptions and personal and professional self or, paraphrasing the ethnographer and philosopher Ernesto de Martino, deliberately exposing myself to the outrage of my own most cherished memories (Martino 2002). By doing so, this volume addresses the ways in which anthropological knowledge is built and shared, and the epistemological possibilities arising from collaborative methodologies where ethnography, performance, and the urban space intersect.

**ANTROPOFÁGIAS: SETTING THE SCENARIO**

Diana Taylor defines scenarios as ‘sets of possibilities, ways of conceiving conflict, crisis or resolution, structures of understanding’. Scenarios are multifaceted systems; their formulaic structure predisposes certain outcomes while allowing for reversal and change. They are not reducible to narrative because they demand embodiment: the body is inserted into a specific frame, in which it nevertheless has a space to manoeuvre because is not entirely scripted. The social actor and her role are thus both simultaneously in view, alongside their uneasy fits and areas of tension (2003: 28–63). In outlining the particular scenario in which the project took place, I want to address the artwork *Antropofágias* (Anthropophagies), created by Claudio Alvarado Lincopi, Roberto Cayuqueo Martínez and myself that was part of the MapsUrbe final exhibition. The coloured picture is a playful and ironic reproduction of a black and white photograph taken in the 1880s and entitled ‘Marriage of an Italian to two Mapuche’. The photographer is unknown and the man depicted is probably Pedro Totta, an Argentinean adventurer of Italian origin who ended up living in an indigenous community near Temuco in the south of Chile.

This photograph, contained in the book *El Pueblo Mapuche en la pluma de los Araucanistas* (Mora, Samaniego 2018), immediately caught my attention due to the similarities between Pedro Totta’s and my own positionality: his Italian origins; his ‘whiteness’; and his long-standing relationship with Mapuche society as a foreigner. By coincidence, when the photograph was taken, he had been living in the Mapuche community for as long as I had been working in Chile at that time: thirteen years (following my first trip at 22, in January 2006). Besides these similarities, there were some obvious differences, such as in our gender and in our permanence within Mapuche
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society (mine on and off, his rather more permanent). Also, I was not married to Claudio and Roberto — even if our trio did form a striking parallelism. Yet, more than analysing similarities and differences, what first struck me and then my colleagues, and led to the installation of Antropofágias, was the implicit yet intense entanglement of proximity and distance, intimacy and difference, and ultimately love and violence, contained in the black and white image. That was the punctum that constrained my gaze to return to it over and over again, as the man, his suit, his whiteness, his suitcase, and even his body posture and facial expression are part of a well-known colonial history: at the end of the 1800s the Mapuche lost their independent territory, entering an era of displacement, illness, poverty, and socio-cultural upheaval at the margins of the dominant state in both Chile and Argentina (see Antileo Baeza et al. 2015; Marimán, Caniuche, Millalén, Levil 2006). The distinction between the man and the people around him is, in that sense, telling. The brightness of his suit is in sharp contrast with the background of the surrounding vegetation, of which the depicted indigenous people seem to be a part, due to both their poses and the similarity of colours in the black and white image. This also contributes to making the man stand out as the only ‘individual’, clearly distinguishable and named, while everyone else belongs to the same and unidentified ‘whole’ (the Mapuche). The parallel between indigeneity, rurality, and community is palpable and in line with a national ideology equating indigenous territories south of the Biobío River with rural backwardness. In contrast with Santiago, the locus of ‘civilisation’, they are perceived as needing to be ‘pacified’ and incorporated into the project of modernity of the Chilean nation. In this picture, indigeneity is pushed to the background, a ‘natural’ and past condition constituting a sort of ‘oblivion’ within Chilean history (Waldman 2004; see also Montecino 1996; Pinto 2000).

This was the first element that the artwork wanted to challenge, by staging the photographic reconstruction in an urban setting and reducing the group only to its central characters, exaggerating their personification. While Mapuche migration to the cities and especially the capital began in the 1930s as a consequence of territorial dispossession and the enclosure of the indigenous population within the reservation system, their presence within urban contexts has been invisibilised until recently.5 Claiming an urban emplacement constituted a denial of any straightforward identification of indigenous people with a romantic idea of nature, community, and

5 Besides the work of Carlos Munizaga at the end of the 1950s, studies concerning urban indigenous Mapuche have emerged since the 1990s, and especially since the turn of the century. For example, see: Gissi (2002); Aravena (2007); Antileo Baeza (2008, 2010); Lavanchy (2009); Imilán (2010, 2017); Sepulveda, Zúñiga (2015); Antileo Baeza, Álvarado Lincopi (2017 and 2018); Warren (2017); Campos, Espinoza, de la Maza (2018). For the growing literature on the ‘urban indigenous’ in Latin America, see, for example: McSweeney, Jokish (2007); Alexiades, Peluso (2015); Horn (2019).
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rurality. This claim is central to the Mapuche diaspora, especially for the younger generations, who actually reject the rural–urban dichotomy; first, they engage in concrete connections between the capital and the territories in the south, travelling there for political activism, ceremonial events, and support for seasonal work – and second, they contend that urban space is part of Mapuche contemporary experience, through recent literary and artistic productions as well as through political activism. That is also why the term ‘Mapuche diaspora’ has been used by indigenous intellectuals since the early 1990s, highlighting the violence, displacement and scarcity of land forcing the abandonment of rural communities, and their subordinate position within socio-racial hierarchies (Antileo Baeza 2008; Ugarte, Fontana, Caulkins 2019; Alvarado Lincopi 2021; see also Alvarado Lincopi; Llancaman and Huenchún Pardo essays, this volume).

At the same time, the notion of diaspora is linked to underlying tensions related to the complex relationships between the territories in the south and the city. In the capital, there is strong political activism in support of indigenous communities' collective rights, territorial control and autonomy. On the other hand, there is also an ongoing internal discussion of issues such as gender inequalities, sexual identities and the problematic links between indigeneity and a given ‘tradition’. Returning to the photographs, these frictions are represented not only in the change of setting but also in our bodies and the reversed relationship between our genders and power positions, turning a polygynous marriage (supposedly part of Mapuche tradition) into a polyandric one. As elaborated in Chapter 3, this shift is part of a recently emerging discussion around the possibility and the meaning of ‘indigenous feminism’, further impelled by broader feminist mobilisations in Chile in 2018. Far from straightforward, this debate rather highlights disputes between different forms of agency (and ways of thinking about them), interrogating the modalities of thinking liberatory projects through cultural and historical specificities (Mahmood 2005).

Yet the whiteness of the dress, the centrality of the figure of the foreigner and the gazes toward something else rather than each other all speak of another kind of power relation – that between the anthropologist and ‘her research participants’. This raises multiple issues: can ‘we’ – an anthropologist and a group of indigenous activists – be part of the same effort at decolonisation, in the same frame? Can ‘we’ intervene in, with our racialised performing bodies, an ongoing colonial history? Can ‘we’ heal its wounds? How much

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6 The Mapuche context, both in rural and urban areas, is characterised by what contemporary indigenous scholars refer to as ‘colonial continuities’, pointing to marginality, discrimination, and more subtle or open forms of political violence: the occupation of their land by transnational companies; the militarisation of their territory; and the application of anti-terrorist laws to indigenous protests and the killing of activists by police and paramilitary forces (see Antileo Baeza et al. 2015).
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love is in these gestures, how much violence, and how much do the two things differ from one another?

Being painfully aware of what Elin Diamond calls the ‘violence of the we’ (1992), probably the first point that needs to be made is who ‘we’ are in this context. Many positionalities and intersections were at play during the research process: the European/indigenous divide was not the only one – even if it was probably the more notable and the hardest to overcome – of the many reversals we engaged in. There were the distinct positions of the project’s participants and their personal, social and familial histories, their multiple trajectories of migration, and their collective and personal ways of thinking of themselves as Mapuche in the city, having both indigenous and mestizo origins. In this regard, the ‘we’ that characterises the project and that is employed throughout the book does not stand for ‘the urban Mapuche’. Furthermore, when it is employed to identify ‘the Mapuche’, it usually does so from a political rather than an essentialising perspective. This political positioning is expressed through the notion of the Mapurbe (addressed in the following paragraphs), a concept that has a political and poetical content at the same time, resisting power by mobilising invention and by playing with belongings and identities, thus departing from any ethnic identification and defying at the same time both colonialism and essentialism. The somehow partial and changing ‘we’ employed in the book is thus situated and specific to a particular group of young women and men collaborating on the aim of addressing their own and the broader indigenous history of migration, displacement, and their relationship with otherness. At the time, it included the silent presence of the broader Mapuche migrants to the city and my own ambiguous figure as an anthropologist. I unpack this further here.

The central interest of the project was to open up a shared space in which personal trajectories and fractures could find a place, moving from particular positionalities. Building on this, the book seeks to open a broader dialogue about the (post)colonial city and the possibility for colonised subjects to subvert its landscape through political and creative gestures. The visions and voices collected in the volume should be thought of as ways of engaging with a certain reality of (dis)placement, intervening at the same time in the very ethnographic representation of these same processes. In this context, there were the memories and paths of the previous generations to deal with, as well as the constant – if sometimes opaque – references to the territories and communities in the south, and their simultaneous closeness and distance from the stories that we wanted to tell. Finally, but no less importantly, there was the meaningful absence of a large majority of Mapuche who, after settling in the city, cast aside their indigenous roots, ‘disappearing’ into the broader underclass of Chilean workers and pobladores with whom they shared the same residential spaces on the outskirts of Santiago (see...
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Course 2013; Antileo Baeza 2008 and 2010). This ‘we’ thus needs to be thought of as something non-homogeneous, fractured and complex, as much characterised by tensions as it is by affect, and as much by shared aims and concerns as it is by friction and silence.

Another key issue is how and to what extent this sort of multi-layered ‘we’ became so during the MapsUrbe project, including the ethnographic gaze. The challenge for a possible redefinition of the epistemological horizons of ethnographic knowledge and its contexts of production and reproduction characterised our collaboration from the beginning. We aimed not only to co-create the research process (Kazubowski-Houston 2017) but also to engage in co-theorisation (Rappaport 2008). This was particularly important in a socio-political context in which anthropology and other disciplines have long been characterised by practices that fall under the label of extractivismo, marked by social, racial, and political hierarchies forged by colonialism (Nahuelpán 2013; see also Quidel 2016). As the research participants themselves stressed from our first meeting, there is a clear need for different methodologies and engagement; the MapsUrbe project constituted a step in this direction, one that wants to begin answering Kazubowski-Houston’s question of “how might we re-envision a collaborative, deeply reflexive and engaged interventionist anthropology?” (2017: 210).

Considering ethnographic knowledge as a situated and relational construction, methodological possibilities were thus explored in line with recent experimental practice-based methods that consider the imaginative, sensorial, and performative dimensions of lived experience (e.g. Pink, 2009; Irving, 2011 and 2013). This process contributed to the construction of an ethnographic practice characterised by a constant shifting: not only between the familiar ‘observation’ and ‘participation’, but also between the individual gaze of the ethnographer and the plurality of gazes, both parallel and intersecting, of the research participants. Especially during the later stages of the project, they became colleagues and fellow ethnographers engaged in the same research process. While this adds complexity and richness, it proves challenging at the writing stage, for it requires the rethinking of issues of authorship and writing authority. To what extent am I author-ised – allowed, expected, or compelled, for writing also constitutes a form of responsibility towards the people we work with – to write as ‘the ethnographer’ here?

7 In her insightful and beautiful ethnography on care and violence in neoliberal Chile, focusing on the poor urban neighbourhood of La Pincoya, Clara Han translates pobladores simply with ‘the poor of the city’, referring to peripheral urban masses (2012: 13–14). While one cannot disagree with this translation, I want to underline how poblador in Chile also refers to a strong political identity, and not only an economic condition (see Garcés 2002; Rodriguez 2020). This was also the family origin of most of the research participants. Some of them have then experienced upward mobility, having been able to study thanks to the efforts of their families. The silent majority of indigenous migrants dwelling in the city was the audience the project participants had in mind when staging both the exhibition and the play.
These issues, while acquiring particular significance in the current socio-political context, are nothing new within the anthropological debate. Especially in the context of the Americas, more recent shifts towards collaboration intersect with issues related to the politics of knowledge and decolonisation, as well as to the question of social inequality as previously addressed in works such as those of Vine Deloria, Diane Lewis, and William Willis, among others (see Kennemore, Postero 2020). Decolonial theorists have called for the ‘decentering’ of the academic project and ‘border thinking’ (Gloria Anzaldúa 1987; Mignolo 2002). It has been noted how the colonial construction of the relationship knower/known has restrained any shared production of knowledge between Western and non-Western people (Quijano 2007; see also Alonso Bejarano, Lopez Jarez, Mijangos García, Goldstein 2019). Critically, Silvia Rivera Cusicanqui has underlined how decolonial theory must be accompanied by ‘anti-colonial practice’ (2012: 100); and native anthropologists have long been calling for the decolonisation of knowledge production and methodologies (Harrison 1991; Smith 2012), addressing the tensions inherent to insider anthropology by proposing strategies such as ‘ethnographic refusal’ (Simpson 2014) or ‘calculus ethnography’ (Tallbear 2013). Others, especially within the Latin American context, have been engaging in activist action research – famously, Paulo Freire and Orlando Fals Borda (Freire 1970; Fals Borda 1987, 2015) – or, more recently, have highlighted the ‘partial connections’ at play in the possibilities of understanding and the need to negotiate between ontologically different ways of knowing (de la Cadena 2015). Significant in this regard is the Otros Saberes initiative, conceived in 2004 as a project of the Latin American Studies Association (LASA), promoting collaborative research in indigenous and Afro-descendant cultural politics. Through collaboration between civil society and academic based intellectuals, these works have been engaging in critiques and reformulations moving from ‘hybrid forms of knowing’ (see Hale, Stephen 2013). In the important article by Kennemore and Postero, these more recent waves of collaborative and activist research are analysed as ‘blur[ring] conventional lines between activist and academic knowledge, ‘traditional’ and western scientific epistemologies and the research process and products that may result’ (2020: 9). If these research practices ‘challenge the anthropologist as an expert’ on the one hand; on the other hand, they also state the need to address the paradox that privilege emerges within the collaborative relationship itself, the most critical aspect of collaboration (Kennemore, Postero 2020: 12; see also Rappaport 2017).

Sharing the research process does not simply mean being involved together in its corporeal aspects in terms of looking for a specific site, story or archive

8 For further insights on the Otros Saberes initiative: https://sections.lasaweb.org/sections/otrossaberes/.
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material, or doing an interview, or exploring urban areas. As Johannes Fabian once said, there is nothing particularly ‘participative’ in this: ethnography has always been collaborative if this is what we mean by collaboration.9 ‘Collaboration’ or ‘participation’ are not conclusively, smoothly and clearly defined: they represent contested and often ambiguous concepts, and an open-ended reflection with research participants involving issues of representation, power, and knowledge production (see Kennemore, Postero 2020; Briones 2017). Fabian’s own proposal of the ethnographer as a theatre producer, while certainly important for collaborative work, fails to engage with a key aspect of this approach: how, as anthropologists, we are caught between the positions of theatre producers – ‘providers of occasions’ (Fabian 1990:7) for the performance to happen – and that of performers ourselves. Being simultaneously on stage and backstage, we dwell in the imbalance between questioning, yet at the same time wearing, the whiteness of our dress. This often means engaging in what Johannes Sjöberg referred to as the ‘ongoing negotiation’ of collaborative research (2018), a shared space for dialogue and friction. Yet what is this a negotiation of? What it is that is negotiated, and until which stage of the project is this negotiation held, is of key importance.

Our ‘what’ constantly under discussion – both among the coordination team of myself, Claudio, and Roberto, as well as with the project’s participants – concerned research topics and methodologies, as well as final representations, lasting well into the writing and editing of this book. While during fieldwork, open and ongoing discussions allow for the ‘struggle, intervention, breaking and re-making’ as proposed by Norman Denzin (2003), a fundamental aspect of this process is also to keep this negotiation open after fieldwork, including during the writing stage.10 This is why we decided to alternate forms of authorship in the different sections of the book, signing some essays individually and others collectively, and shifting between the two dimensions. This choice allowed us to maintain the singularity of voices, avoiding any pretence of a homogenous shared authorship and also recognising responsibilities, roles, and power relationships. Yet fissures became apparent in the process of writing, thinking, and producing knowledge. This is true especially for the central section (Chapters 1–4).

9 Fabian’s challenging and thought-provoking stance was part of a discussion in a seminar held at the University of Verona in 2011. It is nevertheless worth reiterating that, besides the obvious fact that this was not always the case, even when it was, ethnography’s collaborative nature remained unrecognised and implicit in the final results and writings. On similar issues, see also Holmes, Marcus (2008).

10 Notable recent examples of collaborative writing in anthropology are the work of Jennifer Deger (Deger et al. 2019); Paloma Gay y Blasco with Lira Hernández (2020) and the recent ethnography engaging with collaborative work and writing with undocumented migrants in the United States, which also includes a theatre script (Alonso Bejarano, Lopez Jarez, Mijangos García and Goldstein 2019). See also Briones et al. (2007); Levy and Speed (2008); Hale, Millamán (2018).
authored as a collective (‘Colectivo MapsUrbe’) with singular voices in shorter texts parallel to the central narrative. For the central narrative of those chapters, the actual processes of ‘inscription’, constantly shared and discussed with the members of the collective, were concretely performed by me and by Claudio, except for the Proscenium that was written by Roberto. A similar method was adopted for the play script, stemming from collaborative work but concretely assembled by Roberto already during the research process. The shorter texts in Chapters 1–4, extracts of the reflections emerging in collective spaces during the research, guided our elaborations and the process of academic writing. The choice of keeping these levels separated, while still in the frame of collective authorship, instead of incorporating materials as ‘quotes’ into a ‘discussion’, might seem an odd one. There is also a risk of falling back into an oversimplified division between ‘theoretical elaboration’ and ‘empirical data’. Yet our choice, after much debate, was for a narrative style that both claims the friction, uneasiness and, to a certain extent, incommensurability between these layers while endowing epistemic meaning to their symmetry. It is an attempt, unresolved and openly problematic, of ‘dislocating’ and ‘displacing’ authority and authoriality, engaging ‘in analysis as a mode of conversation, rather than a mastery’ (Mahmood 2005: 199).

While this may have led to a more complex organisation of the book, with different layers of authorship and a constant and sometimes confusing shift in the use of pronouns (we/I), we felt that no matter how much we were able to share the research process and the final representations produced through it, we also needed to recognise our different positionalities. Mine was and is that of the foreign anthropologist proposing the project and upholding its management. The dialogue and shared creative work with the research participants never allowed me to simply veil myself in solidarity, engaged research or anything of the sort. Especially in the many conversations with Claudio, I was continually reminded of the whiteness of my dress. He also denied the possibility that our friendship and affective relationship acted as a sort of filter for the frictions between our different positionalities. Rather, I believe he offered me the opportunity to build that relationship precisely by inhabiting its ambiguities and tensions. As recently suggested by Tsitsi Jaji this allowed me ‘to make room for that antagonism, and to find a solidarity that does not demand […] a loosening of our structurally antagonising positions’ (2018).

This book has been developed moving from these aspirations and questions, in an ongoing and intense process of negotiation. At a deeper level,

11 For this elaboration, I am clearly indebted to Marylyn Strathern’s argument for a ‘strategy of displacement’ of Western analytical categories by staging inversions of familiar ways of thinking and conceptualising (in Mahmood 2005; see also Strathern 1992).
this negotiation is and was precisely about the ‘we’: the kind of relationship that was built during the process, its affective and political implications. As noted by Claudia Briones, relationships need ‘to illuminate reciprocal blindness through a complex play of inter-ferences, inter-references, and translations’ (2017: 38). The artwork Antropofágias plays with these frictions and partial connections. Returning to Diana Taylor (2003), in theatrical and performative staging, bodies correspond to opposed histories of discovery, subjugation and conflict. Through the ‘fiction’ of performative representation, our subject positions were thus absolutely present, shaped by the unavoidable gap between ourselves and the characters we were enacting. Our bodies were racialised ones, for power-laden histories continue to haunt the bodies on stage, even those that seem to have freed themselves (Kondo 2018). This recursivity, which makes colonial history still relevant today (Stoler 2016), was central to the ethnographic scenario in which the MapsUrbe project took place, and constituted the backdrop against which we acted and enacted. Our different positioning needs to be in full sight: not only to be simply acknowledged but to constitute the very material from which any collaborative engagement can begin to develop. Artistic but also ethnographic performances work with the possibilities arising from, not transcending, the givenness of historical and power relationships (Kondo 2018). The ambiguities of these relationships – their intimacies and yet also their complicities with systems of oppression – probably need to be worn to be challenged.

THE (POST)COLONIAL CITY: SITES AND PATHS

The history of Mapuche migration, and the broader history of the (post) colonial relationships between the Chilean state and indigenous people from the Spanish Conquista to contemporary multicultural policies, is embedded in Santiago’s material features and socio-spatial organisation as a highly segregated and neoliberal city. Following the military coup in 1973, what was named the Chilean ‘experiment’ represented the first attempt to build a ‘neoliberal state’. With state violence and terror removing opposition, the labour market was freed from any restraints, nationalisation was reversed, public assets were privatised and natural resources were open to private and unregulated exploitation, affecting mostly indigenous territory in the south of the country. Social security, health, and education were privatised, while foreign direct investment and free trade were facilitated (Harvey 2005: 7–8; Klein 2007). Parallel to the development of these policies, urbanisation

12 For the analysis of Santiago’s spatial segregation, see Sabatini, Cáceres, and Cerna (2001); Link, Valenzuela and Fuentes (2015); Agostini, Hojman, Román and Valenzuela (2016).
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processes and the related production of space became one of the key features of capitalist accumulation (Harvey 1985, 2012). With Santiago’s urban space converted into a financial asset, practices of ‘neoliberal urbanism’ were developed (Vergara Perucich 2019; see also Janoschka, Hidalgo 2014; Rodríguez, Rodríguez 2009; Daher 1991). According to the analysis recently proposed by Francisco Vergara Perucich (2019), the main strategies of this model were disproportionated and unregulated urban sprawl and the reorganisation of the city’s spaces according to the needs of real estate investments and the free market. During the military regime, these policies perpetuated the segregation and fragmentation of the city, resulting in an urban development capable of generating, but not distributing, growth. Furthermore, the measures that have been introduced since the end of the dictatorship in 1990, related to increasing needs of mobility and in continuity with the previous market-oriented choices, have deepened these processes (Vergara Perucich 2019: 23). The result, at odds with the celebration of Chile for successfully implementing a ‘third way’ in managing the contradictions between the institutional context of the restored democracy and the continuities with neoliberal policies, is a profoundly unequal country, in which life is regulated by pervasive economic indebtedness and the moral debt of the aftermaths of state violence (Han 2012). This was apparent in the strong mobilisations shaking the country in October 2019 and the current process of rewriting the Constitution to which these led (see Afterword, this volume).

The Mapocho River, traversing the city from the west to the east, is a silent witness of the scars which this history has left in the urban space. Rising in the cordillera, the Mapocho flows through areas of racial and socio-economic segregation in its journey through Santiago, from the richest neighbourhoods at the start of its course to the lower part of the city, through the Cerro Navia municipality and on to the airport. As the writer Pedro Lemebel wrote some time ago: ‘although the mayors of these posh municipalities decorate it with stone walls and vines and little parks with statues and pots of jasmine, the broken Mapocho still looks dark, buried and very Indian in his stubborn endeavours’ (Lemebel 2017: 154). Historically a space for life at the margins, the river testifies to both the opposition to the dominant order and the violent response from the state: in the first days after the military coup and occasionally during the dictatorship, with the relentless restitution of corpses surfacing from its

13 In 1979, the dictatorship promulgated its first neoliberal urban policy, inspired by the ideas of Arnold Harberger, who proposed the elimination of assigned urban boundaries. This facilitated the unregulated sprawl of the city. This policy ended up increasing the price of land and accelerating the formation of informal urban settlements. This, in turn, forced the military government to develop a new National Policy for Urban development in 1985, later named ‘adjusted policy’ (política ajustada) (Vergara Perucich 2019: 25).
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waters, but also recently, as a stage for marches, political manifestations, and police violence.\textsuperscript{14}

The Mapocho also reconnects with a deeper history, a more distant past. When the Spanish arrived in the sixteenth century, they settled on its river banks in the Maipo Valley. For centuries, the watercourse represented the border between the colonial city, later the city of the criolla oligarchy, and indigenous, popular, informal settlements. From this very first moment, this colonial division of the city was reproduced endlessly in the organisation of the urban space into the dictatorship and its aftermath, representing, with many other cities throughout the world, ‘a node of colonial extraction’ embedded in historical power relations (Danewid 2020: 300). With urbanisation processes closely connected to the control of the land by the criolla elite that generated value through extractive activities, the foundation, construction and later development of Santiago was the result of the conquest and domination of indigenous territories (Ugarte, Fontana, Caulkins 2019). Neoliberalism, as first applied by the civil–military dictatorship, was in continuity with a ‘class project’ carried out by the old agrarian oligarchy, briefly sidestepped by the Allende government (Harvey 2005).

These spatial tensions and temporal layers, somehow interrogated by the Mapocho silently flowing through the city, are especially strong in its central sectors and in the boundaries between those areas and the periphery. While this is elaborated on throughout the book, and especially in Chapters 1–4, here I want to briefly address one of the key sites of our work: the Santa Lucía/Welen Hill, which represented the place from where to think coloniality, neoliberalism and multiculturalism. A touristic attraction at the heart of downtown Santiago and the symbolic place for the founding of the Spanish city, the hill was supposed to be the scenario for our first workshop within the project, but it never was. It was only with the performance of Santiago Waria that we were finally able to come to terms with the hill, finding a path through the many of its spatiality (see Chapter 4). Before that, it represented a real challenge: we tried on different occasions to work there, but never succeeded. The first time, we had to suspend the activities because it coincided with a gastronomic fair held there the same weekend. It was an upmarket fair for which the hill, a monumental site and a park normally open to the public, was closed and restricted to paid admission. As we realised that we were not going to be able to access the hill, the group was annoyed but not surprised. The experience of ‘no go’ places was quite familiar to them, often related to issues of both race and class, and to the very aesthetics and composition of certain places, designed

\textsuperscript{14} In October 2020, the scene of a young protestor thrown into the Mapocho from the Pío Nono bridge by the police caused indignation worldwide.
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for specific uses and bodies. At the same time, this event gave us the chance to discuss in depth the activity organised for the Santa Lucía/Welen Hill. What emerged was that what was initially proposed by Claudio, Roberto and myself – re-founding Santiago through performance and photographic re-staging – was of no interest to the group: no one was actually keen on the very idea of ‘founding’. They were rather concerned with imagining different ways of engaging with the space where colonial Chile saw itself as starting, as well as with the very ideas of nation, power, and foundation. The workshop was rescheduled, and its central activity rethought. Yet once again, we were unable to carry it out; this time owing to the outbreak of political protests in the area following the killing of the young Mapuche activist Camillo Catrillanca by the police in November 2018.16

The hill was constantly slipping away. And every time it escaped us, it was for reasons pointing to the bones of the relationship between the Chilean state and the Mapuche: one riddled with violence and exclusion, but also ambiguity, negotiation, and endurance. As the place of the colonial foundation, located right over an ancient Mapuche sacred place, the hill is full of conflicting representations contained in its landmarks: from the foundational stone inscribed with a letter from Pedro de Valdivia to the King of Spain; to the monument to Nicolás Palacios, credited with first defining the ‘Chilean race’ in his essay of the same name; a ‘fake’ Caupolicán statue; a chemammul still showing signs of burning.17 Marked with antagonistic tensions and contradictions, the hill embeds both colonial history and the possibility of resisting its dominance, as well as aptly representing the slippery arena of the state’s multicultural policies.

In Latin America, multiculturalism has been a strategy to generate consent for neoliberal reforms, leading to important negotiations concerning the recognition of cultural rights, and, even if far less so, some collective rights. Nevertheless, as pointed out by many scholars, these changes have not been truly transformative of the relationship between the state and indigenous people: demands for radical redistribution, autonomous territory, and self-determination – in short, all that challenges states’ positions in the global

15 This has primarily to do with economic aspects of access to certain places, de facto eliminating the possibility of access for certain groups. But this is also linked to the way spaces are designed and organised, as welcoming or intimidating for certain people and not others, as processes of racialisation intersect design and architecture (see Cheng, Davis and Wilson 2020).

16 The murder of Camilo Catrillanca – shot in the back by a Chilean Carabineros officer – sparked a wave of demonstrations across the country, of which the centre of Santiago was the epicentre in November 2018.

17 I refer to the sculpture by Nicanor Plaza, supposedly representing Caupolicán but actually depicting a figure from The Last of the Mohicans by J. F. Cooper (see Chapter 4). The Chemammul (traditional wooden sculptures) were burned down in the context of a protest against the Chilean state, an act that remains controversial within the Mapuche movement.
market – have been often neglected. Diversity has been recognised without truly addressing power inequalities (Richards 2013: 10–13; see also Hale 2002, 2006; Postero 2007). One of the critics of multicultural neoliberalism, Charles Hale notes how these policies have resulted in the creation of the juxtaposed subject positions of the *indo permitido* and the *indo insurrecto*. The first (in a term coined by Silvia Rivera Cusicanqui) embraces state-sponsored multiculturalism and interculturality; the second instead calls for the redistribution of power and resources (Hale 2004). In Chile, this last figure has been well represented by the *indio terrorista* through the application of anti-terrorist laws (such as the National Security Law) to indigenous activists and the consequent incarceration of many of them (Richards 2010). The *indio terrorista* falls within the historical peculiarity of a context marked by the institution of the *reducciones* and beliefs that the indigenous were simply irrelevant, or even non-existent. Somehow paradoxically, being the country where neoliberalism was first applied in Latin America, multicultural policies were applied at a later stage in Chile and even in a more limited way, with indigenous demands mainly addressed as a ‘problem of poverty’ (Richards 2013: 108–109). Rather than actors in their own rights, with specific knowledge and ways of being, Mapuche were considered ‘a problem to be solved’, and neoliberal multiculturalism was configured ‘as a racial project [in] continuation of the history of colonial dispossession’ (Richards 2013: 132; see also Antileo Baeza 2013).

Shaped by national identities, problematic representations, socio-spatial segregation and coloniality, the city materiality constituted the most important reference for the shared research process. Through a creative and performative engagement, as shown in more detail in the next paragraph, we focused on specific neighbourhoods or areas of the city but also on objects and landmarks such as the statue of Pedro de Valdivia in the Plaza de Armas, the *pewen* (Araucaria tree) in the Quinta Normal Park, or the Caupolicán statue on the Santa Lucía/Welen Hill. These material objects stood as nodal points, representing multi-linear connections between different times and spaces. The urban trajectories we designed were collectively defined through non-obvious links and practices of collage and *bricolage*. The exercise of moving, traversing the urban space, was developed by putting the body in place and through places – hand in hand with the construction of narratives shaping the final exhibition and especially the play *Santiago Waria*. As such the research process was developed at the intersection of the lived experiences of the participants, their families’ trajectories of migration, the broader context of the relationship between the Mapuche people and the Chilean state, and the materiality of specific spatialities within the city. Place and the constructed environment were given weight in establishing an understanding of people’s everyday lives and concerns. Drawing on a range of site-specific methodologies, what was at stake was not conceptual and abstract but something practical.
that needed to be engaged with persons in place. For place, disrupting the linear unfolding of stories enables not only different representations but also different modes of knowledge production, which are less likely to emerge with another kind of methodology. It was precisely by focusing on particular sites within the city that the possibility of playing with connections, multiple belongings, routings, and imaginations was opened up. This creative process resulted in the active re-drawing of Santiago from the Mapuche point of view, what the research participant referred to as an act of mapuchización or ‘making/becoming Mapuche’. Ephemeral but powerful, it resembled the processes of re-territorialisation observed in the south of the country (see Hirt 2012). This gesture of imaginative and corporeal appropriation was crafted by an exchange between the city and the indigenous bodies inhabiting it who were both embodying and enacting these stories, which brings us to the meaningful ‘as ifs’ (Schechner 1994) of performance addressed in the following sections.

**Between ethnography and performance: emplaced imaginations**

To engage with and work through the city’s materiality, the research was organised as a sort of performative cartographic exploration of Santiago. The project’s participants, contacted through both personal networks and social media, numbered between fifteen and twenty young Mapuche living in Santiago following their or their families’ migration, and who were often of mixed origin (mestizo, indigenous and non-indigenous). In 2018, they included university students, visual, theatre and musical artists, and artisans, all of them politically engaged in different ways in indigenous activism. For one year, we worked together exploring several concerns that the group found compelling. Historical documents and maps were analysed, and issues such as displacement, migration and urban segregation, racialisation processes, internal colonialism, and the contradictions of neoliberal multiculturalism were addressed in their relationship with the city’s materialities. Calling into question hegemonic representations of the metropolis, alternative mapping practices including walking, drawing and on-site brainstorming were performed, conceiving this process as political and aesthetic at the same time and involving issues of representation, knowledge production and power relations (see Crampton 2010; Wood 2010). Mapping – tracing paths and narratives by moving through the city – was understood as contingent and relational, ‘an inherently imaginative practice’ and a deeply embodied way to explore urban space that allowed different stories and trajectories to emerge (Dodge, Kitchin, Perkins 2009; see also Massey 2005).
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Moving from this research practice ‘on foot’ (Ingold, Vergunst 2008; see also Irving 2007 and Pink 2008), previously individuated places, sectors, or landmarks, meaningful to the participants and the broader history of the Mapuche diaspora became the locations for on-site workshops, in addition to almost weekly meetings. The workshops were intended to generate meaning, collective thinking, and knowledge through a range of practice-based and creative methodologies that engaged with these spatialities such as collage, collective cartography, photographic and performative sessions, writing, or the simple sharing of reflections and memories. Parallel to these collective moments, the participants worked on personal artistic projects, either individually or in small groups.

Throughout the year and a half in which the MapsUrbe project took place, ethnography, art, theatre, and politics were intertwined. The city space and its relationship with the bodies inhabiting it were central elements of the research undertaken. Space became a co-interpreter: Santiago, in its materiality, was part of this creative process. Particular spatialities were addressed in their significance for both the project participants’ personal and family history and their relationship with the broader Mapuche history of migration. The sites were investigated in depth: historical and audio-visual documentation about the Mapuche presence (or absence, or absent-presence) in the capital and specific sectors of it were consulted, as were the participants’ own knowledge and memories during collective sessions and debates. Through this process, specific places within the city turned into the starting points for the construction of narratives, later elaborated with the creative facilitation of Roberto, who, as a theatre director and writer, is also an expert in site-specific methodologies. In the final construction of the play, not every place that we engaged with during the workshop phase was included. Some sites gradually acquired more importance than others, some were discarded due to logistical reasons, and over the months of rehearsal, four places were finally selected as key points for the theatre piece: the Quinta Normal Park; the Plaza de Armas; one neighbourhood in Providencia; the Santa Lucía/Welen Hill. Equally significant were the connection and routes between them. A more detailed discussion of the construction of the performance is provided by Roberto in ‘Proscenium’. Here, I want to discuss two particularly meaningful aspects of this process.

To begin with, the relationship between the project’s final outputs probably requires further explanation. When we started to organise the exhibition, we engaged in long debates about where to locate it. During the workshops, 18

18 The rethinking of traditional concepts such as the *tuwün* (place of origin) is also significant for debates on indigenous spatialities and the space/place debate more generally (see, for example: Feld, Basso 1996; Casey 1999, 2009; Ingold 2000; Morales 2002; Low, Lawrence-Zúñiga 2003; Massey 2005; Calbucura and Le Bonnice 2009; De Giminiani 2018; Roberts 2018; Casagrande 2020). See also Chapter 1, this volume.
interrogating different spatialities throughout the city had proven a meaningful way of addressing memory and history. Turning to a motionless exposition of ‘art objects’ felt static and enclosing, unfaithful to how the previous research had been characterised by dynamic ways of designing trajectories, retracing paths and manipulating the city’s spatialities. To be faithful to this sense of traversing, it was decided that the exhibition could not stand alone, but needed to be part of something much more performative. Thus, while choosing to set it in the Centro de Extensión Balmaceda Arte Joven within the Quinta Normal Park, a site-specific theatre play was assembled under Roberto’s guidance. This resulted in a ‘city tour’ that had a dual function: returning to the main sites we had been exploring during our year of collective research, connecting them through a non-linear narrative; and turning the static pieces of the art exhibition into actions and performances. The staging of Santiago Waria thus took place both in specific locations and on the route between them, and was made of live scenes as well as recorded audio-guides and materials. This moving through the city – what I have called elsewhere ‘acts of traversing’, referring to the concept of ‘transversality’ in highlighting their creative and generative potential (Guattari 1995; see Casagrande, Cayuqueo Martínez 2019; Casagrande 2021) – needed to remain central. The trajectories designed by moving across the urban landscape during the research process were translated into performance, asking the audience to redraw a similar path (see ‘Proscenium’).

This allowed us not only to make the Mapuche urban presence and history visible but also to highlight its complexities and tensions as well as the multiple trajectories of the current generation, engaging with the memories of migration but at the same time keeping the focus on young Mapuche living in Santiago today. The second important aspect I wanted to address lies here. As shown in more detail in Chapter 4, although most of the participants lived or grew up on the city’s outskirts, a decision was made that the tour should focus on the central sectors of the city: the same spaces we had been interrogating the most during the research phase. While the choice of not engaging directly with the spatialities of the periphery was not easily made, what prevailed was the political claim of intervening – through bodies, narrative, and artistic creations – a space usually denied or only partially available to the indigenous experience of the metropolis. The aim was to ‘stain’ the colonial city through the (in)visible presence of the indio and the champurria. That was what the performance was about: ‘bringing’ the periphery to the city centre.

Imaginative aspects were particularly significant in the construction of the theatre play Santiago Waria, central to this book. Alongside historical records and personal and collective memories, imagination played a key role in how the performance was conceived, becoming essential to its staging. As the
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script was put together, it soon became clear how it would become an open and collective process: besides explorative walking, on-site writing sessions, and the use of materials that had emerged during previous workshops, scenes were constructed by mixing individual texts, experiences, and narratives with historical data, archive and ethnographic materials. In this assemblage, imagination in the guise of fiction played an important part. Fiction was employed to elaborate on the connections between places, times, and stories; to adapt biographical experiences to the overall narrative, and to respect the decision by some of the research participants to give anonymous contributions. Explicit testimonies were blended with fictionalised parts, ‘epitomising’ in one character or scene different and interconnected stories and reworking the biographical connections with the family histories of some of the participants, such as in the Quinta Normal and Providencia scenes (Chapters 1 and 3). These reworked stories thus provide ‘insights into lived experience and embodied understandings of the world’ (Sjöberg, 2018: 178). The fact that the majority of project participants were not professional actors (apart from three of them) was key to this: they were reworking their own story, that of their family or another participant, engaging in an ‘empowering process of creative action’ (Bright 2014: 99). What materialised was an intersubjective and affective engagement with a deeply felt reality, or paraphrasing Kazubowski-Houston, experience converted into artistic and performative expression (2017: 221), in which enactment was as important as embodiment and emplacement in addressing indigenous experiences of the city and the often-contradictory feelings of (dis)placement.

In this simultaneous staging of biography and fiction, the frontier between reality and the ‘unreal’ – or ‘irreality’ – was blurred, the two dimensions reciprocally constitutive (Crapanzano 2004: 15). Yet, this was not only a way to gain a better understanding of indigenous experiences of the city or to give them a public place. It was also a way of intervening reality, concretely building a different possible – or impossible – world. According to Johannes Sjöberg, ‘fiction refers to the human necessity to speculate, to fill the blank canvas of uncertainty with imagined utopias and dystopias’ (2017: 174). The play and its fictions constituted a way not only of envisioning possible futures but also of re-imagining the past. A clear example of this is the metro journey between the Quinta Normal and Plaza de Armas at the beginning of the piece. There, facilitated by the underground route, we scripted an overlap between Pedro de Valdivia, conqueror of Chile, and Augusto Pinochet Ugarte, the military dictator. Shifting from one 11 September to another – in 1541 and 1973, both dates deeply marking Chilean and Mapuche history – we mixed the audio of Pinochet’s first proclamation and a semi-historical, semi-fictional letter from Pedro de Valdivia to the Spanish king (see Interlude 1, this volume). This surreal and provocative linking has a deep connection with the present-day Mapuche
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The connections between performativ e practices and anthropology can be traced back to an already long tradition highlighting the close relationship between theatre and ethnography. For a recent and detailed review, see D’Onofrio (2018). For elaborations on how recent uses of performance and theatre as ethnographic practice-based methods also encourage a critical reflection on the process and the relationship with the research participants see Tamisari (2014, 2018); Gatt (2015), Flynn and Tinius (2015) and Sjöberg (2018). Moreover, recent works have been importantly engaging with different artistic expressions involving collaboration and participation in art and anthropology. See, for example: Sansi (2015); Schneider, Wright (2010 and 2013); Strohm (2019).

The analysis proposed in this book addresses this performative process as a shared ethnographic representation constructed with the research participants and moving through fiction, lived experience, collective memories, and creative ethnographic practices. As in Boal’s idea of theatre as ‘telescopic’, performance constitutes an extraordinarily useful tool for social scientists to explore and represent people’s own experiences, reflections, interpretations, narratives, and counter-narratives (D’Onofrio 2018: 6). Creating meaningful contexts for anthropologists to better understand how people come to grips with the world, engaging with their own realities by producing theatre ‘politically’, this approach sheds light on the revealing ways in which politics and aesthetics relate to each other (Flynn, Tinius 2015; Ranciére 2004). Along these lines, Dorinne Kondo points out how theatre is an especially rich site for a deeper understanding of the relationships between race, power, aesthetics, and affect (2018). As previously mentioned, in her view, performance’s multiple possibilities arise from, rather than transcend, power: the theatrical making of the world evokes at the same time transformation and the impossibility of escaping power, history, and culture, for ‘worlds, like language, are pre-given, and remaking must always work with this givenness’ (2018: 29). The givenness of historical and power relationships is something one inevitably has to work through, being caught in a creative, and at the same time constraining, tension. This givenness is part of the ‘scenario’ in which processes of (artistic or everyday) making and remaking of the world take place, and in which anthropologists engage with others, as outlined in the first section of this Introduction. For Kondo, it is from these performative (im)possibilities and the centrality of the body – what the author calls ‘corporeal epistemologies’ – that the close relationship between theatre and ethnography derives: their shared attention to the senses, embodiment, and reality in Chile, where neoliberal policies affecting indigenous territories were implemented through the terror of the dictatorship, thus following the path first laid out by colonial rule and further reproduced through more recent practices of neoliberal multiculturalism. Another significant example is the final scene on the Santa Lucía/Welen Hill, where the audience is welcomed to the future, the ‘Chilean race’ has long since disappeared and a Mapuche president is ruling the country. This is something that felt surreal at the time, but, after October 2019, much less so.

19 The connections between performative practices and anthropology can be traced back to an already long tradition highlighting the close relationship between theatre and ethnography. For a recent and detailed review, see D’Onofrio (2018). For elaborations on how recent uses of performance and theatre as ethnographic practice-based methods also encourages a critical reflection on the process and the relationship with the research participants see Tamisari (2014, 2018); Gatt (2015), Flynn and Tinius (2015) and Sjöberg (2018). Moreover, recent works have been importantly engaging with different artistic expressions involving collaboration and participation in art and anthropology. See, for example: Sansi (2015); Schneider, Wright (2010 and 2013); Strohm (2019).
affect and an emphasis on ‘collaborative meaning-making and the world beyond the text’ (2018: 25).

In the context pertinent to this book, the making of meaning went through the staging of the performance Santiago Waria, constructed at the crossroads of biographies and fiction, ethnography and collaborative practices, and artistic creation. Embedded in the (post)colonial city, the givenness of historical and power relations was interrogated and challenged through embodied and emplaced aesthetics enabling the questioning of assumed habitus, and the claiming for the force of ‘natality’ (Arendt 1958) by designing new and imaginative paths through the city. The central character of the performance Santiago Waria, the Comandante Boliviano, perfectly represents this compositional ‘holding together’: mixing styles and crafting her own self through the performative act of traversing the city, the Comandante engaged in the ‘setting into motion’ of alternative and dissenting imaginations (Escobar 2004), which we have previously described as an active gesture of poiesis through displacement (Casagrande, Cayuqueo Martínez 2019). In this process, the ‘as if’ of performance, putting specific bodies on stage and thus generating relationships and/or tensions to create something ‘anew’ (Ricoeur 1984) was inevitably linked to politics. Engaging with the socio-historical thickness of bodies in place, fictional gestures of world-making played with the entanglement of reality and the aesthetics of political imaginations.

**The Political Aesthetic of the Champurria**

During the research process, and especially in the play Santiago Waria, performing bodies and the city stood in a dialectical creative relationship. Dwelling in the contradictions of inhabiting the diaspora, the body represents the only possible ‘political territory’ (Alvarado Lincopi 2021), traversed by issues of race, socio-economic status, and the country’s broader political history. Classified as ‘indigenous’ or ‘white’ (in my case as a European anthropologist and in the case of a couple of other participants with less evident indigenous origins), our bodies were constrained into given categories and assigned to specific areas within the city, according to specific urban imaginaries (Márquez 2003, 2007). Upper-class neighbourhoods in the eastern part of Santiago are sectors where the presence of indigenous people is relegated to the kitchen or the maid’s room, and jobs such as breadmaking, gardening, or construction work. The city centre is more ‘mixed’ (and therefore often perceived by the upper classes as less secure) with the presence not only of indigenous and mestizo lower classes but also, increasingly, of migrants from Peru, Venezuela, and Haiti. In downtown Santiago, indigene-ity is framed as past national history by monumental landmarks, referring
to the Conquista, colonial rule, and the early years of the republic. Occasionally, indigeneity appears in cultural activities disciplined by neoliberal multiculturalism (Hale’s indio permitido) or suddenly surfaces in all its unruliness in the context of political manifestations and marches (Hale’s indio insurrecto). Even at the periphery, on the outskirts of Santiago, mostly unfamiliar to the middle and upper classes and still representing the ‘place’ where most people of indigenous origin live, indigeneity almost disappears among the mass of urban poor, working-class, and rural migrants.

The city reiterates the Chilean nation’s logic of ‘white mestizaje’, based on a founding ideology celebrating a racial mixture tending towards ‘whitening’, and negating yet at the same time discriminating against indigenous bodies, seen as belonging to other times (the past) and other places (the rural south).

While there have been signs of change in recent years, and especially after the political process beginning in October 2019, closely following the conclusion of the project, spatial segregation still marks the indigenous experience of the city, as well as related processes of racialisation. A clear example of this dynamic is analysed by Claudio Alvarado Lincopi in an episode in which the singer Ana Tijoux was insulted by someone shouting cara de nana (‘nanny face’). The insult was immediately labelled and condemned as ‘racist’, being based on several underlying issues that for the Chilean public simply stand as obvious: that those working as a housemaid or nanny come from specific ‘races’ (indigenous and/or migrant); that race is expressed in physical traits and particular bodies; and that those bodies and that job represent a pejorative condition, and can therefore be employed as an insult (see Alvarado Lincopi 2021). Moreover, according to this racialised but implicit logic, ‘racial mixture’ is understood as an old process that has already taken place, leading to most Chileans ‘becoming white’. This simultaneously

20 Unlike other Latin American countries, mestizaje has never constituted a feature of national identity throughout Chilean history. Chilean society was consolidated during the republic as racially homogenous, in an ideology built on Nicolás Palacios’ book Raza chilena (1904) and the related idea of ‘white mestizaje’ (Walsh 2015, 2019). The blurring of the line between ‘whiteness’ and mestizaje is evident in current self-identification as ‘white’ by large sectors of Chileans who, in other parts of South America, would think of themselves as mestizos (Telles, Flores 2013: 442). Palacios asserted the uniformity of the Chilean population as resulting from the historical mixture between Araucanian Indians and Northern Europeans and being biologically superior to that of other Latin American countries (Walsh 2015: 613–615). For processes of ‘becoming white’ related to Mapuche migration, see Course (2013).

21 Mapuche visibility within the capital of Chile has been increasing significantly, with the building of ceremonial centres and traditional ruka (houses) in many sites across the city (for example, see Carmona Yost 2017). It is worth mentioning the building of a ruka in the yard of the Memory Museum, first connected to the theatre representation ‘Nuke’ and then used during 2018 for other cultural and artistic activities. Nevertheless, these kinds of initiatives are often associated with criticism about the dynamic of Chilean multiculturalism and the related lack of engagement in any truly political dialogue concerning collective rights, ancestral territory, and autonomy.
negates the existing dynamics of racialisation and thus excludes race from public debates (Barandiarán 2012; see also Richards 2013).

In recent years, and in opposition the outlined national ideology that is embedded in the capital city, the notion of *mestizaje* has undergone a process of appropriation and subversion among young urban indigenous people. This is especially so in contemporary artistic productions, characterised by underlying tensions concerning issues of identity, belonging, and conflicting representations of otherness. These efforts are reinventing the concept of *champurria*, which originally referred to blood mixture. It was, and to a certain extent still is, a pejorative concept within indigenous society, especially in the rural south (see Course 2013). The recent multiplication of creative uses of this concept is related to the poetic of the *Mapurbe*, a key reference point for the work developed during the research process. Coined by the Mapuche poet David Aniñir Guiltraro at the beginning of the 2000s, the word *Mapurbe* plays with *mapu* (land in Mapuzugun) and the Latin *urbe*. This neologism notably erased the ‘-che’ suffix (person/people) of Mapu-che, substituting it with urban space in a provocation made to draw attention to the lives and experiences of the many Mapuche migrating to cities from the south of the country, and especially to the second and third generation. The term rapidly increased in use among youths in both Chile and Argentina, constituting a sort of ‘authorisation’ of their experiences and mixed sense of belonging (see Briones 2007; Collins 2014). While the vast majority of indigenous migrants, owing to the violence and pain of displacement, went on to abandon their indigenous identity, traditions, and language, many of this younger generation, who were adolescents when David Aniñir’s work started to circulate and are now in their twenties and thirties, engaged in a process of reworking (often discovering) their indigenous origins. David Aniñir’s work – firmly positioning them as *Mapuche within the city* – calls for mixture and contradiction, contributing to the opening up of a space for artistic and intellectual productions. These artistic fields – part of a long tradition in terms of literary and visual production, and a more recent one for theatre and the performative arts – are contributing to the creation of transformative spaces for the negotiation of meanings and the articulation of emerging subjectivities. Deeply embedded in political activism, the resulting artworks construct their aesthetics and poetics by engaging with the friction of the *Mapurbe* and the mixture of *champurria*.²²

The group taking part in the MapsUrbe project comes from this background. For them, the concept of *Mapurbe* refers to ways of engaging with reality. They use it at the same time as a noun, an adjective, a verb, and a claim. They do not simply define themselves as *Mapurbe*, but as complex

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²² Besides the artists participating in this volume, I am thinking of the work of Daniela Catríleo, Sebastian Calfuqueo, and Rodrigo Castro Hueche, for example.
and multiple subjects engaging with and speaking from and to the Mapurbe. Seen from this perspective, the term can be thought of as a site of enunciation allowing particular practices of place-making and forms of emplacement (see Casagrande 2021). Similarly, the word *champurria* was used more as a verb (*champurriar*) than uniquely as a noun representing some kind of fixed personal identity. As stated by Claudio in other writings, this concept is appropriated for ‘think[ing] those stories that do not fit into official narratives of ‘being Mapuche’, defying at the same time the denial of racial mixture and any essentialist culturalism’ (Alvarado Lincopi 2021).

*Champurria* is then doing something similar to the Aymara term *ch’ixi* as elaborated by Silvia Rivera Cusicanqui. Originally meaning ‘marbled grey’, the concept claims mixture without blending or overlapping, for black and white points are perceived as grey only from a distance, but as one gets closer, they reveal as separated, while still part of the same whole (Rivera Cusicanqui 2018). As a form of perception, thinking, and knowledge-making in which multiplicities and contradictions share a coeval space, the concepts of *ch’ixi* and *champurria* stand in dialectical tension with ideologies of *mestizaje* most common in Latin American countries. A myth and rhetoric for the construction of national identities and cultures, such as in Mexico and parts of Central America (see Lomnitz 1992, 2012; Bonfil Batalla 1987; Vasconcelos 1997), or a claim ‘from below’ (Hale 2005: 25; see also Anzaldúa 1987; De La Cadena 2000), *mestizaje* has multiple, rather than one all-encompassing, meanings. Its shifts in time and space entail sameness and difference, inclusion and exclusion, homogeneity and diversity, domination and resistance (Wade 2005: 240). Yet the concepts of *ch’ixi* and *champurria* further defy these constructions, slipping away from binarisms and coming closer to recent critical approaches addressing *mestizaje* as practice, situated acts, claims, and interventions, able to both enforce and change social realities, actively producing arenas of mixed identifications by ‘joining things that seem incommensurate’ (Eiss 2016: 5–7; see also Wade 2005; Poole 2016). Yet these ‘impure genealogies’ do not translate into forms of ‘hybridity’ (García Canclini 1990; see Chapter 4), refusing any synthesis of juxtapositions or any depoliticised erasure of conflict easily coopted by multicultural and neoliberal policies. *Ch’ixi*, in Rivera Cusicanqui’s theorisation, and *champurria*, in contemporary works of Mapuche artists and in their political positioning, is rather something uncomfortable that retains its antagonism. As discussed many times with Claudio, and as Rivera Cusicanqui states, it is dialectic without synthesis.

23 It is not possible to address this broad debate in its entirety and complexity. For a comparative discussion of the literature addressing ideologies of *mestizaje*, see Hale (1996); Mallon (1996); de Castro (2002); Rahier (2003); Miller (2004); Mangan (2014).

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In the artworks reproduced throughout this book as well as in the performance Santiago Waria, this represented a call for mixture as Mapuche, not as mestizos, a form of belonging that dwells in tensions that are not resolved, but rather inhabited (Alvarado Lincopi 2021).  

From the reaffirmed standpoint of the urban context, indigeneity is a political and affective identity linked to migration, displacement, the memories of previous generations, and the political struggle for the ancestral territory. But also and at the same time, it is the possibility of playing with otherness and with a mixing of genres, self-identifications, and expressions. Dwelling in an unruly overlapping of pieces and scratches of memories, histories and different territories, the resulting political aesthetic – what could be called a ‘champurria aesthetic’ – is constituted by multiple and intertwined aesthetics that bring together the political, the artistic, and the experiential for young indigenous people living through processes of (dis)placement. ‘Champurria aesthetics’ are built through forms of knowledge and representations emplaced as much as embodied, in a corporeal dialogue with the city. This is how Puelpan’s music mixes the sounds of indigenous traditions with contemporary pop under the critical and abstract gaze of both Chilean and Mapuche nationalities; or how Cynthia Salgado redesigned traditional jewellery in the urban context, through a collaboration with many different young Mapuche voices (see Puelpan and Salgado, this volume). Champurria aesthetics represent entangled layers of belongings, encompassing race, class, and gender, and involving memory and place-making as well as imaginative reconfigurations. Lingering on the feeling of being double, they nevertheless refuses the hyphen, as one still thinks of oneself as Mapuche, not as Chilean-Mapuche. This possibility is at the same time lived and called for, and stands central in terms of acting and creating, as evident in the intersectional participation of younger indigenous people and mestizos, as having a political – rather than an ‘ethnic’ – identity. Besides being in line with the current political project of the Mapuche movement, who are pushing for an autonomous territory as the ‘Mapuche Nation’, this also reflects conceptions of Mapuche identities in more ‘traditional’ contexts that are far from being essentialist (see González Gálvez 2016). Yet, it is worth mentioning that essentialised images of indigeneity in official narratives and representations within the Chilean social context (e.g. those related to the criteria for recognition within the state’s policies) are sometimes adopted by Mapuche themselves in the context of strategic essentialism or in controversial stances such as what has been ironically defined as Mapuchometro: the practice of judging ‘how Mapuche’ one is according to fixed categories and standards such as surname, bodily aspect, or daily practices.

In the metropolitan area of Santiago, Mapuche tend to live on the peripheries of the city, suffering the consequences of spatial segregation described. As evident for example in the poetry of David Amihir Guílarraro, their multiple forms of belonging are often connected to those residential spaces and the identity of the pobladores, which in Chile is connected to a strong political trajectory. The gender element is also present in the current re-elaboration of the concept of champurria, in the contestation of the celebration of masculinity even within the Mapuche culture. See the work of the artist Sebastian Calfuqueo, for example the performance You will never be a Weye and Alka Donno.

24 This is linked to the fact that Mapuche identity is mostly conceived, especially by younger indigenous people and mestizos, as having a political – rather than an ‘ethnic’ – identity. Besides being in line with the current political project of the Mapuche movement, who are pushing for an autonomous territory as the ‘Mapuche Nation’, this also reflects conceptions of Mapuche identities in more ‘traditional’ contexts that are far from being essentialist (see González Gálvez 2016). Yet, it is worth mentioning that essentialised images of indigeneity in official narratives and representations within the Chilean social context (e.g. those related to the criteria for recognition within the state’s policies) are sometimes adopted by Mapuche themselves in the context of strategic essentialism or in controversial stances such as what has been ironically defined as Mapuchometro: the practice of judging ‘how Mapuche’ one is according to fixed categories and standards such as surname, bodily aspect, or daily practices.

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of many of the authors of this book in multiple political stances (indigenous/feminist/queer/constitutional reform movements) or the creative engagement with different media and methods, such as in Roberto Cayuqueo Martínez’s own theatre production.

Representing what Faye Ginsburg calls ‘embedded aesthetics’ in the context of aboriginal Australia (1994) in that they ‘embody, sustain and even revive or create certain social relations’, these productions make an active intervention in public debates, both locally and internationally. If, on one hand, this is a way of reaffirming the links with indigenous identities, traditions, and territories, then, on the other hand, it represents a strong engagement with broader processes of racialisation, politics of identity and representation and, especially recently, decolonial and anticolonial stances. In an ongoing dialogue with other realities throughout and beyond Latin America, the artistic questioning of the (post)colonial city puts the aesthetic and the political in a deep and complex relationship, mutually shaping and at the same time exceeding each other (Startwell 2010: 11).26 Constituting sites of expression for new political subjectivities, the elaboration of these aesthetics is a way not only of addressing but also transforming reality (see Flynn, Tinius 2015; see also Turner 1987), speaking to the very concept of indigeneity, questioning the ‘place’ of indigenous people within (post)colonial societies, and subverting processes of identification and belonging.

In this reading, while still articulating a political language of resistance, the champurria does not simply represent opposition to dominant cultural structures, allowing one to account for the ‘points of suture’ between phenomena of subjection and subjectivation (Hall 2010); rather, it opposes cultural domination by encompassing and embracing the very thing it is meant to oppose. It is resistance as anthropophagy: the capacity to dwell in borders without losing anticolonial critique. Reaching beyond the duality domination/resistance by surpassing the restrictiveness of languages based on such discursive frames, it is a move of cannibalisation, which implies acknowledging and literally incorporating that very domination it seeks to oppose. In this shift, there is reconfiguration and refusal. The claim for the champurria invents and enables subject positions capable of dwelling in the paradox, escaping the multicultural understanding of indigenous identities as either ‘internal’ or ‘external’ to the neoliberal model. Along the lines traced by the analysis of Jacques Ranciére, this broadens the very understandings of ‘indigenous politics’, encompassing political and aesthetic projects transgressing and reconfiguring the relationship between the visible, the sayable, and the thinkable (2004: 63). Champurria political aesthetics thus represent a refusal of ‘the fixing, the chaining of elements to a particular

26 While this is not addressed in depth here, it should be noted that art, and more specifically performance art, has become an important tool for contemporary protests in different contexts worldwide (Werbner, Webb, Spellman-Poots, 2014; see also Mouffe 2007; Serafini 2018).
compositional structure, the refusal of the imperative to relate’, for the elements of its compositions retain their own relative autonomy (Simone 2019: 22; see Chapter 4). 27

This ultimately shapes how decolonisation should be pursued, enacted, and thought of. Drawing on Silvia Rivera Cusicanqui’s proposal of liberating ‘half-Indian ancestries’ to develop dialogical forms for the construction of knowledge in which differences ‘do not extinguish but instead antagonize and complement each other’ (2012: 105), the reflections in this volume stand for the potentialities and unruliness of ‘motley’ (abigarrada) creations. 28

The concept of champurria calls for practices of poiesis and invention, rather than recuperation and endurance – a sort of ‘coming back’ or ‘survival’ of practices, traditions, and subjectivities of colonised subjects. This recalls Franz Fanon’s writings of the ‘native poet’ and the ‘fluctuating movement’ that should be searched for: there is no going back to a lost/regained origin, but rather the need to embrace ‘that occult instability’ (1963: 227).

This is probably the main point that this book aims to make: to refuse any dialectical opposition – between modernity and tradition, indigenous and non-indigenous, coloniality and postcoloniality – and instead embrace a ‘Baroque modernity’ encompassing paradoxes and dissolving the borders between alterities (Echeverría 2000). Shedding light on the long duration of colonial continuities, their violence and disruption, it focuses on the possibilities of creation, the imagination of the future and even reinventions of the past: words and images are constructed by mixing codes and grammars, and the resulting neologisms and aesthetics make sense of this world, even when their links with indigeneity are no longer straightforward. Embracing the oscillating imbalance proposed by Fanon, the champurria aesthetic at the centre of this book and its visual and performative forms are shaped by memories, traces, silences, tensions, and the entanglement of multiple identities and belongings.

At the same time, the champurria represents particular ways of knowing and engaging with reality (see the chapter Niitxam, this volume). Thinking of the indigenous selves, bodies, and histories beyond the places usually assigned to colonised subjects, these creative representations question, and in some ways also disrupt, the social and material landscape of the (post) colonial city, claiming mixture and non-whiteness under the skin of the nation. Elaborating on the epistemological possibilities arising from a shared

27 This is similar to what has been defined ‘outside politics’ (Stephenson, Papadopoulos 2006) and ‘politics of indistinction’ (Yurchak 2008), albeit in different contexts and with different contents.

28 In her reflections on practices and narratives of decolonisation, Silvia Rivera Cusicanqui engages in a strong critique of the work of scholars of the Latin American decolonial tradition (for examples, see Escobar 2008; Mignolo 1999, 2011; Escobar, Mignolo 2010; Mignolo, Walsh 2018). This critique was shared by many among the research participants and was debated many times. See the Niitxam.
space of collaboration, friction, affectivity, and distances, they are asking what stance every one of us is going to take, how we are going to look at our own cities, their monuments, and their toponymies and, if we feel the need to tear down those violent and problematic symbols, what we are going to put in their place.

**About this book ... and the writing of it**

The book is organised into three main sections of varying lengths and complexity. The first section includes this Introduction and the Preface by Enrique Antileo Baeza, a Mapuche scholar and anthropologist. Part I, the core of the book, is divided into four chapters, each linked to a specific site: Quinta Normal, Plaza de Armas, Providencia, and Santa Lucía/Welen Hill. Every chapter/place connects to different themes, which are addressed through the analysis of the process leading to the construction of the performance — from the on-site workshops held in each place to the development of the creative exercises and related collective artworks — in a visual exchange with selected images, maps and graphics, and excerpts from the debates and reflections held in each scenario. The script of the play related to each scene is at the end of every chapter, holding together dialogical elaborations of the meanings attached to each site, biographical experiences, and the broader Mapuche historical memory of migration and diaspora. This text thus needs to be read as an ethnographic text written in collaboration with the research participants, emerging from the shared space of the performative representation of Santiago Waria, its rehearsals and its staging. The script also links the four chapters, providing a connection between them through three ‘Interludes’, moments during the performance in which the audience was moving between the four sites and listening to audio-guides, put together using different ethnographical and historical materials. The collective artwork on the Mapocho River (Mapocho: kürü lhewfu) visually accompanies this travel through the city and the book.

Part II of the volume is dedicated to the writings of some of the participants addressing different subjects, moving from the work we did within the project and their own personal path and artistic practice, research, and activism. There are six texts in this section, discussing issues of migration and memory (Rodrigo Huenchún Pardo, Martín Llancaman); the city space, public monuments and representations of indigeneity (Antil); racialisation, silence, and resistance (Claudio Alvarado Lincopi); and imagination, creation, and urban trajectories (Cynthia Niko Salgado Silva; Puelpan). The fourth and final part of the book contains a concluding text by myself, Claudio Alvarado Lincopi and Roberto Cayuqueo Martínez, a conversation on the project and the main issues connected to it in the form of the
Mapuche *nütxam* (an oral genre of Mapuche storytelling), as well as an Afterword by Claudio Alvarado Lincopi. A glossary is provided at the end of the book, containing the main Mapuche terms and neologisms mentioned. Instead of translating each term every time it is used, the reader is referred to the glossary to keep at least something of the rhythm of the use of Mapuzugun in spoken Spanish among urban Mapuche. The different sections and materials reproduced in the book are also linked to a dedicated website (www.mapsurbe.com) in which maps, images, songs, videoclips, and audios are stored. Throughout the volume, the reader will find links and QR codes bringing them directly to the specific section/material on the website.

As a final note concerning the writing of this book, it must be said that the whole process was far from straightforward. We experienced many delays, downtimes, and changes in structure. This is surely part of the lengthiness and complexity of every edited volume, especially when it concerns collaborative writing in a context where different backgrounds, agendas, and languages are at play. It is also related to the specific power relationship shaping the academic environment: the need to write in English if we wanted to engage with the widest possible academic community, and the fact that I, as an anthropologist in charge of a Marie Curie-funded research project, was paid for the work I was doing in writing and editing the book, whereas the participants and the other editors were not. They obviously had other commitments and duties that came first. To this was added the broader (and extraordinary) socio-political processes arising during the last few months of the project, a relatively short time between the end of fieldwork and the writing of the book. The world simply changed, both locally with the political turmoil and unrest in Chile (and especially in Santiago) since October 2019, and globally with the COVID-19 pandemic in early 2020, still ongoing as I write this Introduction. These two events render any criticism about academic reflections being ‘behind times’ redundant, for circumstances have changed so much between when the research took place and now that one might ask how – and possibly if – it is still relevant. Yet, current processes are an exacerbation of the political and social context addressed with MapsUrbe. Notably, much of what was discussed and analysed is linked to fundamental features of current contexts, as beautifully elaborated by Claudio in the Afterword. Socio-racial inequalities, political aesthetics and performances, as well as the key issue of urban spatialities and segregation and the links between the city’s materialities and the lived experiences of its inhabitants, are particularly meaningful today and seem even more urgently in need of being addressed in light of what is happening both locally and globally. This book is an exercise in this direction, even if both we and the world have been transformed since the project took place.
In this regard, this book also represents – as probably every book does to a certain extent – an ending. As Claudio recently – half-jokingly and half-seriously – said in one of our frequent, if irregular, Jitsy calls (one of the many video-call services that suddenly became popular during the COVID-19 pandemic), writing and editing this book felt just like talking with someone else about a past love, long gone. One feels tenderness and melancholy, the shadow of the passion experienced back then, yet its essence is irremediably lost: it can only be remembered. Feeling that melancholic tenderness myself, I have been thinking about Claudio’s metaphor. When in a relationship, lovers are (mostly) the only witnesses to what is happening to each other. As soon as love ends, there is an interruption also in terms of communication: the interlocutor, the recipient of our intimate thoughts, memories, and shared words, changes. When that experience is narrated to someone else, the ‘audience’ is inevitably different from what it was when we were sharing it with our beloved one. During the whole project, including the final artistic exhibition and the site-specific play, the research participants clearly had a Mapuche audience in mind. They aimed to craft a space for sharing and rethinking a common history and experience of migration, loss, and displacement. However, with this book, the engagement is with a different audience and shared space: one that feels much more distant. What is at stake here is the construction of a new kind of dialogue, mediated by specific canons, aesthetics, and media. In this task, other issues play an important part, such as language, translation, and intercultural communication, which are open to misunderstandings and equivocations (Viveiros de Castro 2004). In bringing the ethical, aesthetical, and poetico-political experiences and concerns of young urban Mapuche into the form of an academic book, there is, as with every translation, a risk of something being irremediably lost. Yet, what can be gained is precious. Besides important insights into indigenous urban life and its creative and generative potential, there is the possibility of questioning and retracing the boundaries of anthropology and ethnography through collaborative and multimedia methodologies and representations, and, paraphrasing the words of Saba Mahmood (2005), if in the process of culturally translating other lifeworlds, my own certainties did not remain stable, I hope that the reader will share the tenderness of our remembrances, even when it feels as if we are telling the story of a past love, long gone.